Flag Football Rules 4 v 4

Each participant is responsible for presenting a current Photo ID at game time. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Intramural Flag Football will be played according to the NIRSA Flag & Touch Football rules. The following are highlighted rules and exceptions to the NIRSA Rule Book. *Italic print indicates special rules for co-recreational play only.*

**Quick Summary of Differences Between 7 v 7 and 4 v 4:**
1. 2-15 minute halves, 2 timeouts per team per game
   a. Clock runs continuously the first 14 minutes of each half
2. Start halves, OT and new series after score from the 10yd line.
3. 3 downs to gain the 20 yd line or score.
4. No punting, unsuccessful advancement of the ball results in turnover at the dead ball spot.
5. 1 player on the line at the snap.
6. Cannot run to advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, forward passes only!
   a. Balls advanced from behind the line of scrimmage whether by run, forward or backward pass result in a 3yd illegal procedure penalty.
7. The quarterback has 7 seconds to release the ball from the time that they receive the snap, the referee shall make this count verbally, if the quarterback does not release the ball within 7 seconds the referee shall sound his/her whistle and assess a 3yd loss of down penalty.
8. All penalties the same as 7 v 7: 5 yard penalties are assessed 3 yards, 10 yard penalties assessed 5 yards.
9. No mercy rule.

**Eligibility**

It is the responsibility of each team to know the existing intramural rules. IGNORANCE OF ANY INTRAMURAL RULE IS NOT AN EXCUSE!! The Department of Campus Recreation does not assume responsibility for the investigation of the eligibility of all participants. The Department of Campus Recreation will, however, investigate any case as required.

- Men are not permitted to compete in the Women’s Division.
- One (1) woman is allowed to appear on the roster of a Men’s team.
- It is the responsibility of all participants to know their own eligibility status at all times.

All current members of the Fitness & Wellness Center are eligible to participate. This includes faculty/staff, students, Alumni, semester off, and EELI students. If you have access to the Fitness & Wellness Center you are welcome to play Intramural Sports.

All participants must have a valid state/government issued PICTURE ID to play and know their identification number. Student ID with picture is recommended but we will also accept the following: Driver’s License, State ID Card, Military ID and Passport.

Exceptions:

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
Any individuals who have been declared ineligible to participate through disciplinary sanctions by the Director or Assistant Director of Campus Recreation

**False Name:**
An individual may not participate under an assumed name or use false identification. Violation of this rule will result in suspension from further participation for the individual and/or team.

**Compete on Two Teams:**
A player may participate on only one team in any given activity during a season. Note: The only exception to this rule is that a player may play on a team in the men’s or women’s division and play on a Co-Rec team. If an individual plays for more than one team in that division, all teams involved will receive a forfeit in games in which that player was involved and the player shall be suspended for a period of 1 week.

**Playoff Eligibility:**
Team members must have participated in at least one (1) game during the regular season to be eligible for participation in the playoffs. Teams must earn at least a 7.0 Sportsmanship Rating average to participate in the playoffs.
- The Intramural Staff reserves the right to declare an individual ineligible for competition if his/her participation is considered unsportsmanlike or dangerous

**Professional and Olympic Athletes:**
An individual who has participated as a professional/Olympic athlete in a sport is not eligible for intramural competition in that sport or similar sport.

**Current and Former Intercollegiate Athletes:**
Any person who participated with a varsity team in the current or last school year (i.e. practiced, red shirted, and/or played) is ineligible to participate in that intramural sport (or related activity). Ineligibility will be determined by the Assistant Director based on rosters, media guides, and participant reports which will be looked into and ruled upon. All protests on ineligibility rulings may be taken to the Director of Campus Recreation.

**Ringer Rule**
The ringer rule allows former varsity athletes and current sport club members the opportunity to participate in Intramurals in their sport (or related activity). Individuals are considered ringers in a particular sport for the following reasons:
1. They are a current sport club member in that sport.
2. They have competed on a College or University Varsity team at any level in that sport but are currently eligible for that Intramural sport.

