

MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS RECREATION DEPARTMENT



INTRAMURAL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Current NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association) shall govern all intramural rules used for flag football at Millersville University unless modified by the Intramural department for program needs.

Persons subject to the rules are team representatives, including players, substitutes, Replaced players, coaches, trainers, spectators & other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game & shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.

All rules apply to coed, men's & women's flag football unless otherwise noted

EQUIPMENT, FIELD, PLAYERS & GAME TIMING

1) Illegal / Prohibited Equipment is as listed by not limited to the following:

- a. Helmets & pads or braces worn above the waist
- b. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in or detachable cleats
- c. Ski or logger boots or boots with exposed metal, hook (s), loop (s) or soles exceeding 2-inches
- d. Any item containing exposed knots: Includes bandannas, do-rags & stocking caps
- e. Headwear containing any hard & unyielding material: Baseball caps
- f. Pants, shorts or jerseys with any belt (s), belt loop (s), pocket (s), exposed drawstring or zippers
- g. Tear-away pants, shorts or jerseys
- h. Jewelry: Includes earrings, rings, watches, bracelets, necklaces
- i. Any exposed body or facial piercing must be taken out
- j. Hooded coats & sweatshirts
- k. Hard & unyielding leg & knee brace material

2) Legal Equipment

- a. Protective gear is highly recommended (Mouth, crotch & pelvic protectors)
- b. Cleats that are molded to the sole of the shoe or shoes made of canvas, leather or synthetic material which covers the foot & attached to a firm sole of leather, rubber or composition material
- c. Jersey (short / long sleeve or sweaters) must be long enough to remain tucked into pants or shorts & short enough so there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the jersey to player's waistline
- d. Pants or shorts without belt (s), belt loop (s), pocket (s), exposed drawstring or zippers
- e. Religious & medical alert bracelets or necklaces must be taped to the body for participation (Written prove may be required for religious bracelets/necklaces)
- f. Knit headwear without a bill & headbands made of non-abrasive material
- g. Hair control devices, knee pads, gloves & mittens that are soft, pliable & non-abrasive
- h. Play books may be carried inside clothing

3) The game field shall be a rectangular area with 4 – 20 yard zones & 2 – 10 yard end zones.

4) Men use a regular size ball & women can use a regular, intermediate, youth or junior sized ball

- 5) The **men's & women's game** shall be played between 2 teams of 7 players each. 5 players are required to start the game to avoid a forfeit. **Rosters are limited to 12 players (Coed is 15).**
- 6) **It is highly recommend for teams / individuals to arrive 10 minutes early before the scheduled game time. At the scheduled game time, if a team does not have the required number of players a 10-minute grace period is in effect. If a team/individual does not appear within the grace period, a win by forfeit will be accredited to the opposing team.**
- 7) The game shall consist of two 18-minute running halves with the clock stopping in the last 2-minutes of each half. Intermission is 5 minutes in length.
- 8) **During the final 2-minutes (2-minute warning) the clock will begin on the snap or officials signal**
- 9) **At the 2-minute warning of each half the clock will stop for a:**
 - a. Incomplete legal / illegal pass, pass goes out-of-bounds or penalty
 - b. Team is awarded a new series after gaining a first down or a legal punt
 - c. First down or touchdown
 - d. Change of possession
 - e. Team attempting to consume or conserve illegally
 - f. Safety or touchback
 - g. Time-out, referee's time-out or inadvertent whistle
- 10) **Mercy Rule for men's & women's game**
 - a. **The game will end when a team is 19 or more points ahead at the 2-minute warning in the second half.**
- 11) **Overtime will only occur in playoffs.**
 - a. **Playoffs shall consist of four 10 minute quarters with clock stopping in the last 2-minutes of each half. Intermission is 5 minutes in length.**
 - b. Shall be played towards the same goal line.
 - c. Only one coin toss will occur & shall begin the overtime period & the winner of the toss is given the options of offense, defense. The opponent shall make a choice of remaining options.
 - d. **Time-outs do not carry over from regulation game; each team is awarded 1 time-out.**
 - e. Unless a penalty occurs, each team will start 1st & goal on the 10-yard line. Each team will have 4 downs to score. If a tie remains after one period, captains will alternate choices & series will continue until a winner is determined.
 - f. **Teams can intercept a pass or fumble & return it for a touchdown, if team scores, team wins & the game has ended.**

