



Game Time Sportz NFL Flag Football League Official Rule Book

**GameTime SportZ reserves the right to modify rules and brackets at any time*

Age Brackets

_____ : 3-4 yr olds (P Squad), 5-6yr old (Mini Mites), 7-8/9yr old (Mighty Mites), 9-10/11 yr olds (Ter Mites), 11-13 yr olds (Seniors)

The Basics

1. A coin toss determines first possession. Visitor calls toss. Team winning coin toss has the choice to play defense or offense in the first half. If they choose offense for the first half, they will play defense in the second half, and vice versa.
2. Offense takes possession of ball at the 3-yard line and has 4 plays to get a first down and 4 plays to score if they get a first down. If offense fails to get a first down or score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over at their 5 yd line.
3. **Game Play Format: 5 vs 5**
4. **P Squad Game Play Format: 3vs3 See "P Squad" Rule Book**

Player Rotation/Ball Distribution

1. **Players must be rotated evenly! All players must receive equal playing time and equal ball distribution. Every child should "touch" (catch, completed pass, run) the ball a minimum of 2 times per game.**
2. Teams must field a minimum of four players at all times.
3. Players CAN NOT "Touch" the ball on back to back plays!
4. Coaches must not start the same players every week.

Timing

1. Two 20-25 minute Half's. (Depending on age bracket)
2. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 35 seconds to snap the ball. Referee will give one "Huddle Time" warning (10 sec left) before a penalty is enforced
3. Each team has one 30-second time-out per half
4. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion, otherwise it will be a running clock

Overtime

No overtime for any division.

Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: (Interceptions can be returned. If intercepting team scores, the extra point that the offense is going for will be awarded to the defense. Ex: 1 or 2 points)
- NO Extra Points in the P Squad & Mini Mite Divisions

- 1 point (played from 3-yard line)
- 2 points (played from 8-yard line)-
- Safety: 2 points- *no safeties in the P Squad & Mini Mite Division*

Running

1. Quarterback cannot run with the ball in any division except **Ter Mites & Seniors!** QB may run only if blitzing defender crosses the line of scrimmage. QB may also run if "blitzer" crosses the line of scrimmage to "Blitz" in the "no run zone"
2. "No-running zones" is 3-yards from end zone . "No Run Zone" Rule does NOT apply to the Mini & Mighty Mite division.
3. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
4. Any football move by ball carrier to avoid a defender is allowed (Spinning, juking, sidestepping, cutting). No jumping. Players cannot dive headfirst or hurdle a player.
5. The ball is spotted where the ball **carrier's feet** are when the flag is pulled, **not where the ball is.** The ball carrier is down once the flag is pulled, dropped, falls off. All ball carriers must have flags attached to belts to be an eligible runner. No flags, No yardage!
6. Pitches are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage.
7. **No negative yardage plays in the P Squad & Mini Mites Division**

Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes.
2. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Passing

1. Shovel passes are allowed.
2. All passes must be forward **AND** beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
4. **Interceptions are live. If the intercepting team does not score, the ball will be spotted at the intercepting teams 5 yard line.**
5. The quarterback has a 7 second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.
 - a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7 second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

Dead Balls

1. The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play. "Shot Gun" is allowed. **Exception: P Squad & Mini Mites Division & Female/Male exchange.**
2. Play is ruled "dead" when: Ball carrier's flag is pulled, Ball carrier steps out of bounds, Touchdown or safety is scored, Ball carrier fumbles the ball, Ball carrier's knee hits the ground, Ball carrier's flag falls out, QB drops the ball from center, and if Player catches ball and does not have both flags.
3. If player does not have his flags on the side (hips) the referee may call player down at the point he gets ball. Help referees and make sure that your players flags are on the side (hips) and that any extra belt (3rd flag) is tucked in or taped around their belt. Shirts/Jersey's must be tucked in.

