



SAMSON'S FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Official Rules

FLAG FOOTBALL IS NON-CONTACT: BLOCKING AND TACKLING ARE NOT PERMITTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES

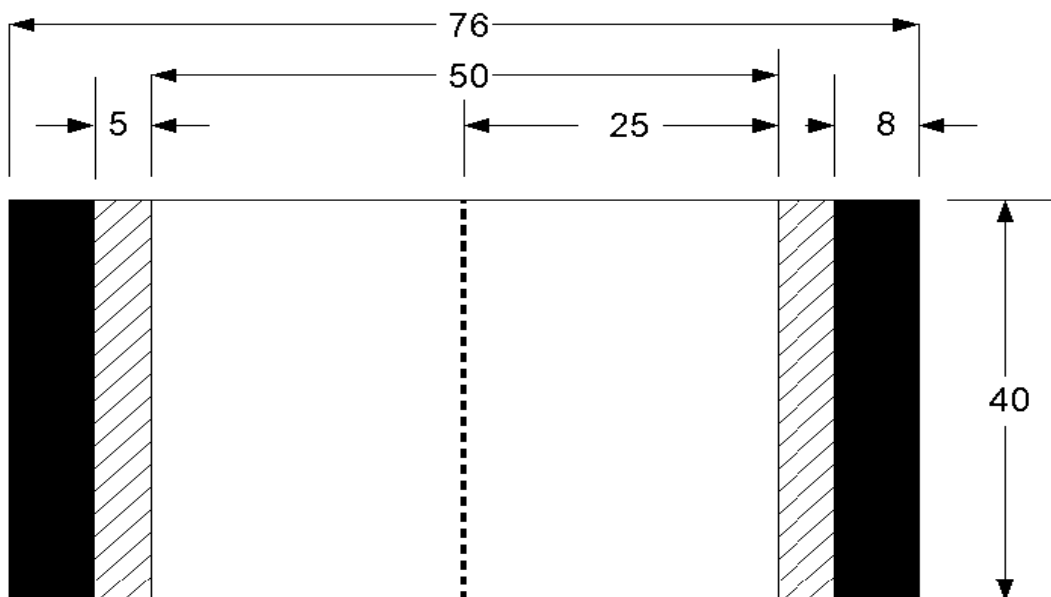
Pre-game preparations:

Player Attire:

- Cleats are allowed, but must be rubber. Metal spikes of any kind are not permitted
- Players must wear shorts or pants of a solid color, i.e. entirely black
- Shorts or pants cannot be the same color as the players flags
- Before the beginning of every play, players flags must be at the sides and be properly attached by Velcro strips
- All player shirts must be tucked in while on the field of play

Field Dimensions:

- Length: 76 yards
- Width: 40 yards
- End Zones: 8 yards deep
- No running zones: Marked 5 yards from each end-zone



Black: End zone
Hatches: No Run Zone
All measurements in yards

Possession

- A coin toss determines first possession at the 5-yard line. Loser of the coin toss has choice of end zone to defend. The team that loses the coin toss gets possession at the beginning of the second half, starting at its own 5-yard line.
- **There are no kickoffs or punts**
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line at the beginning of each series and has 4 plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or score a touchdown(once passed midfield) it will produce a turnover on downs, resulting in a change of possession.
- An automatic first down penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding 4 plays to make either a first down or to score.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- If an offensive penalty occurs passed midfield, which causes the ball to be placed behind the midfield marker, the offensive team must still make a touchdown within 4 plays.
- Teams change sides at halftime
- **One pass must be made for every- 4 plays of possession**

Scoring

- Touchdown – 6 points
- Extra point(s) – 1 point (played from 5-yard line - **Must be a PASSING PLAY** - a play-action fake is considered a running play and will result in a dead ball and a loss of down.
- 2 points – (played from the 12 yard line/7 yard rushing marker)
- Safety – 2 points
- A win constitutes 2 points, a tie 1 point, a loss 0 points

Note: An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra-point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus gaining possession for the next series at its own five yard line.

Number of Players

- Each team plays five players per side.
- Teams may play with a minimum of four players
- If less than 4 players are available, then game will be cancelled and the team without enough available players will forfeit.

Timing and Overtime

- Game length is 25 minutes running time per half (2 halves – 25 minutes each)
- If the score remains tied at the end of regulation, a tie will be rewarded with each team receiving one point
- **Only in the playoffs** – If the score is tied at the end of regulation time, teams move directly into overtime. A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. The team that wins the coin toss starts with the ball on its own five yard line. Play continues as in regulation until one team scores. There will be no timeouts granted during the overtime period. Alternatively, the game can be decided by alternating convert attempts from the 5 yard line
- Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball

- Each team has 2 – 60 second time outs per half. The clock stops during a time out. Timeouts cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- Officials may stop the clock at their discretion, i.e. during injuries
- Teams will be warned when there are two minutes left to play in both halves. The official will make two whistle blows to signal two minutes.
- The game cannot end on a defensive penalty
- There will be a halftime period of 5 minutes between the first and second half

Sportsmanship/Roughing

- If the official witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY IS NOT TOLERATED
- Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs a first warning will be given. If a second offense occurs, the player or coach will be ejected.
- Once a flag is pulled, the defensive player should drop the flag at their feet so the official can spot the location of the flag pull.

