



# 2026 REGULAR SEASON RULE BOOK





# TABLE OF CONTENTS



I.	Rules.....	3
II.	Terminology .....	4
III.	Eligibility.....	5
IV.	Equipment .....	5
V.	Field.....	6
VI.	Rosters .....	6
VII.	Timing and Overtime .....	7
VIII.	Scoring .....	8
IX.	Coaches .....	8
X.	Live Ball/Dead Ball.....	9
XI.	Running .....	10
XII.	Passing .....	11
XIII.	Receiving .....	11
XIV.	Rushing the Passer.....	12
XV.	Flag Pulling .....	13
XVI.	Formations .....	14
XVII.	Unsportsmanlike Conduct.....	14
XVIII.	Penalties .....	15

# NFL FLAG RULES

## I. Game

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 10-yard line (Crossroads) and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. At Playa Vista Sports Park, the ball starts at its 5-yard line
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield/score touchdown, on 3 downs, and elect to "punt" on 4<sup>th</sup> down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 10-yard line. If the offensive team goes for it on 4<sup>th</sup> down and does not cross field/score touchdown, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.  
\*This applies to Major and Pro divisions only.
5. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.



## II. Terminology

<b>Boundary Lines</b>	The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines and back of the end zone lines.
<b>Line of Scrimmage</b>	(LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
<b>Line-to-Gain</b>	The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
<b>Rush Line</b>	An imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
<b>Offense</b>	The team with possession of the ball.
<b>Defense</b>	The team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball.
<b>Passer</b>	The offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
<b>Rusher</b>	The defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
<b>Downs (1-2-3-4)</b>	The offensive team has four attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. It must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
<b>Live Ball</b>	Refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties. Live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
<b>Dead Ball</b>	Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
<b>Whistle</b>	Sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, halftime or the end of the game.
<b>Inadvertent Whistle</b>	Official’s whistle that is performed in error.
<b>Charging</b>	An illegal movement of the ball-carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head or initiating contact with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.
<b>Flag Guarding</b>	An illegal act by the ball-carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball-carrier’s flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head or by blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand or arm.
<b>Shovel Pass</b>	A legal pitch attempted beyond the line of scrimmage.
<b>Lateral</b>	A backward or sideways toss of the ball by the ball-carrier. If ball is past line of scrimmage, only 1 lateral is allowed.
<b>Unsportsmanlike Conduct</b>	A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language.

### III. Eligibility

1. All players' legal guardians must agree to the online waiver form.

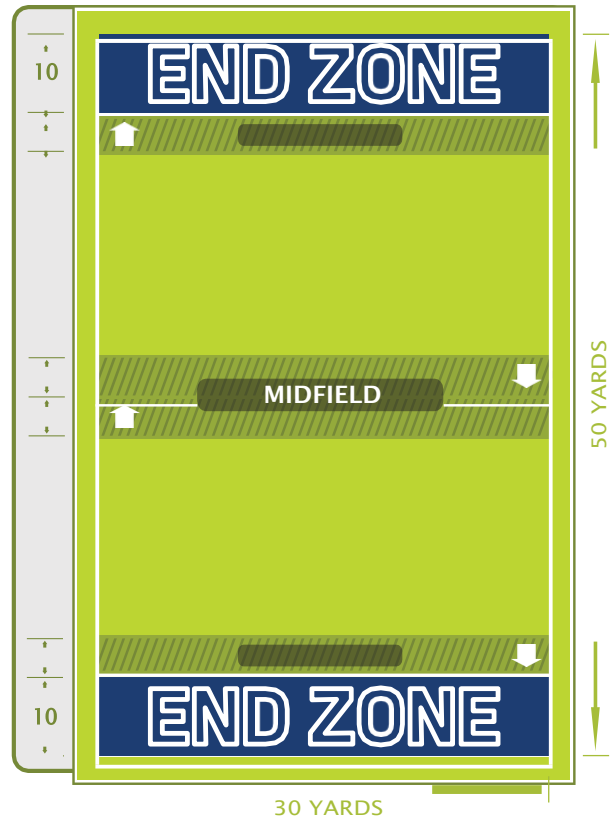
### IV. Equipment

1. The league provides each player with an official flag belt and NFL FLAG team jersey. Teams will use footballs provided by their league.
2. Players must wear shoes. Cleats are encouraged, however, cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.
3. Mouthguard is required. Players may tape their forearms, hands, and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed. Soft shelled helmets are allowed.
4. Players must remove all watches, earrings, and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
5. Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
6. Players must wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets. Shorts or pants with belt loops or pockets must be taped. Games will not be delayed for a player to tape up pockets.
  - a. Flag belts cannot be the same color as shorts or pants.



