

Fairport Flag Football Rules

Updated 08/2023

Roster

1. Each team has no more than 6 players on the field at any given time.
2. Each player must play at least 2 quarters of each contest.
3. Both coaches must agree to player matchups before each quarter begins. Players must guard each other until the end of that quarter.
4. Substitutions should only be made at the change of quarters or in the case of an injury. Both coaches must match up players before play begins again.
5. Each player should have a proper belt with 2 flags. Flags should be located at each hip. Flag belts are located outside jerseys.

Field Area

1. The field area will be 50 yards long by 25 yards wide for the 4-6 division and 20 yards wide for the 1-3 division.
2. Each end zone is 5 yards long by 25 yards wide.
3. The non-scoring playing area is 40 yards long by 25 yards wide.
4. First downs occur at the halfway mark of the non-scoring area, which is at the 20-yard line.
5. Cones will mark the field at necessary landmarks

Time

1. Each game consists of 4 quarters. Each quarter consists of a 12-minute running-clock.
2. Only a timeout may stop the clock. Timeouts last 1 minute each. Each team is permitted 2 timeouts per half.
3. Officials may call timeouts for injuries or equipment malfunctions.
4. Halftime should be no longer than 5 minutes. Only a mutual agreement between coaches can resume play before the 5-minute time.
5. After the official spots the ball, the offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball.

Game

1. At the start of each game, team captains from both teams meet with the official at midfield for the coin toss. The “visiting team” calls the coin toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss chooses between receiving the ball at the start of the 1st or 2nd halves.
3. The loser of the coin toss chooses which direction they will defend. There is no deferring.
4. Teams change sides after halftime.
5. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 5-yard line and has 4 downs to cross midfield. If the offensive crosses midfield, they have 4 more downs to score a touchdown.
6. The offensive team may elect to “punt” the ball on their 4th down, which places the ball on their opponents’ 5-yard line.
7. All possession changes start at the end of the previous play, including interceptions and fumbles.
8. The play is ruled over when: the ballcarriers’ flag is down is pulled or falls out; ballcarrier steps out of bounds; incomplete pass; fumble; touchdown or conversion scored; ballcarrier falls to the ground or knee hits the ground; receiver catches the ball without two flags on their belt.
9. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense can do the following: take the ball where it was at the time of the whistle or replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

Scoring

1. Touchdown = 6 points
2. Safety = 2 points
3. Conversions: 1 point from the 5 yard-line and 2 points from the 10-yard line.
4. Interceptions returned for a score are equivalent to the offensive attempt. Example: touchdowns = 6 points, 2-point tries = 2 points, 1-point tries = 1 point.
5. Once a team is winning by 30 points, the team in the lead will no longer get points for scoring until the other team gets within 30 points.
6. If the game is tied at the end of regulation, each team gets an equal number of 2-point conversion attempts from the 10-yard line. This process repeats until a winner emerges from the contest.

Equipment

1. All players must wear the team-issued jersey & shorts.
2. All players must tuck their jersey under their flag belts.
3. Players must remove all necklaces, watches, wristbands, earrings, etc. before entering the game.
4. All players must wear shoes. Rubber or plastic cleats are recommended. No metal spikes are permitted.

Play Calling

1. All plays must start from the required formation. Playbook plays are encouraged.
2. Coaches may be on the field with their teams to help call plays. The offense has 30 seconds from the spot of the ball to snap the ball to avoid a delay of game penalty & loss of down.
3. After calling the plays, both offensive & defensive coaches must be behind the line of scrimmage to avoid interfering with the play.

Offense

1. The center must snap the ball between the legs to the quarterback in order to start the play. The play ends when the official blows the whistle.
2. Plays for 1-3 grades start after the center hikes the QB secures the ball and says "go". Plays for 4-6 grades start at the hike of the ball.
3. The center lines up at the Line of Scrimmage (LOS). The 4 other receivers must line up on the LOS before play begins.
4. As many as 5 offensive players are eligible to receive a pass from the quarterback, including the center. The quarterback may not catch any passes, including a deflected pass.
5. Forward passes must go past the LOS.
6. Only 1 hand-off or lateral or forward pass is permitted per play behind the LOS.
7. Running play hand-offs or laterals cannot be in front of the quarterback. Bobbled hand-offs or laterals hitting ground end the play and result in a loss of down.
8. All fumbles result in an immediate change of possession for 4-6 division, loss of down for 1-3 division.
9. The quarterback has 6 seconds to throw the ball. The official will blow the play dead with a loss of down.