Teams in open or competitive divisions may have two ringers on their roster. Teams in recreational divisions may not have ringers.

Any matter that cannot be resolved through these eligibility rules shall be brought to the Assistant Director of Campus Recreation for a decision.

**Teams**

A. A game shall be played with a maximum of 4 players and a minimum of 3 players in all leagues.
B. A game shall be played with a maximum of 4 players and a minimum of 3 players in the Co-Rec Division. Teams with four players shall be 2 males and 2 females. Teams with 3 players shall be 2 males and 1 female or 2 females and 1 male.
C. Forfeit = less than 3 players present in all leagues.
D. Each captain shall report to the officials on the assigned field at least 15 minutes prior to the game. The captain shall provide the EKU IDs of all players participating in the game.

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
The Field

The field shall be 40yds long with 2-10 yard endzones. The field shall be 30yds wide.

The field is divided into 2, 20-yard zones. The lines bounding the sidelines and the end zones are out-of-bounds in their entirety.

Equipment

A. A representative from each team is responsible for picking up his/her team’s jerseys, flags and/or ball from the Field House prior to each game. He/she may do this my presenting a valid EKU ID at that time. The equipment will be returned to the Field House following each game – failure to do so could result in the team representative being charged for lost equipment at the end of the night.

B. Teams may either agree upon a ball provided by one of the teams, provide their own ball to be used only during their possessions, or check out a ball from the Field House. Balls must be official size and must be approved by the officials.

C. Shirts – If a team chooses to wear jerseys provided by Campus Recreation, each member must wear a shirt under the provided jersey that has sleeves and is either be long enough to remain tucked in during the duration of a down or be more than 4” above the waist. If a team provides its own jerseys, they must either be long enough to remain tucked in during the entire duration of a down or be more than 4” above the waist. Teams could be required to turn their jerseys inside-out if the content of the jerseys is deemed inappropriate by the officials.

D. Shorts/Pants – Each player must wear shorts/pants without any pockets, belt loops or exposed drawstrings.

E. Optional Equipment
   a. Ace bandage no more than 2 turns thick in any given area. It can be anchored at each end by tape not to exceed two turns.
   b. Gloves with must consist of a soft, pliable and nonabrasive material.
   c. Knit or stocking cap which may have a knit ball on top but no bill.
   d. Headband no wider than 2” and made of non-abrasive cloth, elastic, fiber, soft leather or rubber.
   e. Soft, pliable basketball or wrestling knee pads on the leg, knee and/or ankle.
   f. Play book as long as it is carried inside the clothing and made of a yielding material.
   g. Small towel placed under the ball
   h. Soft, pliable compression shorts

F. Illegal Equipment
   a. Headwear containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material, including billed hats or items containing exposed knots.
   b. Jewelry.
      *Exception – medically related bracelets and necklaces.
   c. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
   d. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in or detachable cleats.
   e. Any hood on a jacket, sweatshirt or shirt that does not remain tucked in.
   f. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless covered on both sides and all edges with at least ½” of slow recovery rubber or similar material.
   g. Towels attached at the player’s waist.

The Game

Before the start of the game, the Referee shall toss a coin in the presence of the opposing field captains, after first designating which captain shall call the fall of the coin. The captain winning the toss shall have choice of options for the first half or shall defer their option to the second half. The options for each half shall be:

A. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
B. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.

The captain not having the first choice of options for a half shall exercise the remaining option.

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
**Game Time**

**10 Minute Forfeit Rule:** Your team has 10 minutes after their scheduled game time show up with the required number of players to start. For each minute late the opposing team will receive a point. Example team A shows up 5 minutes late team B will receive 5 points at the start of the game. Team B also has the option not to take any points.

Playing time shall be 30 minutes, divided into 2 halves of 15 minutes each. The intermission between halves shall be 3 minutes. When overtime is used, there will be a 2 minute intermission.

**Extension of Periods**

A half must be extended by an untimed down, except for unsportsmanlike conduct or nonplayer foul, if during the last timed down, one of the following occurred:

A. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted.
B. There was a double foul.
C. There was an inadvertent whistle.
D. There was a touchdown scored. The Try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the 2nd half and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game.
E. A foul occurs that would have resulted in a safety.

