

5TMSL 2025 FLAG FOOTBALL RULEBOOK



REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

- All players must be wearing a team jersey in order to play.
 - If a player does not have their jersey, the league may provide an extra. If no extra is available, the player cannot play.
 - Tzitzis must be tucked in, or the play will be ruled as flag guarding.
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TEAM REQUIREMENTS & FORFEIT POLICY

- Each team must have at least five players ready to play no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled game time.
 - Failure to meet this minimum will result in an automatic forfeit.
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GAME STRUCTURE

- Games consist of two 20-minute halves.
 - The clock stops for injuries, halftime, timeouts, and dead balls inside the final minute of the first half and final two minutes of the second half.
 - Each team gets one timeout in the first half and two in the second half.
 - No kickoffs
 - Games start with a coin toss. The receiving team begins at its own 20-yard line.
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OFFENSE RULES

- The coach, or an adult designated by the coach will serve as the quarterback.
- Coach QBs may not block or pull flags on interception returns. Blocking results in a 10-yard penalty from the spot of the block, and the interception will be ruled a pick-six.
- The offense plays with six eligible receivers and two ineligible offensive linemen, who must line up on the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has 8 seconds to throw the ball. The play is automatically dead at 15 seconds.
- No completions are allowed behind the line of scrimmage.

- The offense has four downs to reach midfield for a first down. Once past midfield, they have four downs to score.
 - If the offense fails to reach midfield in three downs, they may:
 - Punt (ball placed at opponent's 20-yard line), or
 - Go for it on 4th down (if unsuccessful, the opposing team takes over at the spot).
 - Backward passes are not allowed.
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DEFENSE RULES

- One defensive player must line up on the line of scrimmage. A second defender may either line up on the line or play as a safety.
 - The defense may blitz once per set of downs.
 - Interceptions are returnable for 6 points during regular play and 2 points on extra point attempts.
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SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
 - Extra Point: 1 point (automatic)
 - 2-Point Conversion: 2 points (from the 20-yard line)
 - Safety: 2 points
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DEAD BALL SITUATIONS

The play is dead when:

- The ball touches the ground.
- The ball carrier's flag is pulled or steps out of bounds.
- Any part of the ball carrier's body (except hands or feet) touches the ground.
- A pass is incomplete.
- A receiver with only one flag is touched (play is dead when a defender is within arm's reach).
- A receiver with no flags catches the ball (play is dead where caught).
- Fumbles are dead at the spot, and possession remains with the fumbling team.
- A dropped or mishandled snap remains live (defense does not get a free blitz).

PENALTIES

Offensive Penalties (Loss of Down & Yardage):

- Illegal Forward Pass: QB throws past the line of scrimmage — loss of down, ball remains at the original spot.
- Flag Guarding: 5-yard penalty, play blown dead.
- Jumping: Ball is dead at the spot of the jump (no penalty).
- Spinning is legal.

Offensive Pass Interference (10-yard penalty from line of scrimmage):

- Illegal Pick Plays
- Blocking Downfield
- Illegal Screen

Defensive Penalties:

- Defensive Holding: 5 yards, replay the down (unless it results in a first down).
- Pass Interference: Contact with a receiver before the ball arrives (spot foul; replay down unless spot is past the first down marker).
- Illegal Blitz: Defender rushes illegally — 5 yards, replay the down.

CLOCK RULES

- Running clock, except for:
 - Final minute of the first half
 - Final two minutes of the second half
- Clock stops during that time for:
 - Incomplete passes
 - Ball carrier running forward out of bounds
- The clock does **not** stop if:
 - Player is down in bounds
 - Player runs backward out of bounds

- Play Clock: 15 seconds from when the defense is set. Defense has 10 seconds to set up but may signal readiness earlier.
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MISCELLANEOUS RULES

- One foot in bounds is required for a legal catch.
 - Spinning is allowed.
 - Jumping and stiff-arming are not allowed — play is dead at the spot.
 - Spot of the Ball: The ball is marked where the hips are when the flag is pulled.
 - Offsides: Play is blown dead.
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PLAYING TIME RULES

- No player may sit out for a third drive until every other player on the team has sat out at least one drive.
 - No player may sit out more than two drives more than any other player on their team by the end of the game.
 - If an issue arises, the referee and coach will work together to correct it for the future.
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OVERTIME RULES

- Winner of the coin toss decides if they want the ball.
 - The first team starts at the opponent's 30-yard line. If they score a touchdown, they may attempt either a 1-point or 2-point conversion.
 - The second team then has the same opportunity, starting at the opponent's 30-yard line, with the same choice of a 1-point or 2-point conversion after a touchdown.
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FINAL NOTE

It would be impossible to cover every potential situation in this rulebook. If you have a question about a specific rule or scenario, please contact the league for clarification.