



# **Wisconsin Dells Park and Rec**

## **NFL Flag Football Rulebook**



### **Rule 1. Playing Field**

- Grades 1-2 will play on field 60 yards long by 30 yards wide. There will be a 5 yard line on each end of the field. There will be a first down line at midfield. There will be no rushing zones on 5 yards of each end zone and 5 yards of each side of the first down line.
- Grades 3-4 will play on field 70 yards long by 30 yards wide. There will be a 5 yard line on each end of the field. There will be a first down line at midfield. There will be no rushing zones on 5 yards of each end zone and 5 yards of each side of the first down line.

### **Rule 2. Length of Game**

- There will be (2) – 25 minute halves with a 2-minute rest between halves. Time is kept on each field by the official and games will be controlled by this person. Clock will run continuously with no stopping. Officials may stop the clock at their discretion.
- One 1-minute timeout per team per half.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 45 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive a 30 second warning call.

### **Rule 3. Equipment**

- A. We encourage cleats to be worn, (soccer shoes or turf shoes), regular tennis shoe are also fine.
- B. Jersey's and any outside clothing must be TUCKED IN.
- C. Extra white strap from the belt must be tucked in.
- D. A regulation junior sized football will be used for grades 3-4. Nerf ball used for grades 1-2.
- E. Each coach will be given flag belts for their team, which they are to get back at the end of each game.
- F. Flags will be worn outside of clothing at the hips with both visible at all time.
- G. Mouth guards are encouraged to be worn at all times during practice and games.

### **Rule 4. Players and Substitution/ Team Structure**

- A. Team Size – Teams will be limited to a total of ten players. 5 or 6 players on the field at one time. Teams may agree to play with less.
- B. Players and Positions – The defensive team shall have players lined up no closer than five yards from the line of scrimmage. (Referee will indicate 5 yards with marker)
- C. Substitutions – Substitutions may be made on any dead ball stoppage. (Suggestion: Rotate each drive, keep things moving)
- D. Coaches may be on the field for all age groups.



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## **Rule 5. Start of the Game**

- A. A predetermined schedule will decide home and away teams. Home team will possess the ball to start the game. Away team will begin with the ball for the second half.
- B. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
- C. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- D. Teams change sides after the first 25-minute half. Possession changes to the away team to begin the half and clock will not stop except under special circumstances under 2 minutes.

## **Rule 6. Scoring**

- A. Score will be kept on the field with touchdowns being with 6 points.
- B. Following each touchdown, teams will have the option to go for 1 extra point from the 7-yard line, or 2 extra points from the 10-yard line.

## **Rule 7. Fumbled ball**

- A. On a running or passing play, a fumbled ball is dead where it falls and belongs to the team in control of the ball at the time of the fumble.

## **Rule 8. Centered ball**

- A. Sideways hike and between the leg hikes are legal. (Between legs hike is recommended)
- B. On an unsuccessful snap, the ball will be declared dead and the next down will be played from the spot where the ball lands.
- C. The defense may not line up in the "neutral zone" (less than 5 yards from the ball). Coaches and officials will monitor this throughout the game.

## **Rule 9. Plays not allowed**

- A. Pinocle Play – The center may not carry the ball from the LOS.
- B. Sleeper Play – Every player must be in the huddle at the start of each play.
  - a. **Penalty: 5 yards for illegal procedure**



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### **Rule 10. First Downs**

- A. Midfield is the only first down marker for all age groups

### **Rule 11. Special rules governing the offense**

- A. Blocking – Players may not dive, roll, hold, or extend arms to block. (Must shadow defender, with fists inside of shoulders.)
- B. Roughing and Deliberate Fouls – Tripping, clipping, pushing, illegal use of the hands, etc...
  - 1. Deliberate or intentional fouls will be **penalized 5 yards**, and the child will be removed for the duration of the current drive. A second occurrence of a deliberate foul by the same player will result in that player being **expelled from the game**.
- C. Running –
  - 1. Spin Rule – A ball carrier is allowed to spin with both feet planted to the ground. If player jumps to spin, the ball will be called down at the spot of the spin.
  - 2. Protecting the flags – A player holding onto his or her flags or slapping opponents hands away from flags will be called down at the point of the foul.
  - 3. Lost Flags – If a player carrying the ball accidentally pulls his/her own flag off, the ball will be called dead where the flag fell off. If a receiver catches a pass without flags on, the ball will be called dead at the spot of the reception.
  - 4. The **quarterback CANNOT** run with the ball.
  - 5. Direct handoffs, pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
  - 6. “No Running Zones” located five yards from each end zone and five yards on both sides of the midfield line are designed to avoid short yardage, power-running situations.
  - 7. The player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
  - 8. NO laterals or pitches once the ball has crossed the LOS.
- D. Stiff Arming – Absolutely no stiff arms allowed. Roughing penalty will be enforced.
- E. Pass Minimum – The minimum amount of pass attempts per team is one pass attempt per four downs.