If A, B, C or E occurs during an untimed down, the procedure is repeated.

**First 14 Minutes**

The game will start with the offensive team starting their possession at the 10 yard line. The clock will start when the ball is snapped. It will run continuously for the first 14 minutes unless it is stopped for a:

A. Team time-out – start on snap.
B. Referee’s time-out – starts on the ready for play.

**The clock will run continuously after a touchdown or safety.**

**One Minute Warning**

Approximately 1 minute before the end of each half the Referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that half. The clock starts on the snap after the Referee announces the warning. The back judge will announce to the captains the remaining time and status of the clock after every play during the final minute.

**Last Minute**

During the final minute of each half, the clock stops for:

A. Incomplete pass – starts on snap.
B. Out-of-bounds – starts on snap.
C. Safety – starts on snap.
D. Team time-out – starts on snap.
E. First down – dependent on previous play.
F. Touchdown – starts on snap (after Try).
G. Penalty and administration – dependent on previous play (EXCEPTION: Delay of game – starts on snap).
H. Referee’s time-out – starts at his/her discretion.
I. Touchback – starts on snap.
J. Team A is awarded a new series – dependent on previous play.
K. Team B is awarded new series – starts on snap.
L. Team attempting to conserve time illegally – starts on ready for play.
M. Team attempting to consume time illegally – start on snap.
N. Inadvertent whistle – starts on ready for play.

Correcting Time Errors

The Referee shall have authority to correct obvious timing errors if discovery is prior to the second live ball following error.

Overtime Periods

There will be no ties. All games will be played until a winner is determined.

If a game ends with a tie score, the officials must bring both captains to the center of the field. They will discuss the tie breaker procedures and answer all questions prior to the coin toss.

A coin will be flipped by the Referee to determine the options as in the start of the game. The captain not calling the fall of the coin before the game shall call it before overtime. There will only be 1 flip during overtime. If additional overtime periods are played, captains will alternate choices. The winner of the toss shall be given options of offense, defense, or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining options.

All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line.

Unless moved by penalty, each team will start 1st and goal from the Team B 10 yard line. The object will be to score a touchdown within 3 downs. An overtime period consists of 1 offensive series by each team. If the score is still tied after one period, play will proceed to a second period or as many as are needed to determine a winner. If the first team which is awarded the ball scores, the opponent will still have a chance to win the game. Try for points will be attempted and scored as in regulation. If the defense intercepts the ball the series is over. Each team is entitled to 1 time-out during the entire overtime.

All fouls and penalties are administered similarly to the regular game. Team A shall be awarded a new series of downs when the penalty for defensive pass interference or roughing the passer is accepted. NOTE: The goal line shall always be the zone line-to-gain in overtime.

Charged Time-Outs

Each team is entitled to 2 time-outs per game. Successive charged time-outs may be granted to each team during the same dead ball period. If the ball is dead and a team has not exhausted its charged time-outs, the Referee shall allow a time-out and charge that team. A charged time-out shall not exceed 1 minute.

When a team requests a charged time-out for a rule interpretation, the Referee will confer with the team captain. If the Referee changes his/her ruling, it is an official’s time-out. If the ruling is not changed, it is a charged time-out. If the team has used its 3 charged time-outs, a delay of game penalty will be assessed.

An injured or apparently injured player who is discovered by an official while the ball is dead shall be replaced for at least 1 down unless the half-time or overtime intermission occurs. A player who is bleeding, has an open wound or has an excessive amount of blood on the uniform shall be considered an injured player.

Delay of Game

The ball must be put in play promptly and legally, and any action or inaction which tends to prevent this is delay of game. This includes:
A. Failure to put the ball in play within 25 seconds after it is declared ready for play.
B. Putting the ball in play before it is declared ready for play.

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
C. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.
D. A captain-Referee conference after all permissible charged time-outs for the captain’s team have been used and during which the Referee is requested to reconsider the application of a rule and does not change the application.
E. Failure to kick the ball immediately after receiving the snap on a punt.

