

University of Virginia Intramural Sports Flag Football

Each player must present a valid UVA student ID or current Recreation Membership Card and photo ID before each contest to be eligible to participate - No Exceptions. All players must have checked in with an Intramural Supervisor and be recorded on the game sheet before they are allowed to participate.

All Intramural participants are responsible for their own medical expenses. Any participant unsure of his/her physical condition should check with their family physician or the Elson Student Health Center before participating in an Intramural Sports contest.

Game time is forfeit time! Teams that do not have the minimum number of players needed to start a game at game time will be assessed a forfeit. The forfeit will result in expulsion of that team from the remainder of league play.

The officiating will be done by Intramural Officials who are in absolute control of the game. Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of participants, coaches, or spectators can result in assessment of an unsportsmanlike penalty, ejection or forfeiture of the game. Two ejections will result in an automatic forfeiture. Spectators must also remain in the area designated by the Intramural Officials. The Intramural Officials and Intramural Supervisors shall have the power to make decisions on any matters or questions not specifically covered in the rules. The winner of a coin toss between both captains prior to the game will determine who will start with the ball.

The NIRSA Flag Football Rules will govern play for any rules not mentioned in the following Intramural rules:

1. Team Requirements

- 1.1 All teams shall consist of **7 players (8 players for CoRec)**, but may play with a minimum of 5 players (minimum of 6 for CoRec). Co-Rec teams are composed of any of the following combinations: 4m/4w, 4m/3w, 3m/4w, 3m/3w.

2. Equipment

- 2.1 All participants must wear shoes. Rubber cleated shoes and screw-in cleats will be allowed. Metal cleats of any kind, open heel and/or toe shoes are prohibited.
- 2.2 **Pants and/or shorts with belt loops and/or pockets are strictly prohibited!**
- 2.3 Billed hats, pads, helmets, casts and/or any other item deemed to be dangerous by the Intramural Supervisor may not be worn during a game.
- 2.4 Towels may not hang from a participant's waist or otherwise interfere with the removal of a flag.
- 2.5 Footballs will not be provided. They will be available for check out or teams may use their own ball. The Supervisor shall be the sole judge of any ball offered for play and may change the ball during play at his/her discretion. During the game, each team may use a legal ball of its choice when in possession.
 - a) Men's leagues must use a regulation size ball.
 - b) Women's and Co-Rec leagues may use a regulation, intermediate, youth, or junior size ball.
- 2.6 Each team is encouraged to wear a similar colored shirt. Pinnies will be provided. Shirts must be tucked in or cut off above the waistline. Shirts may not be tied in knots.
- 2.7 Teams must use flags provided by Intramural Sports.
- 2.8 All jewelry is prohibited. *Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards.*

3. Substitutions

- 3.1 Substitutions are allowed between plays and during time-outs.

4. Length of Game and Timing

4.1 The captain winning the coin toss will choose either:

- a) to start with the ball.
- b) to defend a particular goal.
- c) to defer to the second half.

The other captain, not having the first choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining options.

4.2 Games will consist of two 20-minute halves with a 3-minute halftime. **Timing will be continuous for the first 19 minutes of the 1st half** and the first 18 minutes of the 2nd half. Only team and Official time-outs can stop the clock.

4.3 **During the final minute of the first half, the clock will only stop for penalty enforcements, team and official time-outs.** During the last two minutes of the 2nd half, the clock will stop for:

- a) 2-minute warning - clock restarts on the snap.
- b) Incomplete pass - clock restarts on the snap.
- c) Out of bounds - clock restarts on the snap.
- d) Time Outs - clock restarts on the snap.
- e) Touchback - clock restarts on the snap.
- f) Change of possession - clock restarts on the snap
- g) First downs - clock restarts depending on previous play.
- h) Penalties - clock restarts depending on previous play.
- i) Field Goal attempt - clock stops to re-establish new line, then restarts depending on previous play.
- j) Touchdown - clock restarts on opponent's next snap from scrimmage.
- k) Fumble, dropped lateral, or dropped snap - clock does not stop.

