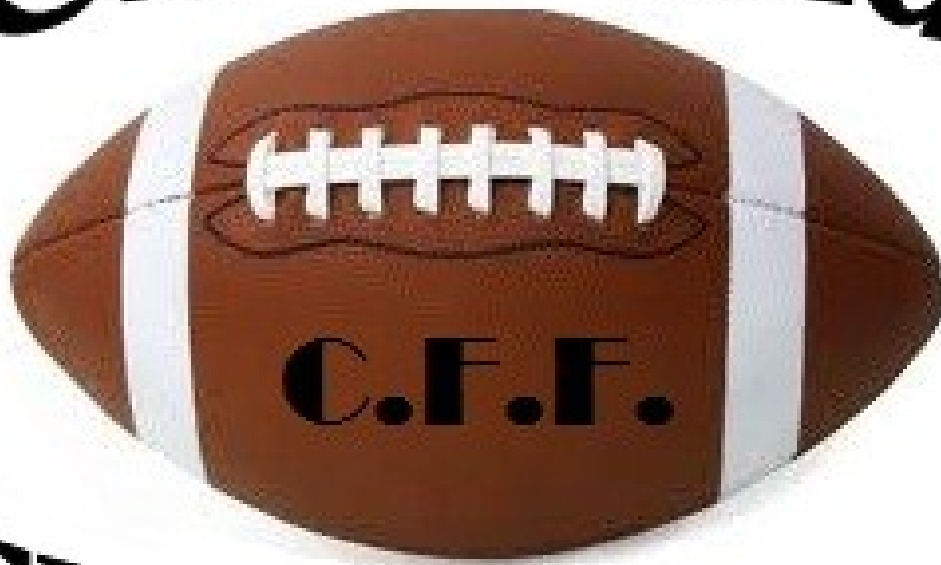


# Cleveland



# Flag Football

## Rule Book

## **Coed Flag Football Rules**

Games will take place at the location & time specified within the registration form and may differ each season.

### **TEAMS AND ROSTERS**

- Team rosters must be comprised of at least 7 players; at least 5 males and 2 females (14 player maximum).
- All players must be 18 or older by the start of the first game.
- **ALL** players must sign the current season's official waiver to be an eligible player.
- Each team will field a maximum of 7 Players during play; with a maximum of 5 males per team on the field at once.
- If a team cannot field 7 players, they can still play with a minimum of 5 players without forfeiting (one less man and one less woman).
- A team can use a registered player(s) from another team in the league with the consent of the opposing captain. If this consent is given, the game result is final and counts as a normal game.
- A minimum of 1 woman per team is required during play (2 is considered a full team).

### **Equipment:**

- All players on a team MUST be wearing like colors.
- Shirts must be tucked in, to allow for similar access to flags.
- No jewelry of any kind (except medic alert items) may be worn on the field. This includes watches, necklaces, earrings, nose rings, eye rings, bracelets, anklets, etc.
- Shoes- players must wear shoes. Cleats must be plastic. No metal, ceramic, screwing, or detachable cleats are allowed.
- Teams are responsible for bringing their own ball. We will have a ball available, but the two teams are responsible for bringing their own game ball. Game balls must be of regulation size, no mini-balls. Referees have final call on what is acceptable.

### **FORFEITS**

- 1.** Game time is forfeit time.

**2.** Any team that cannot fulfill the required number of players (see TEAMS AND ROSTERS) by the scheduled game time will forfeit the game, unless both captains agree on a delayed start time/shortened game. The game clock will always start at the scheduled game time.

**3.** If a team asks another team for permission to add a player because they are short and that request is approved, then the outcome of the game will stand as played.

## **Rules:**

### **Starting the Game**

- The team that wins the coin flip at the start must decide which team will start with the ball.
- The team that receives the ball 1st will start their offensive series at their own 5 yard line (same spot as the 2 point conversion).
- At the start of the 2nd half, the teams will switch sides and the team who was on defense to start the game will now start on offense.

### **GENDER RULES**

- Teams MUST use a female player as an operative player within 4 consecutive plays, or a penalty will be assessed.
- The cycle restarts after a female player is an operative player, referee's discretion.
- When punting, teams do NOT have to use a female as an operative player on a "forced gender play".
- The gender count resets after each change of possession.
- During the game, especially during a "forced gender play", the offense may be comprised of mostly or all females, so long as the team does not exceed 7 players on the field or 5 males on the field at any given time (See TEAMS AND ROSTERS).

An Operative Player is defined as a player who:

- Is the intended receiver.
- Runs the ball as the primary runner (must cross the line of scrimmage or be deflagged before the line of scrimmage).
- Receives the snap as the QB and must attempt to be the person who initiates the ball crossing the line of scrimmage – unless she is sacked.
- Receives a handoff from the QB and attempts a forward pass.

An Operative Player is **NOT** defined as a player who:

- Hands off the football.
- Snaps the ball into play.
- Receives a hand-off only to give it back to a male before crossing the line of scrimmage.
- Lines up as QB and takes a knee.