**Illegally Consuming or Conserving Time**

The quarterback has 7 seconds to release the ball from the time he/she receives the snap. If they do not release the ball the referee shall penalize 3 yards and loss of down.

The Referee may order the game clock started or stopped whenever, in his/her opinion, either team is trying to conserve or consume playing time by tactics obviously unfair.

**Substitutions**

No substitute shall enter during a down. Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players provided substitution is completed by having replaced players off the field before the ball becomes live. An incoming substitute must enter the field directly from his/her team area. A replaced player must leave the field at the sideline nearest his/her team area prior to the ball being snapped.

During the same dead ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw, and no player shall withdraw and then reenter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead ball foul occurs or there is a charged time-out.

**Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds**

A dead ball, having been declared ready for play becomes a live ball when it is snapped.

A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound the whistle or declare it dead:

- A. When it goes out of bounds.
- B. When any part of the runner other than the hands or feet touches the ground.
- C. When a touchdown, touchback, safety or successful try is made.
- D. When the ball strikes the ground following first touching after a kick.
- E. When a player of the kicking team catches a punt which is beyond the neutral zone; when an untouched punt comes to rest on the ground and no player attempts to secure it.
- F. When a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players.
- G. When a backward pass or fumble by a player strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players. A ball snapped from scrimmage, which hits the ground before or after getting to the intended receiver, is dead at the spot where it hits the ground.
- H. When a forward pass is legally completed or loose ball is caught by a player on, above, or behind the opponent’s goal line.
- I. When a runner has his/her flag belt removed legally by an opponent. A flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt.
- J. When a runner is legally tagged with 1 hand between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm, by an opponent once the flag belt is no longer attached.
- K. When a passer is deflagged/tagged prior to releasing the ball.
- L. When a muffed punt strikes the ground.
- M. When an official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, when:
  1. The ball is in player possession – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
  2. The ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick or illegal forward pass – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
  3. During a legal forward pass or punt – the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed.

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle. **NOTE:** There is no time added to the game clock during a down with an inadvertent whistle.

**Series of Downs and Number of Downs**

When a team gains possession of the ball, it shall have 3 downs to advance the ball to the next 20 yard zone-line. That zone-line remains the zone line-to-gain until it is reached or the team loses possession of the ball. A new series of 3 downs shall be awarded when a team moves past the zone line-to-gain on a play free from penalty or a penalty against Team B; or when a team obtains legal possession of the ball as a result of a penalty, touchback, interception, or failure to advance the ball past the zone line-to-gain.

**There are no kicks in 4 v 4 flag football. Teams have 3 downs to make it past the zone line to gain or they will turn the ball over at that spot to the opposing team.**

**Encroachment**

After the ball is ready for play and until the snap, no player on defense may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or in any other way interfere with them. This includes standing in the neutral zone to give defensive signals and shifting through the zone. After the snapper has made his final ball adjustment, it is encroachment for any player to break the scrimmage line plane except for the snapper’s right to be over the ball.

**False Start**

No offensive player shall make a false start. A false start includes simulating a charge or start of a play. An infraction of this rule may be penalized whether or not the ball is snapped and the penalty for any resultant encroachment shall be canceled.

**Snap**

**Offensive players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a down and returning it to the succeeding spot.**

After the ball is ready for play, each Team A player must momentarily be within 15 yards of the ball before the snap.

The snapper, after assuming the position for the snap and adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of the play until it is snapped. An infraction of this provision may be penalized, whether or not the ball is snapped, and the penalty for any resultant encroachment or contact foul by an opponent shall be canceled. When over the ball, the snapper shall have his/her feet behind his/her scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange). The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick continuous motion of the hand(s).

The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. Direct snaps are illegal.

**Minimum Line Players**

The offensive team must have at least one player on their scrimmage line at the snap. The remaining players may either be on the scrimmage line or in the backfield. The player in motion is not counted as one of the required players on the line.