In play Rules:

Running

- At the start of each play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the snapper
- The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap. The center cannot take a direct handoff back from the quarterback (no center sneak play)
- The quarterback is the player who receives the ball directly from the snap
- The quarterback cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage
- An offence may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage.
- Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are running plays. Downfield tosses are not permitted. Once a player has possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, any loss of possession will be blown dead by the official
- “No running zones” are located 5 yards from each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent’s end zone, the offense cannot use a running play to cross the line of scrimmage. **A play-action fake is considered a hand-off within the 5-yard no run zones**
- If a run play occurs within the 5-yard no run zone, the play will be blown dead and a loss of down will occur
- Any player who takes a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
- Spinning is allowed, but offensive players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player. **(No hurdling)** If a player leaves their feet, the play will be blown dead by the official and the ball will be placed from the spot the player left his feet or will result in a turnover on downs (if on 3rd down)
- No diving is allowed by an offensive player when he has the ball. If a player dives from his feet, the play will be blown dead by the official and the ball will be placed from the spot the player left his feet or will result in a turnover on downs (if on 3rd down)
- The ball is spotted where the ball carriers feet are when the flag is pulled, not at the spot of the ball
- It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position will be rewarded to the defense by the officials

- There are **no** fumbles in flag football. Any fumble will be considered a dead ball and will result in a loss of down or a turnover on downs. I.e. a bad snap
- Any fumble by the offensive team in their own end-zone will result in a safety

Passing

- The quarterback has seven seconds to throw the ball. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play will be blown dead, a loss of down will occur and the ball will be spotted at the previous line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake or fake handoff, the seven second rule is no longer in effect. Referees will determine what constitutes a fake.
- Any player can receive a toss or handoff and be allowed to throw the ball downfield.
- Shovel passes are allowed.
- Once a player catches the ball past the line of scrimmage, they are no longer allowed to lateral the ball

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage)
- Players may jump to catch the ball, but may not jump after gaining possession of the ball

Dead Balls

Play is ruled “dead” when:

1. Official blows the whistle
2. Ball carrier’s flag is pulled or becomes illegal.
Note - Illegal meaning the flag is in a position unable for the defense to pull, i.e. falls off; accidentally tucks into shorts
3. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
4. Touchdown or safety is scored
5. When any part of the ball carrier’s body, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground
6. When the ball is fumbled

Note – There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were when the fumble was made. If a fumble occurs, it will result in a loss of down or a turnover on downs. If a fumble occurs in the end zone it will result in a safety

- If the ball carrier’s flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off
- Players are ineligible to catch a pass if their flag has fallen off
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball

Defensive Rushing and interceptions

- Only players starting from a minimum of 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage can rush the passer
- A marker designates the seven yards from the line of scrimmage
- Any number of players may rush the quarterback
- A rusher lined up **within** two yards (side to side) of the 7 yard marker is entitled to a free rush at the quarterback – the rusher may not be interfered. If interfered, it will result in an offensive rusher interference penalty

- A rusher lined up **outside** the two yards (side to side) of the 7 yard marker is **not** entitled to a free rush to the quarterback and may be interfered (For example - a running back or receiver in motion or in a pattern who runs into the rusher)
- **All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake or fake handoff**
- A rusher **may not** hit the quarterback's arm or any other part of their body while the quarterback is throwing
- The defense can return interceptions
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball
- If an interception occurs in an end-zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its own 5-yard line. Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leaves the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead. However, should the ball carrier intercept in the end zone, subsequently leaving the end zone, then return to the end zone and be de-flagged, or the ball be ruled dead, the result will be a safety for the other team

Penalties

- All penalties are 5 yards (except pass interference - 15 yards). The down will be repeated and will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, unless otherwise noted
- All penalties may be declined - the official should check with the coach or captain after each penalty to determine if they accept or decline the penalty
- Officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage except for flag guarding
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines the penalty

Defensive Penalties

5 yards and an automatic first down for the offense

- Offside – occurs when a player is passed the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball
- Illegal contact – holding, blocking
- Roughing - it is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position will be rewarded to the defense by the officials
- Illegal Flag Pull – occurs when a defensive player pulls an offensive player's flag with intention to cause a dead ball
- Illegal Rush - occurs when a rusher is passed the minimum 7 yard rushing length before the ball is snapped when attempting to rush the quarterback

Note – The rusher must pass the line of scrimmage to be considered an illegal rush

- Quarterback release interference – Hitting the quarterback's arm when rushing the passer

5 yards and down repeated

- Disconcerting signals – Signals to distract opponents or simulate offensive signals prior to the snap
- Interference of opponent with ball at the snap
- Substitution fouls – i.e. 6 players on the field, players entering the field during the snap of the ball

15 yards and automatic first down

- Pass interference

Offensive Penalties

5 yards and loss of down

- No cadence by quarterback
- Illegal forward pass – ball thrown after passing the line of scrimmage
- Offensive pass interference
- Roughing - it is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive position will be rewarded to the defense by the officials
- Illegal pick play, receiver push offs

Note – Offenses may not run plays where players are placed into a stalemated position to act as stand-still blockers downfield. If a pick play or wall is intentionally run it will result in a 5 yard penalty and a loss of down

5 yards, down repeated

- Substitution fouls – i.e. six players on the field, players enters field during the snap of the ball
- Delay of game – inability to snap the ball before the 30 second play clock expires
- False Start
- Illegal Snap – snap must occur between the legs of the snapper to the quarterback
- Offensive holding
- Player out of bounds – if a player goes out of bounds, without interference, the player may not return to the field or catch the ball
- Rusher interference – It is illegal for a receiver, running back or center to run a pattern that interferes with a rusher who is at a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage and who is 2 yards (side to side) of the 7 yard rushing marker

5 yards from the point of foul and loss of down

- Flag guarding – using hands, arms or elbows to **intentionally** block the defender from pulling the flag.

Note – Stiff arming a defender is a form of flag guarding and may also result in a roughing penalty.