4.4 A half must be extended by an untimed down, except for unsportsmanlike or nonplayer fouls, if during the last timed down, one of the following occurs:

- a) There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted.
- b) There was a double foul.
- c) There was an inadvertent whistle.

Exception: A period will not be extended for a foul that specifies loss of down, if accepted. Also, any score by the team that fouled is cancelled.

4.5 Each team will receive two time-outs (30 seconds each) per half.

4.6 There will be a 25-second play clock. The ball must be snapped no more than 25 seconds after the Official has signaled "Ready for Play". *Penalty: Delay of game, 5 yards.*

4.7 Mercy Rule

- a) A regular game will end if a team is leading by **17 points** or more during the final two minutes.
- b) A Co-Rec game will end if a team is leading by **23 points** or more during the final two minutes.

4.8 A game that is called due to weather with less than 5 minutes remaining will be considered a complete game.

5. Game Rules

5.1 Field dimensions:

- a) 80 yards by 40 yards with 10 yard endzones and "zone line-to-gain" markings every 20 yards.

5.2 The ball will be placed on the 14-yard line during the following situations:

- a) To begin each half (there are no kick-offs).
- b) Following a point-after attempt.
- c) Following a safety, touchback, or successful "field goal".

5.3 First Downs:

- a) A team shall have 4 consecutive downs to advance to the next zone line-to-gain (and earn a 1st down).
- b) The zone line-to-gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain.

- c) A new series of downs will be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone.
- 5.4 Starting a play:
- a) The offense must have 4 players (5 in CoRec) within one yard of the line of scrimmage (orange ball marker) at the time of the snap.
 - b) The ball must be snapped in one continuous motion (not necessarily between the center's legs) from the spot designated by the ball marker. The ball may be moved with approval of the Official due to poor field conditions. The player receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards from the line of scrimmage. *Penalty: Illegal Snap or Illegal formation, 5 yards.*
 - c) After leaving the huddle, all offensive players must come to a complete stop for at least 1 full second. One offensive player may be in motion, but may not be moving towards the opponent's goal line at the time of the snap. If two or more players go in motion before the snap, then this is considered a shift and all players must come set for one full second prior to the snap. *Penalty: Illegal Shift, 5 yards.*
 - d) All offensive players must be momentarily within 15 yards of the ball. It must be clear who the seven offensive players are on each play. The intent of this rule is to eliminate all sleeper or hideout plays. A penalty will be assessed for this type of play, regardless of when the Official becomes aware of the illegal formation. *Penalty: Illegal Formation, 5 yards.*
- 5.5 Passing/Catching the ball:
- a) Each member of the offensive team is eligible to receive a pass unless a player voluntarily goes out-of-bounds during the play. *Penalty: Illegal participation, 10 yards.*
 - b) Only one forward pass will be allowed per down.
 - c) For a legal catch, a pass receiver must come down with at least one foot in-bounds.
- 5.6 Defensive Rush:
- a) The defense must line up at least 1 yard from the line of scrimmage (behind the yellow ball marker).
 - b) The defense may rush once the ball is snapped.
- 5.7 Laterals & Fumbles:
- a) All laterals and fumbles become dead when the ball touches the ground.
 - b) The ball will be put into play at the point where the ball first touched the ground.
 - c) Any lateral or fumble that does not touch the ground may be advanced by any player catching the ball.
 - d) A ball fumbled by the offense into their endzone will result in a safety. A ball fumbled into the opponent's endzone will result in a touchback.
- 5.8 Touchdowns, Safeties, & Extra Point Attempts:
- a) Touchdowns are worth six points.
 - b) Safeties are worth two points.
 - c) Following a touchdown, a try for one point may be taken from the 3-yard line. A try for two points may be taken from the 10-yard line.
 - d) If the defense should intercept a pass during an extra point attempt, they may return it for a score. A score will equal 2 points, regardless of whether the attempt was for one or two.
 - e) Once the team captain has informed the Official of whether the attempt will be for one or two points, the decision cannot be changed unless a time-out is called.
- 5.9 Overtime:
- a) The field captains shall be brought together and a coin toss will be conducted. During the regular season, only one overtime period shall be played. During the playoffs, the overtime format will be repeated until a winner is declared.
 - b) The winner of the toss shall be given the option of either offense or defense. The loser of the toss shall decide which end of the field to play the overtime periods at. If additional overtime periods are necessary during the playoffs, captains will alternate choices. Each team will be given 4 downs from the same 10-yard line to score a touchdown. If the first team scores, then the second team will still have 4 downs to attempt to win or tie the game.

