

2021 Beaver Youth Flag Football Rules

I. Game

1. Five minutes before game time, captains shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss gets to choose to receive or defer to second half choice.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has FOUR (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield; it has FOUR (4) 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 5-yard line.
4. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
5. Teams change sides after the first half of play, 20 minutes.

II. Equipment

1. Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
2. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
3. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
4. Players' jerseys must be tucked into the pants.
5. Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped.

III. Field

1. Field size for the 2nd and 3rd grade teams are 20 yds x 50 yds, Field size for 4th and 5th grade teams are 40 yds x 70 yds
2. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
3. **The 2nd and 3rd grade teams will each play 8 on the field with the minimum of 7 players on the field at a time. The 4th and 5th grade teams will each play 8 on the field with the minimum of 7 players on the field at a time.**

IV. Timing and Overtime

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock. The clock stops only for timeouts.
2. Halftime is one minute long.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time out per half.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime.

Overtime- Captain shall meet in the middle of the field for a coin toss. Winner determines if they will defend or start with the ball. Each team will receive one position. The ball will start on midfield and the offense will have three (4) plays to score a touchdown. If no score is made, then the total yards gained will be noted by the officials. If no score after 1 complete overtime, then winner will be determined by yards gained. If no yards were gained and no score was made then we will go into a second OT and the OT coin toss decision is reversed.

V. Scoring

1. Touchdown: **6 points**
2. PAT **1 point** (5-yard line) or **2 points** (12-yard line)
3. Safety: **2 points**
 - a. A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in end zone. **Ball will be placed at the receiving team's 5-yard line to start play.**
4. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion 4-5th grade (from the 12-yard line) 2nd-3rd (from the 8-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.

Mercy Rule: After one team is winning by twenty-eight points or more, the losing team gets one offensive series to continue regulation play. If they do not score, the game goes into scrimmage mode until the end of the game. The game is over scoring wise.

VI. Coaches

1. **Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players according to need. Defensive coaches must move to the sidelines before the snap of the ball. An offensive coach is allowed to stay on the field 10 yds behind the line of scrimmage.**
2. Coaches are expected to adhere to Beaver FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.

VII. Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
* The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
2. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
3. Any official can whistle the play dead.
4. Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - e. The ball carrier's flag falls out.
 - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one flag.
 - h. The 7 second pass clock expires.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground unless fumbled forward then ball is spotted where the runner original lost possession.

VIII. Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball or pull from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.

5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with the football or jersey.

IX. Running

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball.
* If one foot precedes the other, the forward foot marks the spot.
2. The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
3. Laterals, pitches, or direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs, pitches, or laterals.
* If the ball touches the ground, it is dead. If it touches the ground in the end zone then it will be a safety.
4. The player who takes the handoff, pitch or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
5. Hand offs can be in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback but must be behind the line of scrimmage.
6. Once the ball has left the quarterback hands all defensive players are eligible to rush.
7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping is considered flag guarding.
8. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
9. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
10. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
11. Offensive players, not carrying the ball must stop their motion not to impede with the defense once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
12. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction.
13. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

X. Passing

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed.
3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven 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 no longer is 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 (LOS).

XI. Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off, pitched, or lateral behind the line).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

- 5.** Interceptions change the possession of the ball and CAN be returned. Normal running rules apply. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

XII. Rushing the Passer

- 1.** All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- 2.** Once the ball is handed off, pitched, or lateral, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- 3.** A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - a. A legal rush is:
 - i. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early, they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - iv. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
 - b. A penalty may be called if:
 - i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Offsides (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - iii. Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - c. Special circumstances:
 - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven second clock in effect.
 - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play, however if they do send a rusher, the rusher must check in with the official.
 - iii. If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as a defender with no offside penalty enforced.
- 4.** Players rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block a pass. However, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way.
- 5.** Offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has a CLEAR PATH to the QB and any interference that would impede his/her path to the QB will be considered screening. The defense may attempt to block a pass provided they do not strike the passer.
- 6.** Blocking the pass and then striking the passer will result in a 10-yard penalty.
- 7.** A Sack occurs if the QB's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the QB's feet are when the flag is pulled. * A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

XIII. Formations

- 1.** An offensive team must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the Center.) The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard beyond and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - b. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
- 2.** Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the one player in motion.
- 3.** Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- 4.** The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

XIV. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the Field Director or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals! FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent or official.
4. Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

XV. Penalties

General

1. The referee will call all penalties
2. Referee will determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play
3. All Penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted spot fouls.
4. Penalties are assessed Live Ball then Dead Ball. Live Ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered completed.
5. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

5 Yard Penalties

Defense:

1. Offside
2. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.)
3. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball)
4. Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

Offense:

1. Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
2. Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)
3. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
4. Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier
5. Delay of game

10 Yard Penalties

1. Roughing the passer
2. Taunting
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct. -After scoring and touchdown is good, offense receives a 10-yard penalty from the yard line of PAT attempt after touchdown (one warning to the player and team before ejection)

Spot Fouls

- Flag guarding.....5 yards & loss of down
- Charging.....5 yards & loss of down
- Defensive Pass Interference.....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

