



# FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

## // QUICK LINKS

[Player Eligibility](#) // [Game Play](#) // [Golden Rule](#) // [Uniform Notice](#) // [General Policies](#)

## // PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. All Players must be at least 21 years of age and have current, adequate health insurance.
2. All players must be properly registered on a team during the season for which they are playing.
  - a. If a player is registered on more than one team within the league, they may only play for one team in the playoffs.
  - b. All players must agree to the Fray Liability Waiver as described in the Fray Terms and Conditions section of Player Registration.
3. Any use of an ineligible player will result in a forfeit.

## // GAME PLAY

1. Starting the Game: The game will start with Rock, Paper, and Scissors between captains, followed by controlled possession. There are no kickoffs.
  - a. The winning team will then have one of three options: Offense, Defense, or Direction. The team that started the game on defense will start the second half on offense and vice-versa. Teams will also reverse direction of play.

- b. Possession starts ten (10) yards/paces from the goal line.
- 2. Scoring: To score, the ball must cross the goal line with the ball carrier establishing/maintaining possession in bounds. There are no field goals.
  - a. Touchdown = 6 points
    - i. One (1) Point Attempt - five (5) yards/paces
    - ii. Two (2) Point Attempt - ten (10) yards/paces
    - iii. Extra point attempts may NOT be intercepted and returned for points
  - b. Safety = 2 points
    - i. The team on defense receives 2 points, and then starts a new possession from their own 10 yard line. A safety will be scored if a player is:
      - 1. Tagged down in their own end zone (not on a punt return).
      - 2. Runs out of bounds in their own end zone.
      - 3. Snaps the ball out of the endzone.
      - 4. The offense fumbles the ball in their own end zone.
    - ii. A player having intercepted a pass or received a punt in the end zone cannot be tagged in the end zone for a safety unless they had previously crossed the plane of the end zone with the ball.
- 3. Line of Scrimmage:
  - a. The line of scrimmage is established at the location of the ball when the ball carrier is downed. Ball extension for additional yardage is permitted.
- 4. First Downs: The offense has four downs to gain another first down or score.
  - a. First downs are earned each time the ball reaches the next marker from where the ball was originally spotted.
  - b. Offensive teams may elect to punt on fourth down.
- 5. Dead Balls: Play will continue until:
  - a. The ball carrier is downed.
    - i. Ball carrier is deflagged by an opponent or downed by a one hand touch. One hand touch is in effect if a player's flags fell off inadvertently and/or were illegally removed prior to catching the ball.
  - b. The ball carrier goes out of bounds.
  - c. The ball carrier scores a touchdown or extra point.
  - d. The ball carrier's knee or elbow touches the ground.
  - e. The defense scores.

- f. The ball touches the ground as a result of a fumble, punt or incomplete pass.
- g. The quarterback does not release the ball within 5 seconds of the snap.
- h. Host sounds a whistle.
  - i. Inadvertent Whistle - If the host inadvertently blows a whistle after the receiver has caught the ball or is running, the ball is dead at that point. If an inadvertent whistle is blown before the quarterback has thrown the ball or the ball is in mid-air, then the play will be redone.

6. Receivers: All players are eligible receivers. Receivers need only one (1) foot in-bounds with possession of the ball to be considered a catch.

- a. If a player runs out of bounds (end zone or sideline) prior to a pass, they become ineligible unless a defensive player forced them out of bounds.
- b. If a receiver is in midair, catches the ball, and is forced out of bounds by a defender prior to landing, the pass will be considered complete.
- c. Offensive players may dive to further advance the ball as long as they do not initiate contact.

7. Quarterback Run & Rushing:

- a. There is no immediate rush. The defense cannot rush the quarterback until:
  - i. Hosts will count “one thousand-1. one thousand-2. One thousand-3. one thousand-4. one thousand-(whistle will blow on 5). Quarterbacks cannot cross the line of scrimmage or run with the ball unless blitzed by the defense. Defense cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the host has said “one thousand – 3” or if the quarterback hands off or laterals the ball to another player behind the line of scrimmage. The quarterback has 5 seconds to throw the ball, Defense can blitz at 3 seconds, if blitzed the quarterback can run but must cross the line before the 5 count of the host. If the Quarterback laterals the ball behind them to another player, the rush count stops that player can either run or throw the ball past the line of scrimmage.
  - ii. The quarterback does a hand-off, lateral, or pass before or after the rush count.
- b. Silent snaps are not permitted. The player calling the snap cadence must receive the snap. The player receiving the snap may not be in motion.
  - i. If the ball hits the ground on the snap, the play is “dead”, the ball is spotted where it hit the ground, and it is a loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the bad snap, it is now 2nd down).