- c) If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, the game will be over. If not, the ball will be placed at the 10-yard line to begin the series of four downs. Extra Point attempts will be held as in regulation play.
- d) Each team is entitled to one time-out per overtime period.

6. Screen Blocking

- 6.1 Blocking, as in regulation tackle football, is prohibited. However, a screen block may take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during a screen block is illegal. *Penalty: Illegal contact, 10 yards.*
- 6.2 Defensive players are responsible for avoiding contact behind the line of scrimmage. Offensive players are responsible for avoiding contact beyond the line of scrimmage.

7. Flag Belt Removal

- 7.1 When the flagbelt is taken from the runner, the down shall end and the ball is declared dead. The spot of the ball is determined at the point *where the ball is* when the clip of the flagbelt becomes detached, not where the belt falls to the ground.
- 7.2 If a flagbelt inadvertently falls off, a one-hand tag between the shoulders and the knees constitutes a capture.
- 7.3 A player may leave their feet to remove a flagbelt.
- 7.4 The ball becomes dead when:
 - a) A legal de-flagging occurs.
 - b) A player in possession of the ball steps out-of-bounds.
 - c) A ball carrier touches the ground with any part of their body other than the hands or feet.
 - d) A forward pass, lateral, or fumble hits the ground.
 - e) A snap from the center touches the ground.
- 7.5 In an attempt to remove the flagbelt from the ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body of an opponent with his/her hands. However, a defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flagbelt. Similarly, no player shall attempt to trip an opponent, contact an opponent who is on the ground, make unnecessary contact with an opponent, deliberately dive or run into an opponent, or tackle the ball carrier. *Penalty: Illegal contact, 10 yards (flagrant offenders will be ejected. Tackling an opponent on purpose is an automatic ejection).*
- 7.6 Inadvertent contact may occur during flagbelt removal. The Officials will determine if the contact created an advantage or disadvantage for either player.
- 7.7 Spinning, jumping, or diving to avoid a pull is legal. However, an offensive player may not stiff arm or guard his/her flags by blocking them with their hands or the ball. *Penalty: flag guarding, 10 yards.* An offensive player who dives may be called for illegal contact if the defender was in position prior to the dive.

8. Punting the Ball

- 8.1 Punts must be announced before the ball is ready for play. The kicking team must have 4 players (5 in CoRec) on their line of scrimmage and the ball must be snapped from the center. The punter must be at least 2 yards off the line of scrimmage upon receiving the snap and must punt the ball immediately. Neither team may advance beyond their respective scrimmage line until the ball is punted. *Penalty: False Start, 5 yards.*
- 8.2 The ball may be advanced by the receiving team after it has touched the ground; however, if the ball hits any player and then touches the ground, the ball is dead at that spot.
- 8.3 Quick kicks and fake punts are illegal.
- 8.4 Once the team captain has informed the Official that the team will punt, the decision cannot be changed unless a time out is called.

