

LEAGUE HANDBOOK

I. FIELD, UNIFORM, & EQUIPMENT

1. The fields will be 50 yards by 25 yards (7 yard endzones). There is one 1st down marker at midfield.
2. All players must wear matching-colored shirts and closed-toe shoes. Shirts MUST be tucked in.
3. No metal cleats.
4. Flags will be provided and must be worn around the waist with one flag aligned on each hip.
5. Each offense provides a game ball; must use an "Official" sized (NCAA, NFL) ball.

II. TEAMS

1. Team rosters will be a minimum of 5 and maximum of 10 players. Rosters will be finalized Sunday, April 14th at 11:59 PM
2. A minimum of 4 players are required to prevent a forfeit. (Pick-ups in emergency situations will be allowed according to opposing team's decision)
3. It is essential that we start games on time, allowing everyone to return home at an appropriate time. Plan to show up 10-15 minutes before your game time. Start time will be strict and delays will result in penalties.

III. TIME KEEPING

1. An official/staff member will be on site to keep track of time and determine the end of your game. A designated referee and line judge will be responsible for calling penalties during the game. At last resort or honest sportsmanship, captains may overturn calls.
 - a. **We ask that each team provide at least one volunteer to officiate or operate the clock when not playing.**
2. The game will consist of two 12-minute running halves. With two minutes to go in a half, the clock will only stop on an incomplete pass, out of bounds play, or timeout.
3. Each team is credited one 30-second timeout per half.
4. Halftime will be three minutes or skipped if needed or agreed upon by captains.

IV. QUARTERBACK PLAY

1. Immediately at the snap, an official will begin tracking a **5 second forward pass timer**. Quarterbacks will have five seconds from the snap to throw a forward pass (***clock is voided when rushed past LOS**)
2. If the ball has not been thrown forward in the allotted time by any eligible player, it is a dead ball. It will be treated as an incomplete pass.
 - a. Split QB (dixie-back) plays are allowed, but the five second timer will not reset at the change of possession of offensive players.
 - b. The forward pass timer is eliminated once a rusher crosses the LOS
3. Initial player that receives the snap is allowed to scramble **ONLY** if a rushing defender crosses the LOS.

V. GAME TIME

1. The Home team may choose from possession or field defense. They can choose to defer or receive the opening possession; or, they can choose which endzone they want to defend. The Away team chooses the remaining option. Privileges are swapped at the beginning of the second half.
2. Offense will always start at their own 5-yard line to begin the half and after a score.
3. Offense or Defense will ultimately be responsible for spotting the ball after each play according to the official's spot.
 - a. Holding the ball preventing a spot will not be allowed and will be an immediate penalty.
 - b. The official will start the play clock the moment the ball is placed on the blue bean bag or the center has the ball.

i. In other words, the teams will determine the pace of the game.

4. Tied games after regulation will continue in a similar structure to college football overtime. The Home team will receive the ball first at the opposing 10-yard line (2-pt conversion marker) and will have one play to score; the Away team will then be given a chance to score. This will go back and forth with alternating order until one team wins.

VI. PLAYING RULES

1. **Blocking is NOT allowed** anywhere on the field. All other players on receiving team must avoid affecting a defenders angle on a ball-carrier.
2. Fumbles are dead at point of ground contact.
3. If a player carrying the ball slips/falls and any body part other than their palm touches the ground, the play is dead and the defense does not have to remove a flag for the play to stop.
4. Players ejected for poor sportsmanship may be suspended for the remainder of the season and/or future leagues at the discretion of staff.
5. **Spirit of the Game – We stress sportsmanship and fair play. Competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of respect between players, adherence to the rules, and the basic joy of play.**

VII. SCORING

1. Touchdowns are counted as six points. Conversions will be either one (1) point from the 5-yard line or two from the 10-yard line.
2. “Breaking the plane” with the football is not enough for a TD. One foot must be **planted** in the endzone before flag is pulled.
3. A Safety will be counted as two points. Following a safety, the defense will also take possession at their 10-yard line.

VIII. OFFENSE

1. The offense starts on their own 5-yard line to start the half or after a touchdown.
2. Teams have four downs to reach the nearest conversion marker. If they fail to reach the line to gain, it is TOD and defense receives possession at midfield.
3. Punts must be declared before attempting a fourth down and are only allowed when on your half of the field. Punts will place the ball at the opponent’s 10-yard line.
4. Offensive players must be aligned behind the LOS (blue bag). The ball must be on the ground to snap and must be a traditional between-the-legs snap of the ball.
5. Play clock (15-seconds) may start when center has ball in ready posture. Do not run the game clock down.
6. The LOS will be set for the next play at the spot of the flag pull of **most forward foot**.
7. Pick plays and routes are illegal. This is not to be confused with route congestion and concepts.
8. Ball Carriers may not protect their flag. If the ball carrier blocks the defender’s hand from grabbing their flag, the play is dead where the block occurred, and a penalty is enforced.
9. Offense cannot run over defenders who have established position.
10. The offensive player cannot leave their feet to advance the ball (no hurdling or diving). The play is dead at the point where the player left their feet.
11. Receivers must have one foot inbounds to complete the catch with complete possession of the ball. The first point of contact after the catch must be in-bounds.
12. The ball carrier is “down” when their flag is pulled or when they step out of bounds. The ball will be spotted where the most forward foot is. One foot must be in the end zone for a TD.
 - a. Flagless ball carriers will be deemed down after one-hand touch.

