

City of McKinney Parks and Recreation

Flag Football Rules

THE GAME: BASICS

- * A coin toss determines first possession.
- * The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross the midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) 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 fail 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.
- * Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes.

PLAYERS/GAME SCHEDULES

- * Teams must field a minimum of five (5) players at all times.
- * Teams consist of 8-10 players (5 on the field).
- * All players must play 1/2 the game.

TIMING/OVERTIME

- * Games are played to 40 minutes, two (2) twenty minute halves w/ a 5-minute half time.
- * If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the score is recorded in the standings as a tie.
- * 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 two 45-second time outs and one 30-second time out per half.
- * Officials can stop the clock on their own discretion.

SCORING

- * Touchdown: 6 points
- * Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard line) 2 points (played from the 10)
- * Safety: 2 points (played from the 12-yard line)

RUNNING

- * The quarterback cannot run the ball.
- * Hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple hand-offs.
- * one (1) lateral or pitch will be permitted per play.
- * "No running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- * The player who takes a hand-off 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). Flag guarding will be called.
- * The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

RECEIVING

- * 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.
- * Player must have at least one foot inbound when making a catch.

PASSING

- * All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- * Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- * QB has a 7-second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.
- * Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

DEAD BALLS

- * Ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to the side, to start play.
- * Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- * Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier's steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - At the point of an interception (interception returns are not allowed).
 - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier's flag fall out.

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

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

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 not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.

SPORTSMANSHIP / ROUGHING

If the fields 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. **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 will be ejected from the game.

PENALTIES

The referee will call all penalties.

Defense: Offsides-5 yards . Interference/ illegal flag pull-10 yards and automatic 1st down; illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.)-10 yards. illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)-10 yard. Mouthpiece – 5 yards.

Offense: illegal motion (more than 1 person moving, false start, etc.)-5 yards; illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage)-5 yards; offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off / away defender)-10 yards; flag guarding-10 yards (from infraction) and loss of down; delay of game-clock stops, 10 yards, and loss of down. Mouthpiece – 5 yards.

* Referees determine incidental contact, which may result from normal run of play. Incidental screening may be permitted as a result of normal running. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

* Only the team coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretation. Players / coaches cannot question judgment calls.

Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

ATTIRE

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections can and will be made. All players **must** wear a protective mouthpiece or it will result in a five- (5) yard penalty; there are no exceptions.