



Flag Football Rules

Revised July 2014

Leagues follow U.S.S.S.A. rules, except for any alterations covered below.

1. Team Captain Responsibilities:

- a. Team Captains must submit a Team Roster Form and a signed Code of Conduct prior to the first game of the scheduled season.
- b. Team Captain is responsible for full team payment prior to **Week 2** of the league schedule. Teams not paid in full by this date may be removed from the league.
- c. The Team Captain is the spokesman for their team.

2. Roster:

- a. **All players must be at least 18 years old. ID's will be checked.**
- b. A team's roster can have no more than eight players.
- c. A copy of the roster must be on file by the first game. Additions can be made up to and including the 3rd game of the season. Rosters are finalized after the 3rd game is completed.
- d. **All players must have a valid Players Membership with TSE.**
- e. Players must check-in at the front desk prior to each game for roster verification. Teams who use ineligible players (see above roster guidelines) will forfeit games where an ineligible player was used.
- f. Players are only permitted to play for one team in any given league.

3. Cancellations and Rescheduling Requests:

Indoor activities are extremely busy at Total Sports Experience. Therefore, the rescheduling of games will only be considered in extremely exceptional circumstances. To be fair to all teams, it is our intention to stick to the league schedule throughout the season. Unavailability of certain players within teams will not be an acceptable reason to reschedule games.

4. Equipment:

- a. Player jerseys of opposing teams should be of contrasting color. The referee will assign bibs to one team if there is not sufficient contrast.
- b. Clothing must be tucked in, under pants, and under the flags.
- c. Flags must be a minimum of 1.5 inches wide and 12 inches long
- d. Players may not wear jewelry or other equipment that may be deemed inappropriate, dangerous or confusing by the referee. Hard casts are permitted with a minimum of 1" padding and permission from the referee.
- e. Teams provide their own ball. Any ball which size is approved for High School, College, or the National Football League is a legal ball (no intermediate sizes). All balls should be properly inflated.

5. Playing Time:

- a. League games consist of two 20-minute halves of running time.
- b. There is a **five-minute** rest period between halves.

- c. The referees have been instructed to begin the games according to the posted schedules. Captains are responsible to watch the clock and have their team ready to start on time. Referees will announce a 30-second warning with a buzzer or whistle.
- d. The two-minute warning will stop the game in the second half only. With under two-minutes to play, in the second half, only a time-out or penalty (see rule 10-c) will stop the clock.
- e. Each team has one time-out per half. Time-outs are 30-seconds in length and stop the clock. Time-outs that are not used in the first half; do not carry over to the second half.
*Time-out called after Touchdown is scored. Defense (Team 1) calls time-out after Offense (Team 2) scores a touchdown. The Point After Touchdown (PAT) is a continuation of the touchdown play, thus the clock will NOT start on the PAT snap. The clock will start when Team 1 snaps the ball on their first offensive play.
- f. There is no overtime in the event of a tie. Overtime will be played, in the event of a tie, in playoff games only.
- g. Teams must field 4 players at all times. In the event a team can't field 4 players to start a game, a 10 minute grace period will be given from the scheduled game start time. The game will start once the 4th player arrives. If mid game, a team fails to field 4 players, they are forced to forfeit the game and the score will be recorded as 28-0.
- h. The referee will declare a forfeit ten minutes after the scheduled start of play in the event a team fails to field the required 4 players.
- i. Substitutions are allowed between plays. Substitutions must be made from the bench side of the field.

6. Game basics

- a. Field is 28 yards x 62 yards long
- b. End zones are 10 yards deep
- c. Five-yard no-run zones are established, from each end zone and on each side of mid-field
- d. The center can snap the ball sideways or between the legs
- e. A play cannot start until all offensive players have their flags on. If a flag falls off mid play, the player is immediately called down once the ball is in their possession.
- f. All players are eligible receivers
- g. One foot in bounds and possession of the ball constitutes a catch
- h. The offensive team is responsible for returning the ball to the line of scrimmage after each play
- i. One player may go in motion (parallel to the line of scrimmage) and the ball can be snapped to him/her.
- j. All forward passes must be completed beyond the line of scrimmage, or the play will be blown dead.
- k. Spinning is allowed.
- l. If a player's knee is down, but his/her flags are still on, the player is considered down.
- m. Kicking or punting the ball is not allowed.
- n. Start of play
 - i. A coin toss determines the first possession. The team winning the coin toss can elect to start on offense or defend. The team starting on defense at the beginning of the game will start on offense at the start of the second half.
 - ii. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field, they have three (3) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to get a first down or a touchdown, the defense takes over on their five-yard line. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offenses five-yard line.
- o. The Quarterback is designated as the player who receives the snap from center. A Quarterback cannot run. A player "in motion" may receive the snap and hand off to another player who can run or pass.

- p. No laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed. The ball must be handed off to a Running Back. One hand-off per play.
- q. Once the ball is handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- r. Each time the ball is spotted, the offense has 30-seconds to snap the ball
- s. All fumbles are considered dead balls and are placed where the ball hits the ground. The offense retains possession, unless it is caught in the air, before it hits the ground, by the defensive team.
- t. Five-Mississippi Rush – Player rushing the Quarterback must be one-yard off the line and must count, **out loud**, or a penalty will be called.
- u. There is no time limit for the quarterback to throw the ball. It is up to the defense whether or not they decide to rush (no 10-second rule)
- v. Interceptions may be run back (except on extra points, the play is ruled dead).