### **Rule 12. Passing/Eligible Receivers/In Bounds**

- A. Illegal Forward Pass – The quarterback may not pass the ball if he/she is beyond the LOS.
  - a. Penalty : Loss of down and 5 yards



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- B. Eligible Players – All players on the field are eligible to receive a pass.
- C. In Bounds – A player needs to have both feet in bounds for a complete pass.
- D. Time per Down – A 30 second warning prior to the 45 second clock for delay of game. Unnecessary stalling will be penalized 3 yards and coaches are encouraged to have teams ready for play in 30 seconds.
- E. All players are eligible to receive a pass (including the QB if the ball has been handed off)
- F. Shovel passes are allowed.
- G. Interceptions can be returned by the defense for all divisions.
- H. As in the NFL, one player is allowed in motion at a time. Penalty: Illegal motion: 5 yards.
- I. The offense will have 7 seconds to pass or it will be a loss of down. This will be enforced by referee.

### **Rule 13. Defensive Play**

- A. **The defense must play a minimum of five yards from the line of scrimmage.**
  - If the defense moves into the “neutral zone” it is a **penalty of 3 yards**.
  - Defensive players are not allowed to move into the “neutral zone” and back before the ball is snapped.
  - All players will be warned by officials. If they are continually off sides, a penalty will be enforced.
  - When inside the 5 yard line, “No rush zone”, when trying to score, players may play man-to-man coverage. (Prevents quick screen plays)
- B. A 3-point stance is not allowed. Officials and coaches will correct this before the ball is snapped (No penalty). Center snap between the legs is not considered a 3-point stance.
- C. Blitzing the Quarterback – The defensive line may not rush the quarterback until the ball is in the quarterbacks hands.
  - **Penalty: 5 yards if defense runs in too early**
- D. Fouls – The defense will be penalized for tripping, tackling, pushing, and illegal use of the hands.
  - **Penalty: 5 yards      Holding: 5 yards**
- E. Diving/leaving feet to grab flags **IS** permissible.
- F. Pass Interference –
  - Defensive: Ball will be marked at the point of the foul. If the penalty occurs in the end zone, ball will be placed at the one yard line.
  - Offensive: 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage
- G. Holding/Pushing – Not allowed at any time
- H. Interceptions can be returned by the defense.



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## Rule 14. Safety

- A. After a safety, the ball is put into play at the 20 yard line with the ball changing to the possession changing to the team who made the safety

## Rule 15. Dead Balls

- A. Play is ruled dead when the following occurs:
  - Ball carriers flag is pulled
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - Touchdown or safety is scored
  - Ball carriers knee hits the ground
  - Ball carriers flag falls out
  - Ball carrier fumbles, the ball is spotted where possession is lost.

## Special Rules

- 1. Inadvertent Whistle – The ball is dead at the point of the official’s whistle. The team in control of the ball has the choice of:
  - Taking the ball at the point of the whistle
  - Play is replayed

## Penalties

All penalties will be called by the referee. Coaches **CAN** call penalties on their own team.

Offense	Defense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal Procedure – 5 yds from LOS</li> <li>• Roughing/Deliberate Foul – 5 yds from spot</li> <li>• Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yds and loss of down</li> <li>• Delay of Game – 3 yds from LOS</li> <li>• Pass interference – 5 yds from LOS</li> <li>• Illegal Motion – 5 yds from LOS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral Zone – 3 yds from LOS</li> <li>• Early Blitzing – 5 yds from LOS</li> <li>• Roughing/Deliberate Foul – 5 yds from spot</li> <li>• Pass Interference – Ball marked at spot of foul, if in end zone, ball placed on 1 yd line</li> </ul>

Only coaches may talk to the referee about questions on rules, clarifications, or interpretations. Players cannot question judgement calls.

Games cannot end of Defensive Penalty, unless the offense elects to decline the penalty.