PLAYING REGULATIONS

- 1) **Each team is allowed 3 time-outs per game.**
- 2) Each half will begin with a coin toss between opposing captains. The captain winning the coin toss shall have a choice of the following:
 - a. Defer their option to the second half
 - b. Begin game on the offense or defense
 The captain not winning the coin toss shall have the choice of what goal to defend.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- 1) All subs must enter field from their team bench.
- 2) No substitute shall enter during a down.
- 3) Substitution can occur between downs, an accepted penalty, time-out, injury or ending of a half.
- 4) Substitutes shall be on their side of the neutral zone before ball is snapped / becomes live

KICKING THE BALL

- 1) **Quick kicks, onside kicks & free kicks are illegal, Illegal Kick = 10 yards**
- 2) **Players shall ignore signals given by kickers or receivers, the ball remains live**
- 3) Punting, after the kicker receives the snap the ball must be kick immediately in a continuous motion = Illegal procedure = 5 yards
- 4) **If a punt goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or comes to rest inbounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead & belongs to the receiving team @ that spot.**
- 5) **If the ball is dropped or muffed by the receiving team the ball is dead on the spot.**
- 6) An offensive team shall have 4 consecutive downs to advance the ball to the next zone.
 - a. On the fourth down, the team may punt or attempt to advance, if punting is not chosen & advancement is not obtained, the ball shall be the opponents at the spot.
 - b. **A captain may declare a punt on any down (Exceptions apply)**
- 7) **The kicking team may not recover a punt by the kicking team.**
 - a. **Illegal Kicking = 10 yards**
- 8) **After a punt, the ball may be blocked, if blocked to the ground it is dead at that spot.**
 - a. **If the punt is blocked & then caught behind the scrimmage line the ball may be advanced.**

PLAYERS

All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass.

1. All players must be inbounds within 5-yard of the sideline & 15-yard of the play when the ball is snapped.
2. The offense & defense scrimmage lines shall be 1-yard apart & separated by ball spotters.
3. The offensive team is responsible for retrieving the ball after a down & the ball will be marked for play.
4. Offensive team has 25 seconds to put the ball in play after the ball is marked ready for play.
 - a. **Delay of game = 5 yards**
5. **Players may use a 2, 3, or 4 point stance.**
6. No defensive player may encroach, touch the ball or make contact or interfere with opponents prior to the snap.
 - a. **Encroachment = 5 yards, Consecutive encroachments = 10 yards**
7. **The offensive team must have at least 4 players on their scrimmage line at the snap.**
 - a. One offensive player may be in motion but not in motion towards the opponent's goal line at the snap. All other players must come to a stop & remain stationary (without movement of feet, body, head or arms) for a full second until the ball is snapped.
 - i. **Illegal Motion = 5 yards**
8. No offensive player shall false start, which includes simulating a charge or start of play.
 - a. **Illegal Procedure = 5 yards**
9. The player who receives the snap must be at least 2-yards behind the offensive scrimmage line.
 - a. **Illegal Procedure = 5 yards**
10. The snapper, after assuming the position for the snap & adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change the position of the ball & shall be penalized for such movement whether or not the ball is snapped = **Encroachment = 5 yards**
11. The snap must be in a backwards motion either between the legs or to the side of the snapper & the snap must be quick & in a continuous motion. **Illegal snap = 5 yards**
12. All fumbles, muffs or backwards passes that hit the ground shall be dead on the spot. If the ball is intercepted during a fumble, muff or backwards pass it may be advanced.
13. A backwards pass or fumble which goes out-of bounds between the goal lines belongs to the offensive team at the out-of bounds spot. If out-of-bounds behind a goal line, it is a touchback or safety.
14. Any player, replaced player or substitute enters during a down, **Illegal Participation, 10 yards**

15. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down

- a. **Illegal forward pass = Illegal pass = 5 yards from spot & loss of down**
 - i. Passer's foot is beyond the scrimmage line
 - ii. Passer intentionally throws ball to the ground to save loss of yardage
 - iii. Passer catches untouched forward or backward pass
 - iv. If there is more than one forward pass per down
16. Pass interference can only occur beyond offensive scrimmage line: after the ball is snapped, passed & touched:
 - a. Offensive pass interference = after the ball is snapped & until touched
 - i. **10 yards & loss of down from previous spot**
 - b. Defensive pass interference = after the ball is thrown & until touched
 - i. **10 yards from previous spot = automatic first down**
 - ii. Defense deflags an offensive player before receiving the ball
17. A runner may pass the ball backwards (lateral) at anytime & a backwards pass or fumble in flight may be caught or intercepted by any player inbounds & advanced
18. A runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled or pushed to gain yardage
 - a. **Helping the runner = 5 yards**
19. Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms or the ball to deny opportunity of pulling or removing the flag belt such as but not limited too:
 - a. **Personal foul = 10 yards**
 - i. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt
 - ii. "Stiff arm" opponents
 - iii. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt
 - iv. Lowering shoulder in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt
20. A runner may **jump** over an opponent to avoid contact but **shall not hurdle a player**
 - a. **Penalty = 10 yards from spot of foul**
21. A runner shall not charge into nor contact an opponent in their path, nor attempt to run between two opponents unless space provides a reasonable chance to proceed without contact
22. **An opponent may dive to grab a flag belt**
23. An opponent shall not hold, grasp or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag = **Personal foul = 10 yards**
24. **A player may dive to gain more yardage for 1st down & touchdown situations only**
 - a. **A dive constitutes arms & feet extended with ball extended from body**
 - b. **@ no time may a player dive through an opponent = Personal foul = 10 yards**
 - c. **If official views diving as an intent to harm, player may be disqualified**

BATTING & KICKING

25. **Players shall not bat a loose ball other than a pass of fumble in flight**
 - a. **Exception = the kicking team may bat a grounded punt beyond their scrimmage line toward their own goal line = Illegal Batting, 10 yards**
26. **Batting a ball in player possession**
 - a. **A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of the team in possession = Penalty = Illegal Batting, 10 yards**
27. **Illegal kicking**
 - a. **No player shall intentionally kick a ball other than a punt = illegal punt & shall be treated like a fumble = Illegal Kicking, 10 yards**

BLOCKING

- 1) Offensive screen block shall take place without contact = **Personal foul = 10 yards**
 - a. Hands & arms must be on their side or behind their back
 - b. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact is illegal
 - c. At no time shall players interlock to encircle or interfere with the runner

- 2) Defensive players may not go or push through offensive screen blocker's, they must go around an offensive screen = **Personal Foul = 10 yards**

ROUGHING THE PASSER

- 1) Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown forward legally.
 - a. **Roughing the passer = 10 yards & automatic 1st down**
- 2) No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as they are considered out of the play after the pass.
 - a. **Roughing the passer = 10 yards & automatic 1st down**
- 3) **Contacting hand or arm, regardless of contacting the pass**
 - a. **Roughing the passer = 10 yards @ automatic 1st down**
- 4) **Contacting the ball before contacting the passer**
 - a. **Roughing the passer = 10 yards @ automatic 1st down**
- 5) **Roughing the passer restrictions do not apply if the forward pass is thrown from beyond the scrimmage line but personal foul penalties can be assessed.**

FLAG BELT REMOVAL

- 1) Players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally deflagged by an opponent
- 2) A runner who accidentally or inadvertently loses their flag belt shall be deflagged by one-hand touch between the shoulders & the knees by an opponent
- 3) **A runner who purposely removes their flag belt to gain an advantage**
 - a. **The play shall continue with the option of the penalty or the play**
 - i. **Personal foul, 10 yards**
- 4) In circumstances where the flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play
- 5) An opponent intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball is illegal = Personal foul = 10 yards
- 6) Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, use foreign materials or other methods results in a personal foul & disqualification.

