

RULE BOOK FOR LTYA NFL YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL

(Modified December 2023)

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Fans must adhere to good sportsmanship.

- Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass other teams or officials.
- Keep comments clean and profanity free.
- Compliment all players, not just one child or team.

Offensive or confrontational language is not accepted. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs from coaches, players or parents, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, a 10 yard penalty will be assessed and the guilty party will be ejected from the game.

If the field director or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsporting act, the game will be stopped, a 10 yard penalty will be assessed and the player may 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!**

ATTIRE/EQUIPMENT

Home team listed first on the schedule wears the dark side and the away team listed second wears the light side of the jersey.

Players are required to wear soft shell helmets.

Players must wear their NFL jersey and shorts for games.

Teams must use league appointed footballs and flags during the game.

Molded cleats and tennis shoes are permitted. No metal cleats are allowed.

POSSESSIONS

The referee will flip a coin before the start of the game to determine possession of the ball for the first half. There is not an option to defer possession to the second half.

The team that wins the toss will start the game on offense. At halftime the teams will switch directions and possession.

The offense has 3 downs to pass midfield with an option to go for it on 4th down and then 3 downs to score. A turnover on downs will occur if the offense is short of the first down or end zone resulting in an immediate possession change spotting the ball where the flag was pulled or at the opponent's 5-yard line.

All possession changes will start at the offensive team's 5-yard line unless an interception occurs.

COACHES ON FIELD

Only one coach will be allowed on the field on offense. Offensive coach must back up, out of the way at the snap of the ball. Defensive coaches are allowed on the field, but must quickly get to their team's sideline once the offense has broken the huddle. The defensive coach can direct and align players the full length of the field from their sideline inside the alleyway.

Coaches must stay on their half of the field. After first warning an unsporting penalty will be called.

PASSING GAME

Only one forward pass per down. All passes must be forward and received beyond the LOS.

Shovel passes are legal but must be received beyond the LOS.

QB Pass Clock

PK/K – No time restraint

First/Second – Seven seconds to throw the football.

Third/Fourth - Six seconds to throw the football.

Fifth/Sixth – Five seconds to throw the football.

THE REFEREE WILL BLOW THE WHISTLE WHEN COUNT EXPIRES. If the pass is not thrown within the time limit, the play will be ruled dead. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.

Interceptions are returnable and the ball is spotted at where the defender's flag is pulled.

If a penalty occurs on an interception return, the penalty will be assessed from the end of the run unless a spot foul by the offense has been called.

RECEIVING GAME

If the ball has been handed off or pitched behind the LOS, all players are eligible receivers.

Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

A receiver is down where his or her flag belt is pulled. In order to achieve a first down, or a TD, the ball carrier's front foot must cross the plane of the first down line and/or goal line.

If a receiver's flag belt falls off, before catch is made, the receiver is down where they caught the ball.

Receiver must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

RUNNING GAME

The QB cannot run the ball. The QB can only run the ball if he or she has taken a direct hand-off or pitch.

Anyone behind the LOS can receive a hand-off or pitch. No TAP and GO for the Center.

One pitch by the QB per play is allowed.

The player who takes the hand-off has RPO, as long as he or she does not cross the LOS first.

Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, the seven-second pass rule is no longer in effect.

Defensive players cannot pass the LOS until the ball is handed off or pitched.

Spinning is allowed but must avoid initiating contact. Jumping or diving to advance the ball is a penalty.

If a flag falls off while the player is running the player is down where the flag dropped.

No RUN ZONES

"No Run Zones" located five (5) yards from each end zone and five (5) yards on both sides of mid-field.

"No Run Zones" are designed to avoid short yardage situations.

"No Run Zones" come into effect only when offensive team is approaching a first down or the end zone.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

The rusher has a STRAIGHT line to the QB. If the QB rolls out at the snap and/or if the rusher changes his/her path while rushing the QB, no penalty will be called.

All players that rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the LOS, which will be designated by the back referee. Any number of defensive players can rush the QB.

If the offense draws any rusher to commit early or jump that seven-yard marker, the rusher must reset to avoid an Illegal Rush penalty.

The rusher has the right of way to the QB. All Offensive players must avoid the rusher. If this path is crossed and contact is made involving the rusher then an offensive penalty will be assessed.

Players not rushing the QB may defend the LOS, as long as he or she is at least one yard from the LOS.

The rusher may attempt to block the pass, but it is a penalty to make contact with the QB.

DEAD BALLS

In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options.

Take the ball where it was when the whistle was blown early and the down is consumed, or replay the down from the original LOS.

If a player receives a handoff/pitch or catches the football and their jersey is out/untucked, the play may be blown dead and the down is consumed.

Flag Obstruction – Flags must be on their hips at all times. If a referee notices a player's flags not on their hips, the play may be blown dead and the down is consumed.

A play is ruled dead when the ball carrier's flag is pulled, the ball carrier's flag falls off, the ball carrier steps out of bounds, the ball carrier's knee or elbow touches the ground, the ball carrier lets the ball hit the ground, and after a score.

There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the player loses control of the ball.

PENALTIES

Defensive penalties are 5 yards and an automatic first down. TACKLING IS 10 YARDS

All offensive penalties except for pre snap are 5 yards and loss of down from the LOS. Spot Fouls will be marked off from the point of infraction. (Flag Guarding / Blocking / Diving / Jumping)

On a defensive holding penalty the offense will have the choice of taking the result of the play (down consumed) or 5 yards from the L.O.S. and first down.

ALL CALLS BY THE REFEREES ARE FINAL.

Games will not end on any accepted live ball defensive penalty.

Any offensive penalty in their end zone will result in a safety (2 points).

SCORING AND TIMING

TD = 6 points, Extra point (5 yards) = 1 point, Extra point (12 yards) = 2 points, Safety = 2 points

The front foot must cross the first down or goal line for a first down or TD to be awarded.

If the team attempting an extra point throws an interception, the play is live and returnable for the amount of the conversion attempted.

Two 20 minute halves with a running clock.

There is a 30 second huddle clock, which will start once the LOS is marked.

Each team is allowed one TO (60 seconds) per half. You can NOT carry a TO over into the second half.

Referee may stop the clock at their discretion.

OVERTIME PROCEDURES

If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game will go into OT. The OT format is as follows. The first possession choice goes to the winner of regulation coin toss, loser of toss chooses direction. All regulation rules and penalties are in effect and there are no time-outs. Each team starts with the ball at the 7 yard line going towards the closest goal line with one play to score. Teams can run or pass the ball. There are no extra points in OT. Interceptions stop the play and the ball is dead. If both teams are still tied after 1st OT, the process is repeated in 2nd OT. Change of possession takes place when a team scores or does not score in 1st and 2nd OT. Starting with the 3rd OT, score or most yards gained will determine the winner.