

Sports City Arena Flag Football – Laws of the Game

The following laws of the game have been adapted for indoor arena flag football. Anything that is not specifically modified defaults to the closest corresponding California high school flag football rule.

Law 1: League Rules

- Sports City Arena Flag Football is a 5 v 5 Youth (3rd/4th Grade, 5th/6th Grade, 7th/8th Grade Division and High School Division) girls league. At least four players are required to start and continue a game. If a team drops below the required four players, they will forfeit the game.
- We will base age off the school districts' age requirements per grade.
- The maximum roster size is 12 players for 3rd and 4th and 15 for 5th grade and up. Players can be added with no charge up until the 3rd game of session, after the 3rd game it is a \$30 late add fee per player added.
- Team fees must be paid before a team's second game of the session starts.
- Teams are permitted to use guest players. (See Sports City's Arena [Guest Pass Policy](#))
- All players must hold a Sports City Flag Football membership and have a current waiver signed. The first year of membership will be waived for flag football players.
- Coaches are allowed to be on the field when their team is on offense. They must remain ten yards behind the line of scrimmage and stay out of the way of active plays.
- All schedules are final. Any rescheduling must be requested online at least 10 days in advance and accompanied by payment of a \$55 reschedule fee. Reschedules are not guaranteed.
- Forfeits will result in a loss and will be scored 2 – 0 in favor of the non-forfeiting team.
- Forfeits will result in a \$100 forfeit fine that will go as credit to the opposing team that missed out on a game.
- Officials, referees, and clock operators are an extension of the game itself. Interference, errors, or otherwise game-altering decisions by any of these individuals does not warrant a review of the outcome of any game. Surveillance will only be reviewed for disciplinary reasons.
- Foul language (including swearing, trash talking, verbal taunting, and offensive or abusive language) will not be tolerated and can be penalized as unsportsmanlike conduct.
- If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped, and the player can be ejected from the game. Foul play will not be tolerated.
- The league will provide one referee per game
- The referee is in full control of the game and is charged with fair play and preventing play that is deemed excessively physical. However, it is acknowledged that no referee is perfect and that mistakes will be made. Any arguing with the referee will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty. The coach may approach the referee at half-time or before or after the game to get clarification on calls. Verbal attacks on a referee by fans may also result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.

Law 2: Attire and Equipment

- Cleats are not allowed in Sports City's arena fields. All footwears must be closed-toed with athletic shoes, turf shoes, or sneakers. Inspections can be made and will be made.
- Shirts/jerseys must be tucked into shorts, pants, or the flag belt.
- Flags will be provided by the league. Teams may not use their own flags.

- Flags must be worn at each hip.
- No headgear with an extended bill may be worn (ex: caps, visors, etc.). Exceptions will be made if the bill is backwards.
- Teams must wear the provided Sports City jersey top, in the case of a forgotten jersey player must be wearing a numbered jersey which fits into our uniform policy, which will be determined at the discretion of the officials and/or Sports City staff.
- Sports City will provide game balls.

Law 3: Scoring

- Touchdown = 6 points
- Extra Point = 1 point (from 5 yards out) or 2 points (from 10 yards out)
- Extra point try intercepted and returned to endzone = 2 points
- Safety = 2 points

Law 4: Gameplay

- Sports City Arena Flag Football is a limited contact league. Incidental contact is a result of normal; fair play will be allowed. However, dangerous, malicious, or overly aggressive contact, intentional or otherwise, will not be tolerated. It is up to the discretion of the officials to decide what is permissible and what is not.
- Blocking is allowed, but only in a screening or shielding manner. Players may position their body to shield defenders from the ball carrier and may move their feet while maintaining position. However, they are not allowed to drive through a defender, initiate heavy contact, leave their feet to block or initiate cross-body, chop or blindside blocks.
- All games will start on time, but a 5-minute grace period will be allowed if a team has under the minimum number of players. If a team cannot field the minimum number of players by the end of the grace period, they will forfeit the game. If a team can start with the minimum players at game time, they must start the game and cannot intentionally use the grace period to wait for late players.
- Games only have a 5-minute check-in period between games, no additional warm-up time will be allowed.
- Games will be played with two 22-minute halves and a 2-minute half time.
- The game clock will be a running clock throughout the game. The clock can only be stopped at the official's discretion.
- A play is ruled "DEAD" when:
 - An offensive player's flag is pulled. Once the ball is caught by an offensive player, the flag may be pulled.
 - The ball carrier touches the boundary wall.
 - The ball carrier's arm, torso, leg, or ball hits the ground.
 - An offensive player flag falls out during a play, and a defensive player touches the ball carrier (only 1 hand required to touch).
 - A center snap hits the ground.
 - The ball carrier fumbles the ball.
 - A touchdown or extra point is scored.

