



Norfolk Family YMCA Flag Football Rules

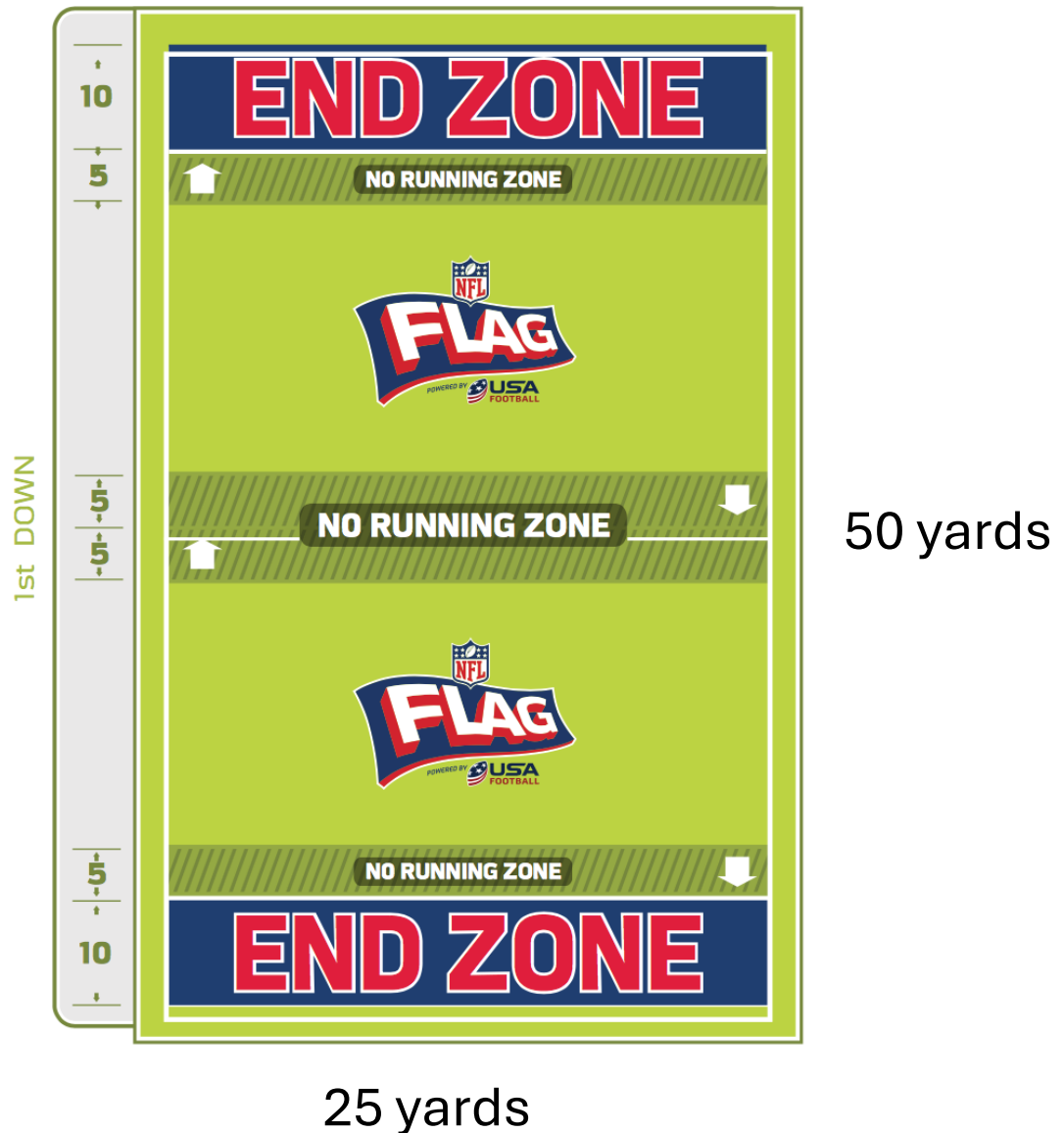
ATTIRE

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS**. Players must wear YMCA reversible jersey. Red is the away team; blue is the home team.
- Must tuck jersey in to prevent Flag Guarding.

PERSONNEL

FIELD SIZE

- The playing field will be 25 yards wide by 50 yards long with 10-yard endzones.
- No-running zones are located 5 yards from the opposing end zone and 5 yards before each 1st down mark. These are designed to avoid short-yardage power running situations.



PLAYING TIME GUIDELINES

- All players must play at minimum, half of a game.
- Each player must start one game throughout the season. The coach may alternate his starting line-up each week.
- Offense and defense will be given the opportunity to substitute at any point. Must notify official
- Each player must be given the opportunity to play every position throughout the season.
- Must rotate offensive backfield throughout the game. Players may only play in the backfield for the equivalent of one-half per game, where that player cannot play in the backfield for the entire game. Coach must rotate backfield, line, and wide receiver position.
- Allowances may be made for missed practices and/or behavioral issues.