7. Scoring

- a. A player's flags must cross the goal line for a successful score. The position of the ball does not matter.
- b. Touchdowns are worth 6 points.
- c. A 12-yard line mark shall be placed, from each end zone for 2 point, extra-point attempts.
- d. A 5-yard line mark shall be placed, from each end zone for 1 point, extra-point attempts.
- e. Two-points are awarded for a safety and the defensive team receives possession of the ball.
- f. Forfeited games will result in a recorded score of 28 points.
- g. Maximum point differential (for tie breaking procedures) is 28 points.

8. Contact

- a. Blocking will not be permitted at anytime. This is a non-contact game.
- b. Bump and run defense is not allowed.
- c. Offensive ball carrier
 - i. The responsibility for avoiding contact rests with the ball carrier. They must show the officials an effort to avoid contact.
 - ii. The ball carrier may not deliberately run or dive into a defensive player.
 - iii. A ball carrier may spin or jump. If they do this, they are considered in a state of non-control and should contact occur, as a result of the uncontrolled momentum, he/she will be penalized.
- d. The defensive player on the line of scrimmage that is positioned in front of the offensive player snapping the ball **MUST** be 1 yard from that offensive player.

9. Tackling and flag guarding

- a. A legal tackle takes place by a defender removing the ball carrier's flag without physically grasping the ball carrier.
- b. **Flag Guarding Rule** – Runners may not guard the flag belt, either intentionally or unintentionally, to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Swinging the hands or arms over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging or placing the ball over the flag belt for the same purpose
 - ii. Lowering the shoulder and placing the arm over the flag belt
 - iii. Stiff arming an opponent
 - iv. Using the ball to protect the flags
- c. **The Breakaway Rule** – A touchdown or extra point will be awarded, if in the official's judgment, an offensive or defensive player, who has obviously broken loose, and has an apparent touchdown made, is tackled, held, or deliberately pushed out of bounds. The penalty will be unsportsmanlike conduct and it will be enforced on the next down.

10. Penalties

- a. The following are five-yard penalties:
 - i. Offsides
 - ii. Illegal procedure
 - iii. Too many players on the field
 - iv. Delay of game
- b. The following are 10-yard penalties:
 - i. Flag guarding
 - ii. Stiff arming
 - iii. Diving
 - iv. Pass interference (plus automatic 1st down)
 - v. Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - vi. Blocking
 - vii. Contact created by ball carrier
- c. With two-minutes or less remaining in the half/game, a delay of game penalty will result in:
 - i. Loss of down, five yards, and the clock stopping for an offensive penalty (if the offensive team is ahead)
 - ii. Five yards for a defensive penalty
 - iii. The intent of this rule is to prevent a team from incurring an intentional penalty to stop the clock
- d. Excessive roughness, taunting and verbal abuse are considered flagrant penalties and may result in ejection from the game or league.
- e. Teams are responsible for their fans conduct.

11. Participant Misconduct and Discipline

Total Sports Experience has a Zero Tolerance Policy towards fighting, taunting, trash-talking and general unsportsmanlike behavior. The referee has the responsibility and the right to eject players, terminate games and use any other measures they deem necessary to maintain a safe environment.

Any player who is ejected will incur a minimum one-week/one-game suspension from all league play at TSE in addition to the next league game for that team. The individual may also be assessed a \$50 dollar fine. The individual may not participate in any game until the fine has been paid and the suspension served. A second ejection may result in the individuals' suspension from playing for the remainder of the season.

Any player who uses a striking motion (punch, slap or swinging of the arm) will be banned from the facility for a minimum of four months!

Any player who is ejected for fighting or other violent actions may also be banned from the facility.

Any player who leaves the bench during an altercation, for any reason, may also be ejected.

Any player, who is ejected from the game, may be asked to leave the facility depending on the referee and management's discretion.

The review of an incident and the resulting disciplinary actions are at the sole discretion of TSE management.

12. Standings

- a. Point system for ranking teams
 - i. 3 points for a win
 - ii. 1 point for a tie
 - iii. 0 points for a loss
- b. Tie-breaker procedures (for playoff seeding)
 - i. Head-to-head record
 - ii. Goal differential for season (max of +/-28 points per game)
 - iii. Most points scored
 - iv. Least points conceded
- c. Tie-breaker procedures (for playoff games only)
 - i. Each team will start at mid-field and have one series of downs to score
 - ii. If still tied, after each team has attempt another series will be awarded to each team
 - iii. If still tied, after the second series of down, teams will be given a third series. If a touchdown is scored, teams must go for the two-point extra point
 - iv. This format will be followed until the tie is broken

13. Management Authority

Unsportsmanlike and inappropriate language or conduct directed at the referees, coaches, players, fans or employees of Total Sports Experience is not acceptable. Repeated violations will result in removal of a participant or a team for an entire season. Total Sports Experience is promoting an attitude and atmosphere of fair play, respect for others and first class behavior. We hold ourselves as well as our guests, to those standards.

Unity Health System Total Sports Experience reserves the right to add, modify or change the rules of play at any time to ensure fair play and the safety of all teams and players.