9. "Field Goals"

- 9.1 When the offense has the ball on their opponent's side of the field, they will have the option of attempting a "Field Goal". Upon notifying the Official of their intention to attempt a "Field Goal", the ball will be placed at either the 5 or 10 yard line (see below) and the offense will be given one play from scrimmage to score. The score will be worth 3 points.
- If the original line of scrimmage is between the opponent's **40-yard line & 20-yard line**, the "Field Goal" attempt will be from the defense's **10-yard line**.
 - If the original line of scrimmage is between the opponent's **20-yard line & Goal line**, the "Field Goal" attempt will be from the defense's **5-yard line**.
- 9.2 If the attempt is *successful*, the defense will take over at their 14-yard line.
- 9.3 If the attempt is *unsuccessful*, the defense will take over on downs. The team gaining possession of the ball will have the following options:
- If the attempt results in an incomplete pass, they will start with the ball at the previous spot (ie - the original line of scrimmage).
 - If the attempt results in a sack or fumbled snap, they may start with the ball at the point of the sack/fumble **OR** the previous spot.
 - If the attempt results in an interception, the defense may return the interception for a touchdown (worth 6 points). If the defensive player is deflagged on the return, they may start with the ball at the point where the returner is deflagged **OR** the previous spot.
- 9.4 The "Field Goal" option, although normally attempted on 4th down, may be exercised on any down if the offense chooses. An unsuccessful "Field Goal" attempt will always result in a change of possession, regardless of what down it was when the offense chose to attempt the "Field Goal".
- 9.5 Once the team captain has informed the Official that the team will attempt a "Field Goal", the decision cannot be changed unless a time-out is called.
- 9.6 During the last 2 minutes of the second half, the clock will be stopped for the teams to walk to the 5 or 10 yard line. Once the new line of scrimmage is established, the clock will re-start depending on the previous play.
- 9.7 If a penalty occurs during a "Field Goal" attempt, any yardage gained or lost will only be applied to the attempt (ie - teams will not be able to take the yardage awarded and apply it to where the ball was before the "Field Goal" attempt was taken). A penalty that normally carries an automatic first down will NOT give the offense a new set of downs – it will simply allow the offense a retry.

10. Rule Clarifications

- 10.1 A defensive player must avoid running into the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage. It is illegal for a defender to contact the QB's arm at any time. *Penalty: Roughing the Passer, 10 yards, automatic 1st down.*
- 10.2 Pushing or chucking a receiver/defender is not allowed. *Penalty: Illegal Contact, 10 yards.*
- 10.3 No player shall attempt to strip the ball from another player. *Penalty: Illegal Contact, 10 yards.*
- 10.4 Diving is legal; however, a player may not dive into/through an opponent. *Penalty: Illegal contact, 10 yards.*
- 10.5 Spiking the ball is illegal. *Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct (dead ball), 10 yards.*
- 10.6 Any dead-ball penalty occurring after a touchdown will be assessed on the extra point attempt. Any dead-ball penalty occurring after an extra point attempt will be assessed on the next play from scrimmage. Any live-ball foul by the defense occurring during a play resulting in a touchdown may be enforced on the try or the 14 yd line once possession changes. Any defense penalty on a successful try may be enforced on the 14 yd line once possession changes.
- 10.7 When an inadvertent whistle is blown, the ball will be dead at the spot when the whistle was blown. The team against which the inadvertent whistle was blown has the option of accepting the play or replaying the

down. If the ball is in the air when an inadvertent whistle is blown, the down must be replayed. An accepted penalty occurring before the inadvertent will be enforced accordingly.

