

**2017**  
**West Central Iowa Youth Football League**  
**FLAG FOOTBALL RULES**

(Note: The game will play by NFHS rules beside the rule changes noted below.)

**FIELD DEMENSIONS**

1. 80 x 35 yards
2. Three 20 yard sections with a midfield line and 10 yard end zones.

**COACHES**

1. One Coach can be on the playing field during the game. The defense coach has to behind the back judge and the offense coach has to behind the head official at the snap of the ball.

**OFFICIALS**

1. Head official needs to be a high school or Jr. High official or coach.
2. Official need to wear official shirts and have yellow flags.
3. All officials, coaches, and captions need to meet before each game to review and discuss the rules.
4. Head official needs to have a copy of the flag penalty card.

**PLAYERS**

1. Each team will have 8 players on the field.
2. 8 separate players for offense and 8 separate players for defense. If short on players, coaches need to sub all players equal. We don't want to have kids playing the whole game on both sides of the ball.

You may change them from offense to defense at the start of the second half. We want everyone to have playing time.

3. Offense must have 5 players within one yard of the line of scrimmage.
4. Offense must have 3 linemen who must be 1yd apart from the center. That means you need to have the center and a guard on each side of the center. These players are not eligible. The other 5 players are all eligible.
5. Defense must have 3 players one yard off the line of scrimmage and lined head up of the offense linemen.
6. NO BLITZING – Only the defense linemen can rush the quarterback when in the tackle box. Tackle Box 3yds. on each side of the ball. (5yd penalty for blitzing)
7. Defensive linemen can't try to knock the ball away from the quarterbacks when are attempting a pass.
8. All offense and defense linemen start out of a two point stands.

## EQUIPMENT

1. A junior size football will be used.
2. Velcro-type flags will be used by all offensive and defensive players.
3. Two flags should be worn and are to be 16" by 2". There should be a flag on each hip. Flags should be a different color from the uniform. Shirt should be tucked in to avoid any flag pulling problems.
4. Have refs check flags before game to make sure their belt is tight.
5. Cleats are allowed as long as they are not metal or metal tip

## GAME LENGTH

1. The game consists of 4 - 10 continuously minute quarters.
2. The clock will run continuously except:
  - A. After touchdowns and during extra points.
  - B. During time-outs
3. Teams will have an 8 minute halftime.
4. Play Clock – Offense must run a play within 30 seconds of the ball being spotted.

## DEAD BALL

1. The ball is considered “dead” during a time-out, after an incomplete pass, when a ball carrier goes out of bounds, fumble, or after a defensive penalty.

## FIRST DOWNS

1. A first down will be awarded if any part of the ball touches or goes over the next 20 yard section line.

## TIME OUTS

1. Each team has two time-outs the 1st half and three time-outs the 2<sup>nd</sup> half that last for one minute each.

## SCORING

1. Touchdown is 6 points.
2. Extra point is worth 1 point from the 3yard line.
3. Safety is worth 2 points.
4. A touchdown or extra point is scored when the ball crosses the goal line. Players or flags do not need to cross. (No diving over players)

## KICK-OFF

1. The ball will be placed at the **20yd** line for all kick-off.
2. The ball will be placed at the **20yd** line for all safeties.

### PUNTS

1. Offense must declare their choice of either going for the first down or punting.
2. The ball will be advanced 20 yards for every punt.
3. No Punt can be placed inside the 10 yard line.

### CENTER SNAP

1. Ball must be snapped between the center's legs. (Penalty 5 yards)

### SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Substitutions may be made on all dead ball situations or between plays.
2. Offense does not have wait for defense to substitute.

### SLEEPER or TRICK PLAYS

1. No sleeper plays are allowed. All players must be in the huddle.

### RUNNER DOWN

1. The ball carrier is considered down if one knee touches the ground, if flag belt is pulled, or if he goes out of bounds.

### PLAYER SET AND MOTION

1. All offensive players, except a man in motion, must be set for one second before the center snap.
2. Only one player may be in motion at one time. His motion must be parallel or backwards to the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.

### BLOCKING

1. Players may not leave their feet while blocking. (Penalty #3)
2. Offense player's hands can be open but not grabbing the defensive. (Penalty#8)
3. Defensive player may use hands to grab and move offensive players.
4. No blocking above the neckline. (Penalty #3)

### USE OF HANDS

1. No stiff arming is allowed. (Penalty #11)
2. No flag guarding is allowed. (Penalty #12)
3. No grabbing of the ball carrier's arm or body is allowed. (Penalty #8)

### HURDLING

1. You cannot jump or hurdle an opposing player. You may jump to avoid having your flag pulled as long as you are not hurdling another player. (Penalty #10)

### FUMBLES

1. The ball is dead where it hits the ground.

### FORWARD PASS

1. Once the passer's arm has started forward, he cannot be downed unless he fails to release the ball.
2. Defenders cannot make contact with the passer's arm. (Penalty #6)
3. A forward pass is any pass thrown up field from a position behind the line of scrimmage. The pass can be overhand, underhand, etc.
4. Only one forward pass per play. (Penalty #17)

### LATERALS

1. A lateral is any movement of the ball backward from or parallel to the point where the ball is.
2. Any number of laterals is legal in a play.

### PASS INTERFERENCE

1. It is illegal to interfere with anyone's right, offense or defense, to catch the ball. (Penalty #13 & #14)

### LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

1. Only the center's head, arms, and hands can be in the neutral zone. No other part of the center's body can be over the farthest edge of the ball. (Penalty #1)
2. No other player may enter the neutral zone. (Penalty #1)
3. Players may not taunt one another to draw offside. (Penalty #1)
4. No one in a 3 point stands. Only two point stands - Hands in ready position

### CLIPPING

1. Any initial contact to the back, anywhere on the field, is a clip. (Penalty #15)
2. Coach's Point – Defenders should not deliberately turn their backs on a blocker to get the penalty.

### MISSING FLAG BELT

1. The ball is dead where a player who has inadvertently lost a flag belt.
2. If flag belt is missing, the player is considered an ineligible receiver and the ball goes back to the line of scrimmage and there is a loss of down.

### FLAG PULLING

1. The flag puller should raise the flag as soon as possible to aid the referee in spotting the ball. It is illegal to pull the flag belt from a player who isn't carrying the ball. (Penalty #4)

### ELIGIBLE/INELIBIBLE RECEIVERS

1. The three linemen are ineligible. That is the center and the guards on each side of the center.
2. The other five offensive players are eligible.

### LEGAL PASS RECEPTION

1. The receiver must gain possession of the ball and have both feet in bounds.

### OVERTIME

1. If there is a tie after regulation time, each team will receive four plays from the **10 yard** line to score. If they score they will get a chance for the extra-point.
2. **Max 2 overtime.**
3. A coin flip will decide who goes first and which end zone to use. Both teams use the same end zone.

### INADVERTENT WHISTLE

1. When an inadvertent whistle blows a play dead, the offense may choose to take the ball where it was blown dead or replay the down. If there is an accepted penalty, the inadvertent whistle is ignored.

### FIELD DIAGRAM