**Motion**

One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent’s goal line at the snap. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head or arms.
Shift

In a snap preceded by a huddle or a shift, all offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position without movement of the feet, body, head or arms for at least 1 full second before the snap.

Handing the Ball

Any player may HAND the ball backward or FORWARD at any time.

Passing Only No Running

The offensive team can only advance the ball past the line of scrimmage via a forward pass that goes past the line of scrimmage.

Backward Pass and Fumble

A runner may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble at anytime except if intentionally thrown out-of-bounds to conserve time or avoid being deflagged/tagged. Penalty: Illegal Pass, 3 yards from the spot and loss of down.

A backward pass or fumble may be caught in flight in bounds by any player except the passer and advanced.

If a backward pass or fumble in flight is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the offensive team.

A backward pass or fumble which goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines belongs to the last team in possession at the out-of-bounds spot. If out-of-bounds behind the goal line, it is a touchback or safety.

THE BALL IS DEAD WHEN IT HITS THE GROUND.

Legal and Illegal Forward Pass

All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. During a scrimmage down and before and before a team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer’s feet are behind Team A’s scrimmage line when the ball leaves the passer’s hand.

Only one forward pass can be thrown per down.

A forward pass is illegal:

A. If the passer’s foot is beyond Team A’s scrimmage line when the ball leaves his/her hand.
B. If thrown after team possession has changed during a down.
C. If a passer catches his/her untouched forward or backward pass.
D. If intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
E. If there is more than one forward pass per down.

When an illegal forward pass touches the ground or goes out-of-bounds, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team at the spot from where the pass was thrown unless a new series of downs has been created. In such a case the ball belongs to the passing team if, after enforcement of the penalty, the ball is left in advance of the zone line-to-gain, or belongs to the opponents if the ball, after the penalty, did not make the next zone line-to-gain and the foul occurred during fourth down. If a player catches an illegal forward pass, the ball continues in play until declared dead.

Completed or Intercepted Pass

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
A forward pass is completed or intercepted as long as the first part of the person to make contact with ground after the catch, usually one foot, touches in bounds.

If a legal forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the offensive team at the spot of the catch.

During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses Team A’s scrimmage line, contact which interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond Team A’s scrimmage line is pass interference unless it occurs when two or more opponents make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch or bat the pass. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond Team A’s scrimmage line.

**Mercy Rule**

There is no mercy rule in 4 v 4 flag football.

**Touchdown = 6 or 9 Points**

In Co-Rec, if a female scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any Team A player, the point value is 9. All other touchdowns are 6 points.

A touchdown shall be scored when any part of the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent’s goal line.

The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not deflagged with one pull and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed and the player is disqualified.

**Try = 1, 2 or 3 Points**

An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line or 3 points from the 20 yard line shall be granted the team scoring a touchdown. If a touchdown is scored on the last timed down of the second half, the Try is not attempted unless it will affect the outcome of the game.

The Referee must speak to the captain only, asking him/her whether the Try shall be from the 3, 10 or 20 yard line. Once the Team A captain makes the choice, he/she may change the decision only when a Team A or B charged time-out is taken. A team’s choice cannot be changed if a penalty should occur. Enforcement of yardage penalties does not change the value of the Try. If Team B intercepts a pass or fumble during the try the try is immediately over!

After a Try the ball shall be snapped by the opponent of the scoring team at their own 14 yard line unless moved by penalty.

**Safety = 2 Points**

It is a safety when:

A. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line and it becomes dead there in his/her team’s possession.

   EXCEPTION: When a Team B player intercepts a forward pass, fumble or backward pass, or catches a punt between his/her 5 yard line and the goal line and his/her original momentum carries him/her into the end zone where the ball is declared dead in his/her team’s possession behind the goal line, the ball belongs to Team B at the spot where possession was gained.
B. A player punts, passes, fumbles, snaps, muffs or bats a loose ball from the field of play to or across his/her goal line and the ball subsequently becomes dead there in his/her team’s possession. This included when the ball is declared dead on or behind their goal line. However, it does not apply to a legal forward pass which becomes incomplete.