Note: There are no fumbles. Referees and coaches MUST stop the play once the ball hits the ground. The ball is spotted at the line of scrimmage or where ball drops during the play if "fumble" occurs past the line of scrimmage. If the ball drops in the backfield, the play will be called dead and ball will be spotted on the line of scrimmage and will cause a loss of down.

Exception...

Mini Mites Division 2nd Fumble Rule: If the center or quarterback fumbles the ball on the 1st & 2nd exchange (i.e., snap), the ball is DEAD but NOT a loss of down. The 3rd fumble counts as a fumble and will be a loss of down . Teams may not drop the ball then pick it up and run. Coaches must help the and work with each other and call the play DEAD.

Rushing the Quarterback (Ter Mites & Senior Division Only)

1. **Ter Mites & Senior Divisions** are the **ONLY** divisions that may blitz one player. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Defender that is rushing QB is considered "off sides" if passing the 7-yard marker prior to the snap and continues to rush the QB past the line of scrimmage.
2. ***** "Blitzers are only allowed to Blitz ONCE per series. Ex. "once before an offense first down and once after an offensive first down"**
3. Rushers cannot make contact with the Quarterback or Jump in front of the QB.
4. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may rush...
5. A special marker will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.
6. Teams may line their defense on the line of scrimmage but ONLY the "Blitzer" can cross the line of scrimmage on the snap of the ball but he/she MUST begin from the 7 yard "Blitz" cone.
7. **P squad, Mini Mites & Mighty Mites Divisions...**No rushers are allowed. Defensive line of scrimmage will be 2 yds off of the ball, which will be marked off by the referee. Defense cannot cross line of scrimmage until ball is handed off or thrown.

Illegal Contact

- Offense or defensive players cannot run into each other (all players must make an attempt to avoid contact)
- It is illegal for a player to “**intentionally**” contact another player
 - Examples - (defender cannot hand check receiver nor can a receiver push defender, no blocking, no colliding with another player intentionally, no tackling, no pulling or pushing, Blitzers must avoid contact with quarterback, players must let go of clothing immediately, no pushing or shoving (being clumsy or fast is not an excuse to bring a player down), Official witnessing acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, intentional pick plays or any unsportsmanlike act, will stop the game, call illegal contact and penalize the team 10 yards. The referee will then do one or all of the following (warn player, team, coach...eject player or coach. Referee notifies Field Coordinator or League Commissioner of ejections ASAP.. TWO ejections could limit player or coach’s ability to participate with any GameTime Sportz related programs...**Rough Play isn’t tolerated.**

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine “offensive” language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, coaches or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will warn and/or eject player, coach, or fans.

After all flag pulls...Players must place flag in the air and hand flags back to opponents

Blocking:

Blocking is illegal...contact doesn’t have to take place for it to be illegal...offensive players can’t move to shield, screen, or get in defenders path to ball carrier. Once the ball carrier or receiver has the ball, offensive players who do not have the ball, must stop!

Coach and Spectator Conduct / Responsibilities

1. Coaches, family members, parents, and spectators are required to observe the contest from a designated area
2. Participants, coaches, parents, and family members must conduct themselves appropriately during League and tournament play. Comments or cheers must be positive (not negative) to coaches, players, teams, or officials.
3. Misconduct may lead to removal from premises at the discretion of GameTime SportZ Officials
4. Only the coach can ask the referee questions about rule clarification, interpretations or to watch for perceived rule violations. Players, parents, or fans cannot question judgment calls.
5. GameTime SportZ has a NO TOLERANCE Policy in place.

Unsportsmanlike conduct – Forms of unacceptable behavior by coaches and players

1. Questioning the integrity of an official by words or gestures.
2. Physically challenging an official.
3. Directing personal, vulgar or profane remarks or gestures toward an official.
4. The use of gestures or actions that indicate displeasure with the officiating.
5. Publicly demonstrating officiating signals such as holding, blocking, etc., which indicate displeasure with the officiating.
6. Voicing displeasure about officiating through continuous verbal remarks.
7. GameTime SportZ has a NO TOLERANCE policy in place.