8. Blocking & Contact: All players must attempt to avoid contact with other players. Blocking at or behind the line of scrimmage and/or downfield is not permitted, and aggressive contact and the “bump and run” are not permitted. Moving picks are regarded as illegal blocking.

- a. **There is no contact at the line of scrimmage.**

- b. Players acting as the offensive line must have their hands behind their backs or at their sides when protecting their quarterback from pursuing defensive rushers.
- c. The offensive line can position their body at any particular angle in an attempt to direct the rushers to a particular area, but they may not physically direct them.

9. Punts: A punt must be declared and cannot be faked. A team does not have to snap the ball during a punt as a dropped snap during a punt is not a fumble. The receiving team may not raise hands or jump to block a punt.

- a. Punts must be kicked. Punts cannot be thrown.
- b. Punts are “open” plays.
- c. The kicking team may not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. The kicking team cannot recover their own punt. If the kicking team touches the ball before the receiving team, it is a dead ball and is spotted where it was touched.
- d. There is no minimum number of players required on the line of scrimmage during a punt.
- e. If a punt is caught, it is a live ball and is returnable.
- f. The receiving team can run up the field but cannot block.
- g. If the ball comes into contact with the ground after it has been punted, it is a dead ball and may not be returned. The ball is spotted at the point where it hit the ground.
- h. A punt through the end zone and a dropped punt in the end zone are touchbacks. The ball is placed at the designated starting distance from the goal line.

## 10. Change of Possession

- a. Score.
- b. Interception.
- c. Offense fails to score or earn another first down. The opposing team gets the ball at the previous line of scrimmage.
- d. Offense punts the ball on fourth down.
- e. Loss of down penalties which occur on fourth down.
- f. Fumbles cannot be turned over unless the fumble is caught in mid-air. If the fumbled ball touches the ground, it is dead at that point and the line of scrimmage is moved there.

## // Mixed Gender Specific Rules

1. There must be at **MINIMUM** 3 Women on the field per team at all times. There is no maximum limit to the amount of women allowed on the field.

2. The offense must involve a women player as an “operative player” within three (3) consecutive downs. If two consecutive plays during a possession exclude women, then the following play is “closed” and must include a women operative player. The closed play count is reset after each change of possession.
3. On a closed play, a man quarterback cannot run for positive yards even if he is rushed. If a man quarterback is sacked on a closed play, the down is lost and the closed play carries over to the next down.
  - a. An Operative Player is defined as a player who:
    - i. Is the intended receiver in the eyes of the host (if the ball is caught an attempt has to be made to cross the line of scrimmage).
    - ii. Runs the ball as the primary runner (an attempt has to be made to cross the line of scrimmage).
    - iii. Receives the snap as the Quarterback and throws the ball forward toward the line of scrimmage (ball does not have to cross the line of scrimmage).
    - iv. If the women player is sacked, throws an incomplete pass, loses yards, or does not catch the ball, the down still counts as a closed play.
  - b. An Operative Player is NOT defined as a player who:
    - i. Hands off the football.
    - ii. Snaps the ball into play.
    - iii. Receives a hand off only to give it back to a man before crossing the line of scrimmage.
    - iv. Receives the snap and immediately spikes the ball at her feet in order to stop the clock in the last 2 minutes.
4. Extra points and punts are always “open” plays and everyone is eligible.

## // **Penalties**

Normal rules and penalties of the NCAA apply unless exceptions have been made herein. A half or game cannot end on a defensive penalty.

### 1. **5 yard penalty, down is replayed:**

- a. Delay of game
  - i. 20 seconds after the ball has been spotted
- b. Encroachment
  - i. Offense will receive a free play. They may accept the penalty or take the result of the play.
- c. False start

- d. Holding
- e. Illegal block
  - i. The offensive team may not initiate a pick/block while in motion. If a catch is made after a clear pick, it will be ruled no catch.
- f. Illegal contact
- g. Illegal motion
- h. Illegal snap
  - i. This includes the quarterback snapping the ball to themselves.
- i. Offsides

**2. 5 yard penalty, loss of down:**

- a. Illegal forward pass
- b. Flag Guarding
- c. Diving - Loss of down; ball spotted at point of takeoff
  - i. Ball carrier cannot dive into or over a defensive player.