## V. Field

1. The field dimensions (Playa Vista Sports Park) are 50 yards by 30 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. At Crossroads, the field dimensions are 60 yards by 25 yards.
2. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.



## VI. Rosters

1. Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
2. Teams must consist of at least five players with a maximum of 12 players.
3. The game is played 6 vs 6. Teams must start games with a minimum of five players. If/when a team has only 5 players, the opponent will have to play 5 players, unless they have 12 players on their sideline.

After the completion of Week 5 in the regular season, all team rosters are final.



## VII. Timing and Overtime

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20-minute halves.
2. The clock stops only for timeouts, except for the last 1 minute of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. During the last 1 minute of regulation, the clock will stop on when the ball is run out of bounds, at the end of the down which a foul occurs, and when a forward pass is incomplete. If a team calls a timeout when it does not have one left, it will result in a penalty for a delay of game.
3. Halftime is five minutes.
4. Play clock - 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.
5. Each team has two 60-second timeouts per half.
6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
7. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
8. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game should be determined a tie (during the regular season)
9. In playoff situations, an overtime (OT) period will be used to determine a winner. OT format is as follows.
  - a. Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession. The only exception is if the first offensive team throws an interception return for touchdown. In this case, the game ends with the intercepting team winning.
  - b. First possession choice goes to the winner of coin toss. Loser of coin toss determines which end zone.
  - c. Each team gets one possession.
  - d. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
  - e. There are no timeouts.
  - f. Each team will have a chance to go for 1 point (3-yard line) or 2 points (5-yard line)
    - i. First OT Period
      1. Offense can go for 1- or 2-point PAT
    - ii. Second OT Period
      1. First possession goes to loser of regulation coin toss
      2. Offense must go for 2-point PAT
  - g. The final points earned by the winning team in the final overtime will be added onto the winning team's total score. The losing team will not receive any additional points.

## VIII. Scoring

1. **Touchdown:** 6 points
2. **PAT** (point after touchdown) **1 point** (3-yard line) or **2 points** (5-yard line)  
**Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2-point PAT can be run or pass.**
3. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion (from the 3-yard line) or a 2-point conversion (from the 5-yard line). Interceptions are returnable. On extra point conversions, interception for touchdown is 2 points to the defense.
4. **Safety:** 2 points
  - a. A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.
5. **Forfeits are scored 16-0 for the winning team.**

## IX. Coaches

1. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines, and code of conduct.
2. Coaches allowed on field during play
  - a. **PW – 2 coaches**
  - b. JR – 1 coach
  - c. MJR – No coach\*
  - d. PRO – No coach\*

\*MJR/PRO coaches are allowed on the field to call a play in the huddle, however MJR/PRO coaches must move to the sidelines before the snap of the ball.



## X. Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
  - a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play and touches before the other foot lands out of bounds.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
    - i. If the ball hits the ground because of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
  - b. The ball-carrier’s flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
  - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
  - e. The ball-carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
  - f. The ball-carrier’s flag falls off.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of no flags. The ball will be spotted where it is caught.
  - h. Inadvertent whistle.



NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball was when the flag is pulled.

8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
  - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

## XI. Running

1. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
3. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player. **The ball cannot be handed off on or in front of the line of scrimmage. The player and the ball must be completely behind the line of scrimmage. Handing the ball off on the line will result in a penalty.**
  - a. **Center sneak plays are not allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the Center on the first handoff of the play.**
5. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
6. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
8. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
9. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
10. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.
11. No running with the ball-carrier.
12. Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