Handling player, coach, or spectator (Referee may eject individual immediately)

1. Warning given to team
2. 10 yard penalty & loss of down if given to offense or 10 yards and first down if on defense
3. Referee asks player, coach or spectator to leave game area and report to the Field Coordinator or League Commissioner on site

Attire

- Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Official NFL FLAG jerseys must be worn and be tucked in when applicable.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- All players must wear black pocketless athletic shorts or sweatpants.
- No hats with bills or brims
- No jewelry during games.
- Flag belts (not the flag themselves) must be cut or taped, to ensure that they do not hang down as appearing to be a flag (3rd Flag). If the belt is hanging, flag guarding will be called.

Coaches on Playing Field

1. **Ter Mites & Seniors**...One (1) coach allowed on field... Defensive coaches MUST move to sideline and offensive Coaches MUST back out of the realm of play prior to each snap of ball (away from action).
2. **P Squad, Mini Mites & Mighty Mites Division**... Two (2) coaches allowed on the field.

Mercy Rule

This is a recreational league and as such we will actively discourage running up the score. The following rule will apply to any team that is up 18 or more points ahead in a game.

- The coach who is leading will NOT be allowed to call a time out.
- The team leading will not be allowed to "Blitz" the quarterback.

Sportsmanship

- After each game, players and coaches are required to line up at midfield and high five and congratulate the opposing team whether your team wins or loses.
- **After all flag pulls**...Players must put flags in the air and then hand flags back to opponents.
- All players, coaches and parents are required to sign and abide by the GameTime SportZ code of conduct.
- All coaches, staff and volunteers will keep a Kids F.I.R.S.T attitude

Playing Field

- The playing field is 50 yards in total length by 20-25 yards in total width.
- Teams will be on the opposite side of the field of the spectators/parents
- Ex: **P Squad** will play on a "Half Field" ...25 yards in length 20-25 yards in width.

No Run Zones (This rule applies to Mighty, Termite and Seniors Divisions Only)

- The **P Squad and Mini Mites** will not play with this rule
- **"No Run Zones"** are located 3-5 yrds from the end zone and 1st down marker
- **"No Run Zones"** are designed to avoid short yardage situations
- **"No Run Zones"** come into effect only when the offensive team is APPROACHING the first down and end zone.

PENALTIES

Penalties (The referee calls all penalties.) ALL Penalties are 5yds except personal fouls

1. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
2. Only a coach can ask referee for rule clarification, interpretation, or to watch for rule violations.
3. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
4. **NO referee's in the P Squad Division. Coaches will ref and monitor games.**

Spot Fouls

- Flag guarding & Stiff Arming.....5 yards and loss of down
- Charging.....10yards & loss of down
- Defensive Pass Interference.....5 yds from LOS...Automatic First Down
- Stripping.....5 yards & First Down
- Offensive Unnecessary Roughness.....10 yards & loss of down
- Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier.....5 yards & loss of down
- Defensive Unnecessary Roughness.....10 yards & first down

Defense

- Offsides.....5 yards from the LOS, repeat down.
- Illegal contact (Holding, Blocking etc.).....5 yards from the LOS & automatic first down
- Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball).....5 yards from the spot of catch or LOS (if receiver drops the ball) and automatic first down
- Illegal rushing (starting from inside 7 yard marker).....5 yards from the LOS, repeat down.

Offense

- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.).....5 yds from the LOS
(Exception: Mini Mites Divisions)
- Illegal forward pass ...5 yds from LOS. Not a loss of down. Play is DEAD. Ref to blow whistle immediately.
- Offensive pass interference.....5 yds from the LOS & loss of down
- Flag guarding & Stiff Arming.....Spot foul, 5 yards & loss of down
- Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier.....Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
- Charging.....10 yards from the LOS & loss of down
- Delay of game.....Spot foul, 5 yards & loss of down
- Offside.....5 yards from the LOS
- Offensive Unnecessary Roughness..... Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down

GameTime SportZ reserves the right to modify and adjust rules at any point during the season