IX. DEFENSE

1. There is only one rusher allowed; must be seven yards from the LOS (red bag). The Offense may not impede the rushers progress.
 - a. When nearing the endzone, defense may rush from goal-line. They do not have to move into endzone to gain the 7-yard depth. (ex. Offense at 4-yard line, Defense may rush from GL).
2. The defense has the option not to rush and have that player roam or double team.
3. All non-rushing defenders must start 1 yard off the line of scrimmage. **Press coverage is NOT allowed.**
4. After a catch, defensive players must go after the players flags, NOT the ball.
5. Defensive players may not pull a flag until the ball carrier has the ball.
6. If the defense sacks the offense in the endzone, two points are scored, and the defense will receive possession at their own 10-yard line.
7. Interceptions may be returned. If the defense intercepts the ball in the endzone and is “tackled” before they leave the endzone, the defense will start their possession on the 10-yard line.
 - a. Defenders must observe the “No Blocking Rule” at the change of possession during an interception. (trailing the interceptor is allowed for laterals)
8. Tackling, holding, or pushing a player out of bounds is not allowed to ensure safety of players.
 - a. **You are NOT allowed to push a offensive player out of bounds to prevent them from securing a foot inbound for a catch or yardage gain.**

X. SAFE PLAY

1. A defender may not step in front of the ball carrier or block a running lane if it has the potential to create an unsafe play. Likewise, an offensive player should not run with their head down, in an attempt to run through the defenders.
 - a. In other words, incidental contact is inevitable, but players should not be run over. Please use your best judgment.
2. At no time should any player hold onto the clothing of another player in an attempt to slow them down or impede their play.
3. Any rough or physical play may result in a player’s release from the team and league if deemed dangerous to the safety of the league and all involved.
4. It is recognized that incidental contact between players is inevitable; however, all players should go out of their way to avoid creating an unsafe play. This rule supersedes all others.
5. Please note that on-site staff members have full autonomy when supervising games. Games may be stopped entirely, players may be asked to leave the playing area or be removed from the game entirely under their discretion.

XI. PENALTIES

Defensive:

- Offside/Illegal Rush: defense may rush but must respect the 7-yard marker from the LOS; referee is not responsible for reminding defense of 7-yard rule
(+5 yards and replay down or offense may decline)
- Defensive Pass Interference: defender affects an offensive players path/attempt on a ball outside of an individual fair play on the ball, both players have the right to go for the catch. Any unnecessary push-offs will be called.
(+15 yards from LOS and 1st down or offense may decline)
- Delay of Gameplay: defender holds ball not allowing offense to spot ball and continue gameplay.
(+15 yards and +time at official's discretion)

Offensive:

- False Start: motion forward/toward the LOS before the snap; sudden movements after the offense is set
(-5 yards and replay the down)
- Illegal Forward Pass: quarterback's entire body must be beyond the LOS to be penalized
(-5 yards and loss of down; negates play)
- Offensive Pass Interference: offensive player affects a defender's path/attempt on a ball outside of an individual fair play on the ball, both players have the right to go for the catch. Any unnecessary push offs will be called, as well as any obvious pick plays
(-15 yards and replay down)
- Delay of Game: play clock expires before snap of ball
(-5 yards)
- Delay of Gameplay: offensive player holds ball not allowing defense to spot ball and continue gameplay.
(-15 yards and +time at official's discretion)
- Flag Guarding: any intentional or inadvertent act with ball-carriers arms/hands preventing defender from a fair attempt at pulling their flag
(-10 yards from spot of foul)

Other:

- Personal Foul/Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Rough Contact: any violent, excessive, and/or unnecessary contact or actions will not be tolerated
(+15 yards from spot of ball and 1st down)
 - Player may be disqualified after first offense depending on severity at officials' discretion, or upon 2nd penalty of the game)
- Illegal Contact/Blocking: offensive player not carrying the ball affects a defenders path on a ball-carrier, blocks them, or runs in front or on the side of ball-carrier to prevent a flag pull; inadvertent included.
(-10 yards from spot of foul)

XII. OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES:

- We ask that each team provides at least one individual a week to help cover officiating a game or two. The more eyes we have on games, the fairer and more controlled our competition can be.
- Dates will vary according to weather, but Monday nights are prioritized. We are willing to visit potential make-up games on other days of the week.
- Team Entry Fee: (\$100 per team) must be turned in by May 6th