**3. 10 yard penalty, down is replayed:**

- a. Defensive pass interference [automatic first down]
  - i. If in the end zone, ball is spotted at the 1 yard line.
- b. Defensive unnecessary roughness [automatic first down]
- c. Offensive unnecessary roughness
  - i. If during a play, any yardage gained will not stand and penalty will be marked off from the line of scrimmage.
  - ii. If after a play, the penalty will be marked off at the end of the play.
- d. Unsportsmanlike conduct

**4. 10 yard penalty, loss of down:**

- a. Offensive pass interference

**5. Additional Penalties:**

- a. Failure to use a woman operative - Loss of down; next play is still closed
- b. Illegal flag pull - 10-yard penalty; Down is replayed
  - i. A player may only deflag an opponent in possession of the ball. If a player removes an opponent's flag belt before they gain possession of the ball, play will continue until the ball carrier is downed by one hand touch.

- c. Intentional grounding - Loss of down; ball spotted at point of infraction (QB's release point).

## **// Sportinglike Conduct, Ejections & Suspensions**

1. A player may be assessed a warning, be ejected, and/or be suspended from a game or league for unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not limited to foul language, rough play, and inappropriate or abusive treatment toward hosts, other players, or spectators. Hosts may assess a warning and/or eject a player with or without warning, depending on the severity of the incident.
  - a. If a player receives two (2) warnings in one (1) game, they are ejected from the game, must leave the park immediately, and cannot play in the team's next game.

### **// Verbal or Physical Aggression**

1. Verbal or Physical Aggression of any kind is not allowed and can and will result in removal from the game and the league, as well as possibly being banned from all PHX Fray activities.
  - a. Verbal Aggression
    - i. Insults or Threats towards another player or host will not be tolerated. Players may receive at most one warning from a PHX Fray host, after which, if it continues, they will be removed from the game and asked to leave the field.
      1. Depending on the situation, at the discretion of a PHX Fray host, a player may be removed from the game immediately with no warning given.
      2. Depending on the severity of the threat, the player may be removed from the season, suspended for multiple seasons, or removed from PHX Fray as a whole.
  - b. Physical Aggression
    - i. Any player who physically engages another player or host, will be removed from the game immediately.
      1. Depending on the situation, players removed for physical aggression may be removed from the season, suspended for multiple seasons, or removed from PHX Fray as a whole.

Any Player who habitually is given warnings or has been removed from multiple games will be suspended for a minimum 1 season and may be banned from all PHX Fray activities.

## **// Overtime**

1. Overtime will only be played during Playoffs. Regular season games can end in a tie.
  - a. Overtime will use the Four Downs & Out format.
2. Overtime will begin with rock, paper, scissors between the captains.

- a. The team that wins rock, paper, scissors decides if they start on offense or defense (there is no option to decline). Their opponent will decide which endzone to use. Both teams will attempt to score in the same endzone.
- 3. Each team will have 4 downs to score from ten (10) paces/yards out from the goal line. If a team scores, they will have the opportunity to go for one (1) or two (2) extra points. The game will be decided when one team scores more points in the rotation.
  - a. No 1st downs will be awarded except in the case of a penalty.
  - b. Mixed Gender: A woman must be used once within the first three plays or on the 1st and 4th downs when applicable.
  - c. An interception will result in a turnover and may not be returned for any points.
  - d. If the score is still tied after two complete overtime periods, each team must attempt a two-point conversion after they score a touchdown until a winner is decided.

## // GOLDEN RULE

First and foremost, all Fray leagues are 50% Social and 50% Sport. While we have staff // hosts, we expect individuals to respect the league's culture of fair and fun play. Foul language and rough play will not be tolerated. Individuals who cannot adhere to our standards of fair play and sportsmanship may be asked to leave the league. We want everyone to have fun and be social while enjoying a great sport. We will do whatever we can to make sure all players are having fun!

## // UNIFORM NOTICE

All players will be given PHX Fray jerseys and are encouraged to wear them for the duration of the season. If your team decides to create and wear your own team uniforms, that's totally acceptable as long as everyone matches and the colors are clear enough for gameplay. Failure to wear the PHX Fray jersey or team uniform will result in a player not being able to play in both the regular season and playoff games.

## // GENERAL POLICIES

Fray is proud to relieve captains of the burden of paying for full teams. We accept individual player payments and allow prepayment for additional players and/or full teams. We are also proud to welcome those who do not have a full team (small groups and free agents) to participate in our league.

Because our mission is to make fun possible, these policies make it easier for people to get involved with and build community through social sports.