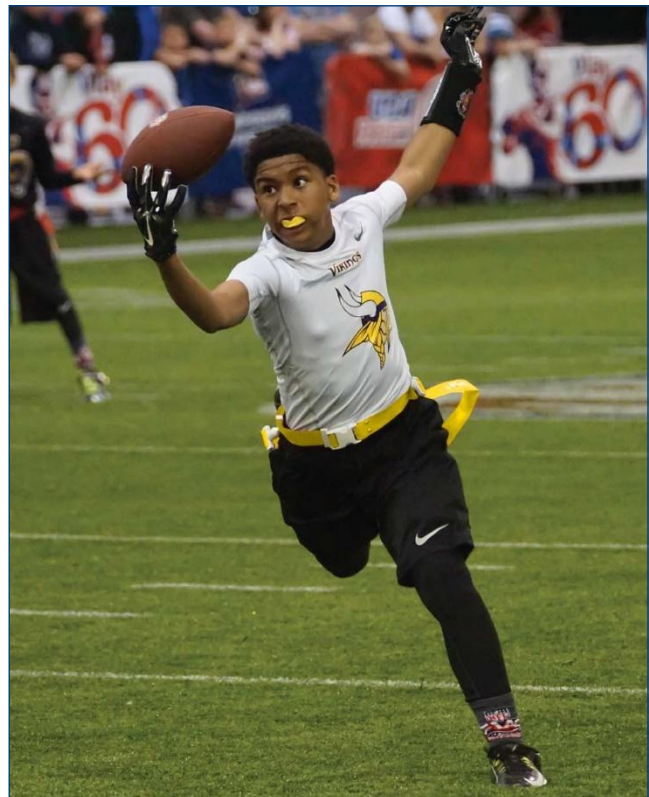


## XII. Passing

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed.
3. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball.

## XIII. Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. 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 10-yard line.
6. Interceptions are returnable. On extra point conversions, interception for touchdown is 2 points to the defense.



## XIV. Rushing the Passer

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
  - a. A legal rush is:
    - i. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
    - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
    - iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7 yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
    - iv. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before he/she crosses the line of scrimmage, he/she may legally rush the quarterback.
  - a. A penalty may be called if:
    - i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5 yards LOSS and replay the down).
    - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5 yards LOSS and replay the down).
    - iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5 yards LOSS and replay the down).
  - b. Special circumstances:
    - i. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the passer in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty. The player passing the ball does not need to be the quarterback for this penalty to be enforced.
5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
6. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is spotted where the ball was when the flag is pulled.
  - i. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

## XV. Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.
7. If one of the flags "rips-off" while the belt is still on, the player is down immediately, and the player must replace the flag belt with a new flag belt.



## XVI. Formations

1. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to five players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
  - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
  - b. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
2. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
3. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.
  - a. There is an exception in the Pee Wee Division where centers are allowed to snap the ball from his/her side while on a knee.

## XVII. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
  - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
  - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
  - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
  - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
  - b. Stay on the sidelines.
  - c. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.

# XVIII. Penalties

## i. General

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

## ii. Defensive Penalties

Defensive Pass Interference	SPOT FOUL, automatic first down
Holding	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & replay the down
Stripping	SPOT FOUL +10 yards & replay the down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	+ 10 yards & automatic first down
Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	+ 10 yards & automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Illegal Rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Illegal Flag Pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Roughing the Passer	+10 yards from line of scrimmage & automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yards from line of scrimmage & automatic first down
Tackling	+5 yards from the spot of the foul and a warning to the defensive player. If a second offense occurs by the same player, that player will need to leave the game for 5 minutes. A 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense by the same player will result in an ejection.

### iii. Offensive Penalties

Screening, Blocking or Running Ahead of the Ball Carrier	SPOT FOUL, -5 yards & loss of down
Charging	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & loss of down
Flag Guarding	SPOT FOUL, -5 yards & loss of down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	-10 yards & loss of down
Offensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	-10 yards & loss of down
Offside / False Start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Illegal Forward Pass (Throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Illegal Motion (More than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Impeding the Rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Delay of Game - Calling an extra timeout, too many men on the field	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down

## **XIX. Standings/Tie Break Procedures**

If at the end of the regular season, two or more clubs in the same division finish with identical won-lost-tied percentages, the following steps will be taken until a champion is determined.

1. Head to Head (best won-lost-tied percentage in games between the clubs)
2. Record against like opponents
3. Net points
4. Points For
5. Points Against

NOTE: Tie games count as one-half win and one-half loss for both clubs

## **XX. Format**

1. Age divisions are as follows
  - a. 6 to 7 U - Pee Wee
  - b. 8 to 9 U - Juniors
  - c. 10 to 11 U - Majors
  - d. 12 to 13 U - Pro
2. Age cutoff
  - a. Spring season - Jan 1 of the current calendar year.
  - b. Summer season - April 1 of the current calendar year
  - c. Fall season - Aug 1 of the current calendar year
3. To be eligible to play, a birth certificate is required for all new players
  - a. If you do not have a birth certificate, we accept other documents:
    - i. Original passport
    - ii. Government issued state ID with birthday
    - iii. Certified copy of birth certificate issued by a state county, municipal authority, or territory of the U.S. bearing an official seal
    - iv. School ID with birthday
    - v. School document with birthday
    - vi. Medical record with birthday