- Equipment violation: The play will be called dead at the snap if any offensive player begins the play without all flags attached to the belt and/or situated appropriately at the hips. If the referee misses the equipment violation, the play will continue, and the defensive player must touch the offensive player with one hand for the play to be dead.
- There are no fumbles. In the event of a fumble, the play is dead, and the ball is spotted where it hits the ground. Anytime the ball touches the ground, it is dead. (Note: Any ball dropped in a forward motion will be brought back to the point where possession was lost.)
- If the score is tied at the end of regulation during a regular season, the game will be scored as a tie. There is no overtime period for regular season games.

Law 4a: Basics

- A coin toss determines first possession, and the visiting team calls the toss:
 - The winner of the coin toss has the following options: 1) offense, 2) defense.
 - The start of the second half is opposite the start of the first half. The team who started offense in the 1st half begins the second half on defense.
- The offensive team takes the ball at their own 5-yard line and has three downs to cross mid-field to earn a first down. Once the team crosses mid-field, they will have three downs to score a touchdown.
- The endzones are marked by the lacrosse (blue) line extended on the large fields and by the goalie box line extended on the small field.
- Failure to cross mid-field after three downs results in a turnover on downs. After crossing midfield and earning a first down, failure to score a touchdown after three downs also results in a turnover on downs. After a turnover on downs, possession of the ball changes and the team now on offense starts their drive from their own 5-yard line.
- All possession changes start on the offense 5-yard line, except interceptions, which may be returned. After an interception, the ball will be spotted where the play ends.

Law 4b: Center Snap

- Center snaps may be either traditional between the leg's snaps or side snaps, if both feet are behind the line of scrimmage, the snap consists of a continuous backwards motion, and the person receiving the snap is at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- A false movement of the football by the center after he is set shall constitute a false start.
- As there are no hash marks, the ball shall be spotted in the middle of the field after each play.
- After a ball is spotted, and the 7-yard rush line is established (see Law 4c), a team has 20 seconds to snap the ball. Failure to snap the ball within 20 seconds of the spot will delay game penalty.
- A center snap that hits the ground before being controlled by the quarterback results in a dead play and loss of down. The new play will be spotted where the snap hits the ground. A snap that is dropped or falls in the end zone is a safety.

Law 4c: Rushing the Quarterback

- Before each play, the referee will mark seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Any player that rushes against the passer must be at least seven yards from the line of scrimmage and one yard from the center position (either side). Any number of players can rush to the QB.
- Players not rushing against the QB may defend against the line of scrimmage, but no bump and run pass coverage is allowed.
- If the ball is handed off, the 7-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders are eligible to pursue a ball's carrier.
- If an offense lines up in a tight formation, the rusher must line up outside of the tight formation. If the rusher establishes his line to the QB outside of the tight formation, the offense must respect his line to the QB and not interfere. Interfering with the rusher after he has established a line to the QB is called impeding the rush. The rusher has a right to establish a clear path to the QB. Once the offense has lined up and the rusher has established his path, the rusher has a right to that clear path.
- The rusher(s) may not contact the QB's arms.

Law 4d: Passing

- A forward pass is defined as a live ball thrown towards the opponent's goal line.
- QB has a seven second "pass clock". Once the ball is snapped, if a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, the play is dead with a loss of down and the ball returns to the line of scrimmage. However, if the ball is handed off, the 7 second count is no longer in effect.
- Interceptions may be returned. Interceptions during extra point tries can be run back for 2 points. If an interception occurs in the end zone, and the player's flag is pulled before he leaves the end zone, the ball will be spotted on the 5-yard line. Interceptions may be returned from the end zone.

Law 4e: Running

- The QB cannot run the ball off of a direct snap. In other words, a QB sneak/scramble is not allowed.
- The offense may use multiple hand-offs.
- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball if he does not pass the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second pass clock is no longer in effect.
- "No Run Zones" are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards before mid-field in each offensive direction. Teams may not execute run plays if the play starts within the No Run Zone. No Run Zones are designed to avoid short yardage power running plays.
- Hand-offs are allowed within the No Run Zone. However, once a hand-off has been made in No Run Zone, the player can only pass - he will not be able to run past the line of scrimmage.
- Spinning and juking is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player.
- The ball will be spotted at the point where the player's hips were when his flag was pulled. A player's hips must break the plane for a 1st down or touchdown. Players are not allowed to dive for yardage or the end zone. If a player leaves his feet to dive/jump for yardage, the play will be whistled dead and spotted at the position where the ball carrier left his feet.
- Players may not deliberately try to block an opponent's attempt to pull their flag. This is "flag-guarding" and will be penalized.

