

South Davis Recreation Flag Football Rules

Forward any questions or comments to:

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Sportsmanship

- Parents, coaches or players that are showing unsportsmanlike behavior may be given **ONE verbal warning**, upon the discretion of the official. The second verbal warning will result in the parent/coach/player being asked to leave and will be given 2 minutes to leave. If they do not leave, the game will end, and if necessary, the authorities will be called to escort them off the fields.
- **SDRC Staff reserve the right to eject anybody for any reason. Failure to comply with staff direction may result in ejection from the league.**

Game

- 1-6 Grade: 8 per team on the field. 11-12 players on roster per team- Must have a minimum of 6 players on the field to avoid a forfeit at game time. 7-8 Grade: 5 per team on the field. Must have minimum of 5 on the field to avoid forfeit.
- **All players must receive equal amounts of playing time and receive equal opportunities to run/pass/or catch the ball.**
- All players must be registered with the league.
- 18-minute halves with 3-minute half time; Running clock except for final 2 minutes.
- In final 2 minutes: clock stops on incomplete pass, out of bounds, change of possession, penalty, momentarily on first down, and during PAT's. The clock only stops for time-outs for the rest of the game.
- Each team has two 60 second timeouts **PER GAME.**
- **Team must wait for referee to set cones before starting each play. Referee will whistle to signal ready for play.**
- 30 second play clock starts at ready for play (coaches will receive a 15 second warning)
- Over time will be decided by a PAT (Point after touchdown). (No Touch Downs in OT). Each team will be given a chance to try for a 1 or 2 point, PAT (same regulation PAT rules apply) A coin toss will determine who has possession first. If at the end of the first OT the score is still tied, teams will switch who has the possession first. If a third OT is reached teams must go for 2. **No Timeouts will be given during OT**
- Score will be kept on the fields but will not longer be updated on Quickscores.
- **For safety reasons, spectators must stay at least 10 feet off sidelines and boundary lines**

Equipment

- Each player must wear a flag belt (worn at the hip) and shoes (cleats preferred). Gloves and mouth guard (optional). – No metal or toe cleats
- Player must wear the official team jersey which must be tucked into pants if they hang below belt line.
- Players must remove all watches, and any other jewelry that officials deem hazardous.
- 1st-2nd grade use a Pee Wee size football.
- 3rd-4th grade use a Junior size football.
- 5th-8th grade use an Intermediate size football.

Field

- 1st – 6th Grade Field size 190'x85'. (end zones 20', sidelines and 2 first downs (50') will be marked)
- 7th & 8th Grade Field size 190'x60'. (end zones 20', sidelines and 2 first downs (50') will be marked)
- Vertical Pocket: 150'x40' – Once the ball leaves the vertical pocket the defense can rush. Also, once the ball leaves the vertical pocket the offense is then allowed to “run up the middle”. “Run up the Middle” will be explained later in the rules – See “LINE BUCKS”.
- Possession begins at 5 yard line. First Down is at thirds of the field. 4 downs, no punting. On change of possession ball is taken to opposing team's end of the field (except in the case of an interception)
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only change of possession that do not start on the 5 yard line. Interceptions are returnable. If the interception is inside the 5 yard line then the ball will be advanced to the 5 yard line.

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Coaches

- 1st – 4th Grade: One coach is allowed on the field per team to direct players according to need. Coaches are expected to be **respectful and professional**. Coaches with unsportsmanlike conduct will be expected to leave. **Coaches are responsible for their sportsmanship of players, parents, and spectators.**
- Coaches who are making ball snap changes based on how the opposing teams line up, will be given an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and asked to coach from the sideline for the remainder of the game.
- Coaches on the field must stand a minimum of 10 yards behind the play.
- 5th – 8th Grade: Coaches must remain on the sideline and not permitted on the field.