### **Game Play**

1. The game clock will run for 20 minutes in the 1st and 2nd halves consecutively. The clock will only stop during the final two minutes of the game.
2. The game clock will run continuously for 20 minutes in the 1st half, with only time outs and injuries. Halftime break time will vary, but will generally be 5-10 minutes.
3. If a time-out is called immediately following a touchdown, the clock WILL NOT run during the PAT, and will not start again until the hike of the ball to start the next offensive drive.
4. The game clock will run continuously for 18 minutes until the 2 minute warning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, with only time outs and/or injuries stopping the clock.
5. Once the game clock reaches the 2 minute warning, the clock will stop for the following:
  - incomplete passes, ball carrier or ball goes out of bounds, either team scores, change of possession, penalties, injuries, Referee and Team time-outs (see below).
6. If the game clock expires on a scoring play (TD or Safety), the offense may attempt the PAT if necessary.
7. If the game clock expires on a play in which the defense commits a penalty, the offense may choose to run an additional play, if the penalty is accepted.
8. If the offense scores a TD on the additional play resulting after the accepted penalty, they may also attempt a PAT.
9. If either team is ahead by 20 points or more at the two minute warning, the clock will not stop during the last 2 minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, except for injuries and time outs.
10. When the clock is running, the offensive team has 25 seconds to snap the ball once the referee has spotted the ball.
11. Both teams will have (2) 1 minute time-outs per game.
12. If the offense intentionally causes a penalty to stop the clock after having used both their time outs, there will be a ten (10) second run off of the clock.

**PLAYING DEFENSE**

1. Teams may play man-to-man or zone defense.
2. If a player is missing one or both of his/her flags and receives the ball, the defense must touch the offensive player with one hand to down them.

**The Defensive Rush:**

3. The referee is responsible for shouting out the rush count after the ball is hiked.
4. The referee will estimate a 5 second count in the following manner: "1 – ONE THOUSAND, 2 – ONE THOUSAND, 3 - ONE THOUSAND, 4 - ONE THOUSAND, 5 – ONE THOUSAND, GO!".
5. The defense may not cross the line of scrimmage until the line judge finishes his rush count and says "GO".
6. The defense may, however, cross the line of scrimmage BEFORE the line judge finishes his rush count, once the ball leaves the QB's hand(s).

**BLOCKING AND CONTACT**

1. BLOCKING is not allowed.
2. AGGRESSIVE CONTACT is not allowed.
3. No physical contact in the attempt to block will be allowed at the line of scrimmage, in the backfield or downfield. We understand that some contact cannot be avoided, but all players must try and avoid any contact with other players on the field of play.
4. Picks, intentionally or unintentionally, may be regarded as an illegal block and will be called as a penalty.
5. On punts, interceptions or on offense, the team in possession of the ball (other than the ball carrier) is encouraged to stand still, thus decreasing the chance of an illegal block.

**Offensive Drive**

1. When a team starts their offensive drive (start of game, after a turnover, after a score, etc.), they have (4) downs to EARN a 1st down, and may decide to punt at any point.
2. If the receiver catches the ball and keeps at least (1) foot in bounds, it will be ruled a reception.
3. If an offensive player steps out of bounds during a play, he/she cannot be the first to touch the ball on that play.

4. If an offensive player is forced out of bounds by a defender, he/she is eligible player as soon as they come back in bounds.
5. At the official's discretion, if the defender causes the receiver to go out of bounds while the ball is in flight prior to the catch, then the receiver will be marked down where they went out of bounds. This includes a play in the end zone, in which the official will rule the play a touchdown.
6. The QB may NOT snap the ball to him/herself. If this happens, play will stop immediately and it will result in a 5-yd penalty and repeat the down. The snap may be an underhand toss or overhand throw. The person snapping the ball may not move their feet to make the snap.
7. First down markers will be identified by a white line as well as cones on the sidelines.
8. Teams can only get one first down per marker; for example, if they cross a first down line and then a penalty pushes them behind the same line they just crossed, they still have to cross the next line to achieve a first down.

### **Continuance of Play**

Play will continue until the:

1. Ball carrier loses a flag. If the ball carrier receives the ball and only has one flag or no flags, he or she is ruled down after he or she has been touched with one hand from a player on the opposing team.
3. Ball carrier leaves the field of play.
4. Ball carrier scores a TD or PAT.
5. Ball carrier's body, knee or elbow touches the ground (hands or feet not included).
6. Defense scores a Safety, TD or Intercepted 2 or 3 point PAT.
7. Ball touches the ground as a result of a fumble (there will be no fumbles, once the ball hits the ground it is dead), incomplete pass, or punt.
8. Referee blows the whistle (including an inadvertent whistle). On an inadvertent whistle after a reception or on a running play, the ball will be spotted where the ball carrier was when the whistle was blown. On an inadvertent whistle after the ball is snapped and before the QB releases the ball, the ball will be spotted at the original line of scrimmage and the down will be replayed.

### **LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

1. The location of the ball, where the ball carrier's flag is removed, will be spotted for the next play.
2. The offense must have at least (3) players at the line of scrimmage before the ball is hiked.
3. All offensive players must be set for at least (1) second before the ball is hiked.
4. Only (1) "man in motion" is allowed for each play. He/she may move forward or backward and side-to-side before the ball is hiked, but must be set for (1) second before the ball is hiked.