Law 4f: Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time and must come to the set again before the ball is snapped.
- Players may not be in contact with the boundary wall when making a catch.
- At least one foot must be on the ground while the catch is made prior to making contact with the wall for a legal catch.
- Players may leave their feet to make a catch. However, players are not allowed to leave their feet to advance the ball.

Law 5: The Field

- All games will be played on our arena fields at Sports City inside Epicenter.
- Cones and the imaginary lines connecting them will mark all relevant zones, goal lines, and boundary lines.
- The goal line will be denoted by two tall cones at each sideline and the line connecting them.
- The midfield line will be denoted by the permanent midfield line on the field.
- Each No-Run Zone will be denoted by two short cones at each sideline and the line connecting them.
- The line of scrimmage will be marked with an orange flag.
- The 7-yard rush line will be marked by the referee for each play as that's where the referee will be standing on the sideline closest to the scoreboard.

Law 7: Substitutions

- Players may substitute in and out of the game between plays. The player subbing out must be off the field by the time the ball is snapped to avoid a penalty.

Sports City Disciplinary

- Breach of any house rules (i.e., chewing gum on the field, slamming gates, etc.).
- Illegal substitution and illegally entering the field of play.
- Player re-entering game without making equipment adjustments.
- Any of the major offenses.
- Any of the minor offenses.
- Delay of game.
- Unsporting conduct.

MANAGER/PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY It is the responsibility of each player to be aware of their playing status and abide by any suspensions/fines levied by the Disciplinary Committee. It is the responsibility of the team manager to be aware of the status of their roster and eligibility of all players. Failure to comply

with suspensions or attempting to play/use illegal players will result in a fine and/or suspension. Should a manager be unable to control their players after a red card is issued, the manager may also be suspended and/or fined.

SPORTS CITY SUSPENSION GUIDELINES *Game(s) suspension, plus a fine:*

1. Accumulation of cards (3 blues, 2 yellows or a combination that results in a red card)
2. Spitting on the field.
3. Chewing gum on the field.
4. Baiting an opponent to fight.
5. Foul/abusive language directed towards opponent, referee or staff member.
6. Physical intimidation tactics towards the opponent.
7. Kicking/throwing the ball at the opponent.
8. Threatening opponents.

1-Year or more suspension, plus a fine:

1. Violence or attempted violence towards another player.
2. Threat of violence towards a referee or staff member.
3. Receiving 3 red cards in a 12-month period.
4. Spitting on/at opponent.
5. Kicking/throwing the ball at referee or staff member.
6. Multiple violations of the guidelines above.

Lifetime ban from Sports City:

1. Violence or threat of violence towards a referee or staff member.
2. Multiple 1-year suspensions.

THE ABOVE LISTED GUIDELINES ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE ALL INCLUSIVE AND SPORTS CITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SUSPEND AND FINE CUSTOMERS FOR ANY AND ALL BEHAVIOR THAT VIOLATES ANY POLICIES, PUBLISHED OR NOT. SPORTS CITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RETROACTIVELY ASSIGN RED CARDS AND SUSPENSIONS/FINES BASED UPON REVIEW OF ANY GAMES OR INCIDENTS THAT TAKE PLACE ON SPORTS CITY/EPICENTER PROPERTY TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION *Sports City reserves the right to terminate participation for all players/teams that violate any policies, rules and guidelines.*

Any player/team that is suspended or banned will automatically forfeit their membership/team fees during the duration of their suspension.

Offensive and Defensive Penalties

Offensive Penalties:

- Illegal snap: 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal motion: 5 yards and loss of down
- False start: 5 yards and loss of down
- Offside: 5 yards and loss of down
- Impeding rusher: 5 yards and loss of down
- Blocking/screening downfield: 5 yards and loss of down
- Flag guarding: 5 yards from the spot of infraction and loss of down
- Lowering head/shoulder: 15 yards and loss of down
- Pass interference: 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal forward pass: 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal hand-off/pitch: 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal run: 5 yards and loss of down
- Delay of game: 5 yards
- Equipment violation: 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal Substitution: 5 yards and loss of down
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct: 15 yards and loss of down, ejection
- Unnecessary Roughness: 15 yards and loss of down, ejection

DEFENSIVE PENALTIES:

- Off-sides: 5 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal rush: 5 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal contact: 5 yards automatic first down
- Holding: 5 yards from spot of foul and automatic first down

- Illegal flag pull: 5 yards from spot of foul and automatic first down
- Pass interference: Ball placed at spot of the foul and automatic first down
- Roughing the QB: 15 yards and automatic first down
- Delay of game: 5 yards
- Illegal Substitution: 5 yards and automatic first down
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct: 15 yards and automatic first down, ejection
- Unnecessary Roughness: 15 yards and automatic first down, ejection