Scoring

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Inside the opponent's 5 yard line is a **No Run Zone all plays must be a passing play. Plays starting on the 5 yard line can be a run play.**
 - **EXCEPTION: Due to the difficulty of passing and catching at their age/skill level we will allow running plays within the 5 yard line for 1st/2nd grade only.**
- PAT (Point after touchdown): A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line **run or pass**) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 10-yard line **run or pass**). If decision is made to change PAT value following a penalty, penalty will be enforced from the new PAT line of scrimmage (from the 5 yard line for 1, from the 10 yard line for 2)
- Intercepted and returned PAT: 2 points regardless of whether the intercepted team was trying for 1 or 2
- Safety: 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 while in the end zone or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty which occurs in the end zone. 2 points and scoring team awarded the ball at their own **10 yard line**

Live Ball/Dead Ball

- Ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until official whistles the ball dead.
- Any fumble will be considered a dead ball & will be spotted at the spot the ball was dropped.
- Substitutions may be made at a dead ball.
- Play is ruled dead when: ball hits the ground, ball carrier's flag is pulled, ball carrier steps out of bounds, Touchdown/PAT/Safety is scored, any part of the ball carrier's body touches the ground besides his/her hands and feet, ball carrier's flag falls off, or receiver with no flags catches the ball (ball is spotted at point of reception)
- In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - A. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
 - B. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- 1-4 Grade: In the case of a fumbled snap teams may have 1 free re-snap per half.

Running

- Ball spotted at the spot of the ball, **not the player's feet** (With any attempt to dive, the ball will be **marked down at the spot where the players feet left the ground**).
- A Dive is when both feet leave the ground in an attempt to advance the ball.
- **Diving is not permitted; Player will be marked down at the spot where their feet left the ground.**
- Aside from the 7th/8th Grade league a quarterback can run either on a designed run or a scramble off a passing play. **Defenders within the 10 yard rush line must wait for quarterback to leave the field's painted pocket lines before rushing the quarterback**
- Lateral handoffs and lateral passes behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. The player who takes a hand off or pass behind the line of scrimmage can pass or handoff the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- If a handoff is dropped, the play is ruled dead, and the ball will be spotted where the ball is dropped.
- Once the quarterback has handed off or passed the ball, all defensive players are eligible to rush the runner.
- **Stiff arms, lowering elbows or head, hanging equipment, untucked jersey's or blocking access to runner's flags with hands or arms to avoid flag pull is considered flag guarding and is not allowed.**

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Running (continued)

- **Under the discretion of the Official, ANY excessive contact by a defender will be ruled as unnecessary roughness.**
- Blocking in any manner is no longer allowed, including running in front of the ball carrier or “setting screens”.
- **The Center may not run the ball. However, the Center is eligible as a receiver.**
- **LINE BUCKS:** A line buck is handing the ball off within one yard of the center. No running plays within one yard of either side of the center will be permitted unless it has been preceded by a distinct lateral pass (A hand-off is not a pass) or the Quarterback runs outside of the “vertical pocket” (No running up the middle!) Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down.

Passing/ Receiving

- All passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, multiple lateral passes behind the line of scrimmage are permitted (**only one forward pass per play**)
- If a lateral pass is dropped, the play will be ruled dead, and the ball will be spotted where the ball hits the ground.
- All players are allowed to receive passes (including quarterback if the ball has been handed off or passed behind the line of scrimmage)
- In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- Receivers must get at least one foot inbounds for a play to be ruled a catch.

7-8 Grade QB Rules

- The QB may not run.
- QB has 7 seconds to **either hand the ball off or pass**. If they fail to do so, it will be considered a sack and the down will be consumed. An official will count out 7 seconds as soon as the ball is put in play.
- If the QB is sacked by the 7 second clock the ball will be spotted where the QB is standing
- If the QB does run, it will be a 5-yard penalty from the original spot and loss of down.