SCORING

Men's & Women's Game Only

- 7) Touchdown = 6 points
- 8) **The player who has scored the touchdown must raise their arms so, nearest official can deflag them. If the player is not deflagged with one pull & the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed & the player is disqualified.**
 - a. **Personal foul = 10 yards from previous spot**
 - b. **By the offense = no touchdown, loss of down & disqualification**
 - c. **By the defense = no touchdown, automatic first down & disqualification**
- 9) Try
 - a. **1 point = 3 yard line, 2 point = 10 yard line & 3 points = 20 yard line**
 - b. Once a team makes a choice, the choice is final unless a time-out is granted
 - c. If a penalty occurs before the time-out, a team cannot change their choice
 - d. Enforcement of yardage penalties does not change the value of the Try
 - e. **An intercepted Try attempt can be returned for a touchdown = 3 points**
 - f. **If a try is intercepted & it results in a safety the point value is 1 point**
- 10) Safety = 2 points
 - a. **It is not a safety when a player intercepts a forward pass, fumble, backwards pass or catches a punt between the 5 yard line & the goal line & momentum carries player into the end zone**
- 6) Teams cannot score points by field goal attempt

COED RULES SUMMARY

1. A regular, intermediate, youth or junior sized ball can be used
2. The game shall be played between 2 teams with players of the following combinations:
 - a. Teams with 8 players shall be 4 women & 4 men.
 - b. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 women & 3 men or 4 men & 3 women.
 - c. **Teams with 6 players:**
 - i. **3 women & 3 men, 4 men or 2 women & 4 women & 2 men.**
 - d. **6 players are required to start the game to avoid a forfeit.**
 - e. **Rosters are limited to 15 players.**
3. **Mercy Rule**
 - a. **The game will end when a team is 25 or more points ahead at the 2-minute warning in the second half.**
4. **Male runner**
 - a. A male runner cannot advance the ball through their scrimmage line
 - b. There are no restrictions; during a run by a male runner once the ball has been beyond the scrimmage line; during a run by a female runner; and after change of possession
 - i. Illegal Procedure, 5 years from previous spot
5. **Male to Male Completion**
 - a. During offensive possession there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to a Try.
 - b. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or female receiver for positive yards.
 - i. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be beyond the scrimmage line.
 - ii. There are no restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to female receiver, or female to female, or female to male.
 - iii. **A legal forward pass caught jointly by a male & female teammates is considered a female reception**
 1. **Illegal forward pass, 5 yards from the spot where the second consecutive male to male completed legal forward pass is released & a loss of down.**
 - iv. Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next forward pass completion is “open” or “closed”
6. **Illegal Forward Pass**
 - a. **Only one forward pass can be thrown per down**
 - b. **Illegal Forward Pass**
 - i. “Closed” play means a male player may NOT throw a legal forward pass completion to any other male player.
 - ii. “Open” play means any player can complete a legal forward pass to any other player
 - iii. There is NO foul for a female receiver being tagged or de-flagged behind the scrimmage line
 1. The next legal forward pass completion remains “closed”
 - iv. If a female passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the scrimmage line on either a “open” or “closed” play, and any offensive male player runs beyond the scrimmage line, it is a illegal forward pass
 1. Illegal forward pass, 5yards from the spot of the pass & loss of down
 - v. All illegal forward pass fouls are classified as fouls during a running play, thus illegal forward passes do not change the “open / closed” status of a down
 - vi. If an official erroneously indicates the “open /closed” status of a down, the play is nullified and the down will be repeated.