- 10.8 The offense is responsible for retrieving the ball after a play. The offense should bring the ball into the huddle.
- 10.9 All players on the field must wear a flagbelt. Failure to do so during a live ball will result in a 5-yard penalty, if the Official notices prior to the ball being snapped. If noticed after the ball has been snapped, the player without a flag belt must be touched with one hand between the shoulders and the knees. After the ball has been snapped, a penalty can still be enforced if recognized by the Official that a flag belt did not inadvertently fall off. *Penalty: Failure to wear required equipment, 5 yards.*
- 10.10 A defensive player may not remove an offensive player's flagbelt when the offensive player does not have the ball. *Penalty: Illegal flag belt removal, 10 yards.*
- 10.11 A defensive player may not remove an offensive receiver's flagbelt prior to the receiver touching the ball. *Penalty: Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards & automatic first down.*
- 10.12 A player may not tie knots in his/her flagbelt or fasten the belt to his/her uniform. *Penalty: Illegally Secured Flagbelt, 10 yards & loss of down.*
- 10.13 The Official will check the flagbelt of players who score a touchdown or conversion. If a player removes his/her flagbelt prior to being checked by the Official, the score will be nullified. *Penalty: Illegally Secured Flagbelt, 10 yards & loss of down.*

11. Co-Rec Rule Clarifications

11.1 Scoring:

- a) A touchdown scored by a male is worth 6 points.
- b) A touchdown scored by a female is worth 9 points. A touchdown scored prior to a change of possession in which a legal forward pass was thrown by a female is worth 9 points.
- c) Extra points and Field Goals are still only worth their respective values.

11.2 Running

- a) A Team A male runner cannot advance the ball through Team A's scrimmage line (first ball spotter). There are no restrictions:
 - 1) During a run by a male runner once the ball is beyond the Team A scrimmage line.
 - 2) During a run by a female runner.
 - 3) After a change of team possession.

Penalty: Illegal Male Advancement, 5 yards from the previous spot.

11.3 Passing

- a) After a change of possession or to start a half, the Officials will announce that the play is OPEN.
- b) Once a male to male completion has been made on an OPEN play, the next play will be CLOSED as announced by the Officials.
- c) On a CLOSED play, a male player may not complete a legal forward pass to another male player. *Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down.*
- d) On a CLOSED play, a legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or female receiver, and the play must gain positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by Rulle must be beyond the Team A scrimmage line (orange ball spotter). There is no foul for a female receiver being deflagged behind the Team A scrimmage line, but the next play will remain CLOSED. Once a legal forward pass completion involving either a female passer or female receiver has gained positive yards, the next play will be OPEN.
- e) If a passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the Team A scrimmage line and he runs beyond this scrimmage line, it is an Illegal Forward Pass. *Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down.*
- f) Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is OPEN or CLOSED.

12. Summary of Fouls and Penalties

12.1 Loss of 5 Yards:

- a) Failure to wear required equipment (ie – missing flag belt)
- b) Delay of game (*dead ball*).
- c) Illegal snap (*dead ball*).
- d) False start or Encroachment (*dead ball*).
- e) Illegal shift (ie - 2 players in motion at snap)
- f) Illegal motion (ie – player moving toward line of scrimmage at snap)
- g) Illegal forward pass (*from point of pass and loss of down*)
- h) Intentional grounding (*from point of pass and loss of down*)
- i) Helping the runner (ie - runner may not be pulled or pushed by a teammate)
- j) Illegal substitution

12.2 Loss of 10 Yards:

- a) Unsportsmanlike conduct (ie – spiking the ball, jewelry)
- b) Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct or personal foul (*disqualification*)
- c) Flag guarding (*from the spot of the foul*)
- d) Illegal Contact (ie – illegal use of hands/arms/legs/etc, stripping the ball)
- e) Offensive Pass Interference (*from the line of scrimmage and loss of down*)
- f) Defensive Pass Interference (*from the line of scrimmage and automatic 1st down*)
- g) Roughing the passer (*from the end of the run or the line of scrimmage and automatic 1st down*)
- h) Two or more consecutive encroachments during the same interval between downs
- i) Illegal participation
- j) Illegal flag belt removal
- k) Illegally secured belt (*loss of down - on touchdown, revoke touchdown*)(*disqualification*)
- l) Illegal kicking