Rushing the Passer

- Must be a minimum of 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and can rush the quarterback when the ball is snapped.
- Once ball has left the QB hands (hand off or pass), or the QB has left the vertical pocket, the 10 yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- **A legal rush** is any rush from a point 10 yards from the line of scrimmage after the ball is snapped; a rush from anywhere on the field after the ball has been *handed off or passed behind line of scrimmage (players are eligible to intercept lateral passes)*
- **Rushers to the QB must avoid any contact with any stationary offensive lineman.**
- If a rusher leaves the rush line prior to the snap, they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback when the ball is snapped.
- If an early rush occurs, an official will throw a yellow flag. The play will be a free play for the offense. When the play is over the offense will be allowed to choose to accept the penalty or decline the penalty and accept the play.
- A penalty may be called if: the rusher enters the neutral zone before the ball is snapped, any defensive (or offensive) player enters the neutral zone before the ball is snapped; any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball has left QB hands or QB has passed pocket lines. It is Encroachment if a defensive player enters the neutral zone and contacts an offensive player or the ball prior to the snap, or if he interferes with the ball during the snap. The play is dead immediately.
- Players rushing the passer may attempt to block a pass, **however NO contact can be made with the passer in any way.** Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then contacting the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.

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Flag Pulling

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- Defenders cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- 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.
- A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball. This will incur a 5 yard penalty at the end of the play.
- Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defenders access to the flags and will be penalized 5 yards from the spot of the foul and the down will be lost.
- Teams cannot intentionally wear shorts that are a similar color to the flag they are wearing in an effort to disguise the flag. This can be grounds for a forfeit.
- **It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.**

Formations

- **The offense must have a minimum of 1 player on the line of scrimmage; the quarterback must be under center or in shotgun and be stationary at the snap directly behind the center. Any player that is not directly behind the center that receives the snap does not receive quarterback protection and is treated as a runner.**
- If a player in motion receives the snap, and is not the designated quarterback, they will not receive quarterback protection behind the line of scrimmage.
- Any number of offensive players may shift prior to the snap but only one player on offense is allowed in motion when the ball is being snapped. The player(s) in motion must be moving parallel to the line of scrimmage or in a backward direction, forward motion will be penalized as an illegal motion. All but one player on offense must be set prior to the snap.
- The center must snap the ball from the ground and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.
- The center may snap between his/her legs or from the side.

Penalties

- The referee will call all penalties. They determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

Only the head coach may respectfully ask the referee questions about clarification and interpretations.

- *Defensive **pass interference***= +10 yards and automatic first down
- *Defensive **Holding*** (receiver being held on route)= +5 yards and automatic first down
- *Defensive **Holding*** (ball carrier being held)= +5 yards from the spot of the foul
- *Defensive **unnecessary roughness***= +10 yards, automatic first down **and ejection if necessary**
- *Defensive **offside, illegal rush***= +5 yards from line of scrimmage and replay the down
- *Offensive **pass interference***= -10 yards from **line of scrimmage** and replay the down
- *Offensive **Holding***= -5 yards and replay the down
- *Offensive **unnecessary roughness***= -10 yards, loss of down **and ejection if deemed necessary**
- ***Illegal Blocking, Holding downfield or running with the ball carrier***= -5 yards from the spot of the foul and the down is consumed
- *Flag guarding*= -5 yards from the **spot of the foul and loss of down**
- *Roughing the passer*= +10 yards from scrimmage, automatic first down **and ejection if deemed necessary**
- *Illegal forward pass*= -5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- *Illegal motion*= -5 yards from line of scrimmage and replay the down or result of the play
- *Delay of game*= -5 yards from line of scrimmage and replay the down
- ***Impeding rusher (Holding)***= -5 yards from line of scrimmage and replay the down
- *False Start*= -5 yards from line of scrimmage and replay the down
- *Charging*= -10 yards from the spot and loss of down
- *Line Buck* = -5 yards and loss of down
- *Running a Play within 5 yard line*= Loss of down and back to the original spot
- *Unsportsmanlike Conduct*= -10 yards **and ejection if deemed necessary**.

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