### **CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

The offense can turn the ball over to the other team in the following manners:

1. After the offensive team attempts a PAT, the opposing team gets the ball on their own 5 yard line.
2. If the offense fails to score or earn a 1st down within 4 plays, the defense will then take possession where the opposition ended.
3. If the offense punts the ball to the other team.
4. The defense intercepts a pass or lateral.
5. A fumble that touches the ground is a dead ball and is NOT a turnover.

### **PUNTING**

1. The offense can decide to punt on 4th down, but must declare it to the referee and the opposing team.
2. If the offense declares a punt, they must kick it.
3. There will be no fake punt plays allowed.
4. The offensive team does not have to hike the ball to the punter.
5. The punter must kick the ball to the opposing team.
6. The punter can stand anywhere behind the line of scrimmage, and may not cross it when kicking the ball.
7. All offensive players must stay behind the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted.
8. The offense cannot recover their own punt.
9. If the offense touches the ball before the receiving team, it is a dead ball and spotted where it was touched.
10. Once a punted ball touches the ground it is a dead ball.
11. The receiving team can advance a punted ball as long as it does not touch the ground.

12. If a punted ball is received in the end zone, the ball carrier can either take a knee or advance the ball. If he/she takes a knee, the team will receive the ball at their 5 yard line.

13. Teams do NOT have to use an Operative Female Player when punting on "forced gender".

14. If a punt goes beyond the end zone, it is considered a touchback and the offense will begin on their 5 yard line.

## **SCORING**

The ball must cross the goal plane and the ball carrier must have at least (1) foot in the end zone. For the sidelines and back of the end zone, one foot in bounds is a TD.

1. Touchdowns – 6 points

2. PAT (2 yards) – 1 point

3. PAT (5 yards) – 2 points

4. PAT (10 yards) – 3 points

5. For a one point PAT attempt, the ball is not live and if intercepted cannot be run back

- For a two and three point PAT attempt, the ball **IS LIVE** and if intercepted can be run back for a touchdown (6 points). If the ball carrier that intercepts the ball is deflagged prior to scoring a touchdown, the play is over and the offense starts a new series on their own 5 yard line.

6. Safeties – 2 points

## **Scoring a Safety:**

- When an offensive player is ruled "down" in their own end zone.
- If the offense fumbles the ball in their own end zone.
- If the offense hikes the ball out of their own end zone.
- If the ball carrier runs out of bounds from their own end zone.

## **Penalties:**

- All penalties will be called by the referee.
- All penalties will be discussed with the non-penalized team and they will have the option to either accept or decline the penalty.
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, unless otherwise noted.
- All disputed calls must be addressed by the team captain only. Violation of this rule can result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

**General:**

- Illegal Participation: 5 yards and replay of down (no more than 7 players on the field for either offense or defense, no more than 5 males on the field).
- Unsportsmanlike conduct: Up to 15 yards, and game ejection, loss or replay of down as play warrants (at the discretion of the refs).

**Defense:**

- Offside's: 5 yards and automatic first down.
- Interference: 10 yards and replay of down from spot of foul (if in end zone, start from 1 yard line).
- Illegal contact: 5 yards and replay of down (holding, blocking, etc.).
- Illegal flag pull: 10 yards and replay of down (before receiver has ball).
- Illegal rushing: 5 yards and replay of down (before ref has yelled go).

**Offense:**

- Offside's: 5 yards (3 players must be on line of scrimmage at the time the ball is snapped).
- Illegal motion: 5 yards (more than one person moving, false start).
- Illegal forward pass: 5 yards and loss of down (QB throwing ball once they are past line of scrimmage).
- Intentional Grounding: 5 yards and loss of down (must have an offensive receiver in the "general area of the pass, referee's discretion).
- Not using an operative player: 5 yards and loss of down (running 4 consecutive plays w/out a female).
- Flag guarding: 5 yards from spot of foul (from line of scrimmage, a player may not use his hands, arms or the ball to block a defender from removing his or her flag.).
- Delay of game: 5 yards and loss of down (the offensive team must put the ball into play 30 seconds after referee has spotted the ball).
- Offensive Pass Interference: 10 yards and loss of down.
  
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.

**Complaints:**

If anyone on your team has a complaint with a call, he/she must let the captain know. The captain is the only person on the team that is allowed to approach the referee with a complaint and may only be done in between games and not during a game. Additionally, there will be no negative talking to the opposing team.

A violation of either of these rules is punishable by game/match/league suspension. The referees call is FINAL. Please be respectful of the refs, **they make our league possible.**

**Playoffs**

All teams will go to playoffs. The seeds will be determined by record, head-to-head and then coin toss. **Points are not a factor** to discourage one team from running up the score on another team.

**Tournament Style**

Tournament play may alter from the above stated rules. Any changes to the above stated rules will be spelled out in a FAQ and will be posted on the website prior to play.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LEAGUE?  
PLEASE EMAIL: [INFO@CLEVELANDFLAGFOOTBALL.COM](mailto:INFO@CLEVELANDFLAGFOOTBALL.COM)