C. A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from a spot in his/her end zone.

D. After a safety, the ball shall be snapped by the scoring team at its own 14 yard line unless moved by penalty.

**Touchback**

It is a touchback

A. An intercepted ball is caught in the end zone and the receiving player is deflagged/touched down.

B. An intercepted ball is caught in the end zone and the receiving player is ruled down by contact with the ground

C. An intercepted ball is caught in the end zone and the receiving player runs out of bounds before crossing the goal lines.

D. After a touchback, the ball shall be snapped from the nearest 14 yard line unless moved by penalty.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

No player shall commit noncontact acts during a period or intermission. Examples include:

A. Any acts of unfair play.

B. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with Team A’s signals or movements.

C. Intentionally kicking at the ball other than during a legal kick.

D. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or with permission of the Referee.

E. Intentionally kicking at any opposing player.

F. Intentionally swinging an arm, hand or fist at any opposing player.

Both E and F carry a penalty of disqualification of that player.

When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he/she shall not:

A. Intentionally kick the ball.

B. Spike the ball to the ground.

C. Throw the ball high into the air.

D. Fail to return the ball to the huddle.

There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players, substitutes, spectators or others subject to the rules. Examples include but are not limited to:

A. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.

B. Disrespectfully addressing an official.

C. Indicating objections to an official’s decision.

D. Holding an unauthorized conference or being on the field illegally.

E. Using profanity, taunting and insulting or vulgar gestures and language.

F. Fighting an opponent.

G. Leaving the team area and entering the playing area during a fight.

In F and G, an automatic ejection will result.

The second unsportsmanlike foul by the same player or nonplayer results in disqualification. **Disqualified persons will be required to leave the field area or Public Safety will be contacted.**

Any team receiving three (3) unsportsmanlike/conduct penalties will forfeit the game and receive a zero (0) sportsmanship rating. Teams will also face possible suspension from the league and Intramural Sports.
**Personal Fouls**

No player shall commit a personal foul during a period or intermission. Any act prohibited hereunder or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. No player shall:

A. Punch, strike, strip or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession. **NOTE:** A player who controls a pass gains possession of the ball when the first part of the person touches the ground.

B. Trip an opponent.

C. Contact an opponent who is on the ground.

D. Throw the runner to the ground.

E. Hurdle any other player.

F. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.

G. Make any contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary including using fists, locked hands, elbows or any part of the forearm or hand.

H. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.

I. Clip an opponent.

J. Position himself/herself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.

K. Tackle the runner by grasping or encircling with the hands or arms and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football.

K carries an automatic penalty of disqualification of that player. All other, if deemed flagrant, will result in disqualification.

**Roughing the Passer**

Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as he/she is considered out of the play after the pass. Roughing the passer restrictions do not apply if the forward pass is thrown from beyond Team A’s scrimmage line although regular contact restrictions do apply.

A roughing the passer is enforced from the dead ball spot and is not added on to the end of a completed pass.

**Offensive Screen Blocking**

The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. **The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back.** Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact during an offensive player’s screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain balance. A player must be on his/her feet before, during and after screen blocking.

A player who screen blocks shall not:

A. When he/she is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him/her.

B. When he/she assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with him/her.

C. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.

D. After assuming his/her legal screening position, move to maintain it unless he/she moves in the same direction and path as his/her opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.

Defensive players must go around the offensive player’s screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. **The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official.**

**Guarding the Flag Belt**

Flag Football Rules Amended April 25, 2011
Runners shall not flag guard by using the hands, arms or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes:
   A. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.
   B. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.
   C. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt.

The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a “stiff arm” extended to ward off an opponent attempting to deflag/tag.

The runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled or pushed by a teammate.

The defensive player shall not hold, grasp or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag.

**Flag Belt Removal**

A. Players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally deflagged by an opponent.
B. When a runner loses his/her flag belt either accidentally, inadvertently (not removed by grabbing or pulling) or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a 1 hand tag of the runner.
C. In circumstances where the flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play.
D. An opponent intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball is illegal.
E. Tampering with a flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials or other such acts is illegal.