10. The QB may throw the ball out of bounds to avoid a sack by time or a blitzing defender.
11. The quarterback may not run the ball, unless the defense declares a blitz before the snap.
12. A player may receive the ball after a flag falls from their belt. However, the receiver may not advance the ball past the reception without two flags hanging from their belt.
13. No player may motion before the snap.
14. A legal catch requires at least 1 foot in bounds.
15. The ballcarrier may not cover their flags to prevent a defender from pulling a flag, including stiff-arming or swiping at a defender's arms.
16. All players without the ball may block with extended arms & hands. Players are not permitted to blindside defensive players or purposefully push them to the ground.

Defense

1. The defense must play man-coverage on all receivers except for running plays.
2. The defender guarding the QB may play from a "free safety" position in line with the QB.
3. All defenders may break towards the football once the ball is in the air or for running plays.
4. Defenders must pull 1 flag to mark a defender down. Defenders should immediately drop that flag to the ground. Defenders may not throw or toss the flag backwards.
5. A defender may only pull the flag of an offensive player with possession of the ball.
6. A defender may not hold, push, or tackle the ballcarrier in order to pull a flag.
7. Defenders may not attempt to strip the ball.
8. The defense is permitted 1 blitz every 4 downs. The player guarding the QB may blitz. The coach must alert the official before blitzing. The official will alert the offense that the defense is blitzing.
9. If the defender sacks the QB, the ball is marked at the site of the flag.
10. Defenders may return interceptions for points on regular downs & conversions.
11. Defenders may not recover fumbles. All fumbles result in a dead ball with an immediate change of possession.
12. Interceptions require the same rules as a reception and may be returned for points, both on touchdowns and conversions. The point totals correspond to the offensive situation.

Penalties

1. The officials will call all penalties.
2. Coaches or players may not challenge any penalties from the field or sideline.
3. Coaches may bring up any officiating concerns in private to the league commissioner with a schedule appointment after the contest concludes.
4. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty. The offense will receive an additional play with no time on the clock in that scenario. The offensive team may decline that penalty to end the game.
5. If the distance to the goal is shorter than the penalty yardage, the penalty assessment will be half the distance to the goal.
6. If an offensive penalty occurs on a conversion attempt, the result is no good. If a defensive penalty occurs, the offense receives another try from half the distance to the goal.

Defensive Penalties

1. Offside = automatic first down
2. Illegal blitz = automatic first down
3. Illegal flag pull = automatic first down
4. Roughing the passer = automatic first down
5. Verbal or physical taunting = automatic first down
6. Unsportsmanlike conduct = automatic first down & removal of player for the remainder of the quarter. A second infraction for that same player results in a removal for the remainder of the game and a full-game suspension for the following game.
7. Defensive pass interference = automatic first down
8. Holding = automatic first down
9. Stripping the ball = automatic first down
10. Unnecessary roughness = automatic first down
11. If any penalty occurs on a first down, then 10-yards is awarded to the offense with a first down at the new line of scrimmage.

Offensive Penalties

1. Offside = loss of down
2. False start = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
3. Illegal forward pass or lateral = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
4. Flag guarding = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
5. Offensive pass interference = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
6. Pre-snap motion = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
7. Delay of game = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
8. Blocking with shoulder, legs, or head = loss of down & replay at previous line of scrimmage.
9. Verbal or physical taunting = loss of down
10. Unsportsmanlike conduct = loss of down & removal of player for the remainder of the quarter. A second infraction for that same player results in a removal for the remainder of the game and a full-game suspension for the following game.
11. Unnecessary roughness = loss of down.