COED RULES CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE

COED RULES SUMMARY

SCORING

- 1) If a female scores a touchdown, the point value is 9.
- 2) If a female player throws a legal pass & a touchdown is scored by a teammate, the point value is 9.
- 3) All other touchdown points are 6 points.
- 4) **The player who has scored the touchdown must raise their arms so, nearest official can deflag them. If the player is not deflagged with one pull & the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed & the player is disqualified.**
 - a. **Personal foul = 10 yards from previous spot**
 - b. **By the offense = no touchdown, loss of down & disqualification**
 - c. **By the defense = no touchdown, automatic first down & disqualification**
- 5) Try
 - a. **1 point = 3 yard line, 2 point = 10 yard line & 3 points = 20 yard line**
 - b. Once a team makes a choice, the choice is final unless a time-out is granted
 - c. If a penalty occurs before the time-out, a team cannot change their choice
 - d. Enforcement of yardage penalties does not change the value of the Try
 - e. **An intercepted Try attempt can be returned for a touchdown which is worth 3 points**
- 6) Safety = 2 points
 - a. **It is not a safety when a player intercepts a forward pass, fumble, backwards pass or catches a punt between the 5 yard line & the goal line & momentum carries player into the end zone**
- 7) Teams cannot score points by field goal attempt

FLAG FOOTBALL

The objective of flag football is to remove the runner of their flag belt in order to decrease ball advancement & scoring. Striking the player or the ball is unnecessary & a violation of the rules.

PLAYER RESTRICTIONS (10 yard penalty)

No player shall commit a personal foul during a half or intermission & if act is viewed as intentional or flagrant the offender will be disqualified.

- 1) Strip or attempt to strip the ball from runner by punching, striking or stealing the ball from opponents
- 2) Contact an opponent who is on the ground
- 3) Throw the runner to the ground
- 4) Hurdling any player
- 5) Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead
- 6) Make contact of any nature with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary including using fists, locked hands, elbows or any part of the forearm or hand, except according to the rules
- 7) Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player
- 8) Position them selves on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT (10 yard penalty)

No player shall be involved in unsportsmanlike conduct during a half or intermission & if act is viewed as intentional or flagrant the offender will be disqualified.

Non-contact player acts are acts during a period or intermission, include but are not limited too:

- 1) Refusal to comply or abide by the request or decision of an official
- 2) Attempting to influence a decision by an official
- 3) Disrespectfully addressing an official
- 4) Indicating objections to an official's decision
- 5) Using profanity, taunting, insulting or vulgar language or obscene gestures to officials or opposing players
- 6) Attempting to kick, strike (using arm, hand or fist) or jump at an opposing player/ teammate
- 7) Using words similar to the offensive audibles & quarterback cadence prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with defensives signals of movements
- 8) Intentionally kicking at the ball, other than during a punt
- 9) Spiking the ball into the ground
- 10) Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or with permission of the referee
- 11) Holding an unauthorized conference or being on the field illegally
- 12) Participate while wearing illegal player equipment

DISQUALIFICATION ACTS

Exhibit, participate in or perform any of the following acts & disqualification will occur:

- 1) Intentionally contacting a game official physically (spitting, kicking, striking (swinging an arm, hand or fist), jumping at during the game (applies to team representatives)
- 2) Tackling an runner or opponent by grasping or encircling with the hand (s) or arm (s) & taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football
- 3) Intentionally spitting, kicking or striking (swinging an arm, hand or fist) any opposing player/ teammate
- 4) Fighting (engaging in a combative manner unrelated to football)
- 5) Leaving a team area & entering the playing field during a fight
- 6) Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, use foreign materials or other methods
- 7) Throwing the ball high in the air, if viewed as flagrant
- 8) Using & participating under an assumed name