All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Any roster that does not reach our official size (based on each sport) is eligible to receive free agents and/or small groups. Rosters made up of primarily free agents and/or a collection of small groups may have more players than the standard roster size. This policy is in place to help ensure free agent teams are able to consistently field a team each week.

## // Roster Size Chart

Sport	Promotion Size	Official Size	Max Roster Size	Women Minimum
Flag Football - 5v5	8	10	12	N/A
Flag Football - 7v7	12	14	16	3

## // Teams & Substitutions

1. **5v5 Leagues:** A maximum of five (5) players can be on the field. Teams must have the required minimum 4 players to start the game
2. **7v7 Leagues:** A maximum of seven (7) players can be on the field (Mixed Gender - 3 must be women). Teams must have the required minimum 5 players to start the game (Mixed Gender - 2 must be women)
3. Substitute players (players not on the roster) may be used at any time in the regular season. Substitutes are not permitted during playoffs.
  - a. All substitutes must be a registered player on another team and/or in another Fray league that is currently in play.
  - b. Teams may use additional substitute players above the player minimum with the opposing team's consent. Teams who agree to play under these conditions must notify the Host before the start of the game and the outcome of the game will stand as is.
4. If a team substitutes players in and out during the game, they must do so from the same sideline the entire game. Eligible receivers must be on the playing field before the cadence is started.
5. Teams must designate a captain prior to the start of the game. **They are the only team member allowed to discuss calls with hosts.** Judgement calls by a host may not be disputed.

## // Game Duration

1. Play will be divided into two (2) 20-minute halves.

- a. The clock will run continuously until the final two (2) minutes of the second half, at which time the clock will stop if:
  - i. An incomplete pass is thrown
  - ii. A player ends a play by going out of bounds
  - iii. Either team scores (clock will remain off until the opposing team snaps the ball after the PAT attempt; the clock does not run during extra points)
  - iv. Change of possession
  - v. A penalty which must be marked off
  - vi. A team calls a time out
    1. If a team calls a timeout after a touchdown, the clock will not start again until the defensive team takes possession and snaps the ball on offense.
- b. The clock does not stop for:
  - i. a 2-minute warning unless there is a deadball situation causing the clock to stop
  - ii. First downs
  - iii. Fumbles
- c. If a team is up by 17 points or more, the clock runs continuously during the last two minutes of play.

2. Teams will have two (2) time-outs per game that may be used at any time. Time outs stop the game clock.
3. Regular Season Games can end in ties. Playoff games will continue until a winner is decided. Please refer to the OVERTIME section for ties during the playoffs.

## **// Equipment, Uniforms & Facility Use**

1. All equipment will be provided on-site, including flag belts, game balls, and field markers.
2. Players should make every effort to wear the official Fray division shirt.
3. Metal cleats are not permitted.
4. Shorts and/or pants with pockets are not permitted.
5. If an individual or team violates the facility's Code of Conduct, they may be asked to leave and a refund will not be issued.

## // Playoffs & Standings

1. Playoffs are determined after the regular season has concluded and are based on scheduling and other league logistics. Playoffs are not guaranteed.
2. Standings are automatically sorted in Commish based on teams' Win-Loss-Tie record. If there is a tie in the standings, we sort based on the following information in order until the tie is resolved:
  - a. Head-to-head matchups
  - b. Score differential
  - c. Points For
  - d. Points Against
  - e. Coin Flip

## // Forfeits

1. Teams have until 10 minutes past the designated start time to field the minimum number of players. The 10 minute grace period is considered part of the overall game time. If a team is unable to reach the minimum number of players, the game will be deemed a forfeit.
2. Teams may play a "legal game" with less than the required minimum number of players with the opposing team's consent. Teams who agree to play under these conditions will lose the option of receiving a forfeit win and the outcome of the game will stand as is. Teams must notify the Host before the start of the game.
  - a. **First Forfeit** - Loss of game and warning issued
  - b. **Second Forfeit** - Loss of game, and Fray reserves the right to remove the team from playoffs.
  - c. **Third Forfeit** - Loss of game and removal from the league with no refund
3. In the case of a forfeit, the final score is recorded as 21-0

## // Weather Cancellations

1. One week is built into the end of each season
2. All players will be notified via email if games are canceled
3. If more than one weather cancellation occurs, Fray will try to find another week if possible to make up the games, but it is not guaranteed.
4. Should inclement weather or other factors limit normal scheduled game duration and more than half the game has been played, the game shall count as the full game.
5. Should a game not reach half-time, the game will be deemed incomplete, rescheduled (if possible), and restarted from the beginning.