COACHING CONDUCT

- Coaches will be expected to adhere to YMCA philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
- **FOR ALL GRADES:** One coach will be permitted to be on the field for each team.

TIMING/GAME LENGTH

- **First Scheduled Game** will be a full 45-minute practice
 - All remaining games will be a 20-minute practice followed by a game with four, 6-minute, running-clock quarters.
- Each time the ball is spotted, the offense will have 40-seconds to snap the ball. Team will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is called.
- Each team will get one 60-second timeout per half. Each game will have a 5-minute half time.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

BEGINNING OF GAME

- Away team (red) will start with the ball.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 10-yard line and has four (4) plays to get past the 1st down mark at the center field line (30yrd marker). If the offense fails to get a first down, or score, the ball changes possession and the defense takes over where the other team left off, unless the offense elected to punt on 4th down.
- If the offense fails to get a first down after their 3rd down play, on 4th down they can elect to punt. Possession of the ball then changes, and the opposition starts from their 5-yard line. If 4th down is attempted and failed, the opposing team receives possession wherever the ball is downed.
- Teams change sides after the first half, and the home team starts with the ball to start the second half.
- All snaps must be taken from under center. No shotgun. The quarterback may "snap" the ball off the center's back if QB-center exchange is difficult.

RUNNING

- **The quarterback cannot run with the ball.**
- Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage (LOS) are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- The player who takes the handoffs can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage (LOS).
- 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 or jumping).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Once a player crosses the line of scrimmage, they possess the ball until they are downed or score.

PASSING/RECEIVING

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are not allowed.
- Must attempt one pass per quarter, time permitting.
- The quarterback has a seven-second pass clock. If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, play is dead and loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

PITCHES/LATERALS

- NO pitches or laterals, behind or past the line of scrimmage, will be allowed.

DEADBALLS

- Play is "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.
 - Ball carrier's flag falls out. Note:
 - If the flag detaches on its own, the ball carrier must be touched for the play to be declared dead. Will be down where they are touched.
 - Interception on an extra point attempt.
 - Ball is dropped from a pass.
- Fumbles: The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. Offense keeps possession.

BLOCKING

- Screening is allowed. Screeners **MUST** put both hands behind their back, locked together in some manner for the duration of the screen. A penalty will be called if a screener's arms are separated from behind their back while screening **within 2 yards of the rusher**.
- Moving screens are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage when protecting the passer or potential passer. Moving screens are when a player is in motion to prevent the rusher from de-flagging a player.
- Stationary screens are allowed anywhere. Once the ball crosses the line of scrimmage, all downfield screens must be stationary. Offensive players may **NOT** run with the ball carrier.
- Screener may **NOT** step into the rusher. However, the screener is in a vulnerable position with hands behind their back so the main responsibility of avoiding contact rests with the rusher.
- Blockers may not dip their shoulders or head while blocking a defender.

DEFENSE

- **NO Tackling is allowed under ANY circumstances.**
- All defensive players must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
- The defense must wait until the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage before attempting to pull the ball carrier's flag.
- They can defend anything past the defensive line.
- If the defense intercepts a pass in regular play, the play is blown dead, and the defense takes possession at the spot of the interception.
- Defensive player must "play on the flag, rather than the ball carrier."

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- There will be **NO** rushing the quarterback in Micro league.
- Once the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage/a receiver has caught the ball past the LOS but in front of the defensive line, all defenders may make an attempt on the ball carrier's flag.

SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

- If the official witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game **IMMEDIATELY. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
- Trash Talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the official will give one warning. If it continues, the person responsible will be ejected from the game **IMMEDIATELY!**

PENALTIES

- **Defensive:**
 - Offside 5 yards
 - Roughing the player (automatic 1st down) 5 yards
 - Illegal Contact (holding, excessive contact, etc.) 5 yards
 - Illegal Flag Pull (before the receiver has ball) 5 yards
 - Rushing (starting to rush from inside 7-yard marker) 5 yards
 - Defensive Pass Interference 5 yards & automatic 1st down
- **Offensive:**
 - Illegal Motion (2+ people moving, false start, etc.) 5 yards
 - Illegal Forward Pass (pass received behind the LOS) 5 yards
 - Illegal Screen (moving screen downfield, contact, etc.) 5 yards from spot of foul
 - Offensive Pass Interference (pushing off defender) 5 yards & loss of down
 - Flag Guarding 5 yards from spot of foul
 - Delay of Game 5 yards (clock stops)
 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct 15 yards & possible ejection
- **Unnecessary Roughness** is any action where a player uses unnecessary force to down the ball carrier (i.e. tackling) or block a player (i.e. extending arms and shoving). 1st offense is a warning with no yardage assessment. 2nd offense is a 15-yard penalty and/or possible ejection.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.