

Wittenberg University

INTRAMURAL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

1. FIELD

- a. The field shall be a rectangular area having 2 ten yard end zones and 4 twenty yard field zones. END ZONES WILL BE MARKED WITH ORANGE CONES--DOWNS WILL BE MARKED WITH YELLOW CONES. The width will be 40 yards. There are no goal posts.
- b. ONLY Team personnel may move between the cones placed at the 20 yard line extended, on the stadium side of the field. The far side of the field is reserved for Intramural Staff ONLY.

2. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. There will be 7 players on the field; you may play with a minimum of 5.
 - i. **Penalty – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage**
- b. Offense: At least 4 players must be on the line of scrimmage until the snap of the ball.
 - i. **Penalty – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage**
- c. Unlimited substitutions may be made during a game, but only when the ball is dead. There is a 25 second maximum entry time for all substitutions.
 - i. **Penalty – 5 yards from the line of scrimmage**
- d. All players on the field are eligible pass receivers.
- e. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT
 - i. **15 yard penalty AND disqualification for the competition for the offender**
 1. **Abusive or insulting language**
 2. **Intentionally kicking or throwing the ball at an opponent**
 3. **Intentionally swinging an arm, hand, or fist at an opponent**
 4. **Attempting to influence the decision of an official**
 5. **Showing disrespect towards any Intramurals employee**
 6. **Spiking the ball or excessively celebrating (warning followed by 15 yard penalty)**
 7. **Intentional or repeated flag guarding**

3. EQUIPMENT

- a. No regulation equipment other than flags are necessary.
- b. All members of a team should wear the same color shirt.
- c. No red or yellow shorts allowed — no exceptions.
- d. No Cleats – turf shoes or tennis shoes only.
- e. No knee or ankle braces with exposed metal bars will be allowed to play. No casts allowed.
- f. No baseball caps or visors may be worn.
- g. No bare feet or sandals allowed.

4. LENGTH OF GAME

- a. The length of the game will be 26 minutes. Two 12-minute halves with a continuously running clock, except for legal timeouts, or in the instance of an obvious delay of game.
- b. Half-time will be two (2) minutes.
- c. Each team will be allowed one (1) timeout per half – 30 SECONDS in length – not cumulative.
- d. Games may end in a tie, during regular season.
 - i. Mercy Rule – If a team is 17 points ahead when the 4-minute warning is announced in the second half, the game shall be over. The same rule applies if a team scores inside the 3 minutes with this differential.
 - ii. The Mercy Rule will not be in effect during the playoffs.
- e. During the final 2 minutes of each half the clock will stop for a:
 1. Incomplete pass – starts on the snap.
 2. Out of bounds – starts on the snap.
 3. Score – following a touchdown or safety.
 4. Team timeout -- starts on the snap.
 5. First down – dependent on the previous play.
 6. Penalty and administration – dependent on the previous play.
 - a. Exception – delay of game-- starts on the snap.)
 7. Referee's timeout – starts at his or her discretion.

8. Touchback -- starts on the snap.
9. Change of possession – dependent on the previous play.
10. Teams attempting to conserve time illegally -- starts on the snap.

5. TIE BREAKER FOR CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

- a. Each team will start first-and-goal from the 20-yard line.
- b. An overtime period consists of one possession by each team. If the score is still tied after one period, they go to a second period or as many as needed to determine a winner.
- c. Try for points will be attempted and scored as indicated in the rules.
- d. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the ball is placed at the 20-yard line to begin their series of 4 downs.

6. PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

- a. Following the coin toss, the ball shall be put in play from the offensive team's 20 yard line.
- b. The loser of the coin toss gets possession of the ball at the start of the second half.
- c. Following a touchdown, the ball shall be put in play from the 20 yard line of the team just scored upon.
- d. Following a safety, the ball will be put into play from the 20 yard line of the team scoring the safety.
- e. Following a touchback, the ball will be put in play by bringing the ball out to the first field line.

7. SCORING

- a. Touchdown – 6 points
- b. Safety – 2 points
- c. Point After Touchdown (PAT)
 - i. May be passing or running.
 - ii. With the ball placed at the 3 yard line, one (1) point.
 1. NO GUT (running inside the tackles from 5 yards or less)
 - iii. With the ball placed at the 10 yard line, two (2) points.

8. SCRIMMAGE

- a. There shall be NO grasping, blocking, holding or shoving of the ball carrier, passer, kicker, or pass receiver. This includes grabbing of clothing and any other use of hands to grab or hold an opponent.
 - i. Penalty is 10 yards from the spot and an automatic first down
 - ii. Continued violation will result in ejection from the game.
- b. The player carrying/in-possession of the ball is considered down at the spot where his flag is first snatched or falls from his side.
- c. Even if a player from your own team knocks the flag off, the ball carrier is down at the spot.
- d. A player may receive the ball without a flag, but is down at the point where the ball is received is received.
- e. The ball is dead when a player in possession of the ball leaves his feet by diving, jumping or spinning to gain an advantage.

9. BLOCKING

- a. Offensive blocking shall take place without contact. The blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of arms, elbows, or legs during an offensive player's screen block is illegal.
 - i. Penalty is 10 yards
- b. Teammates of the runner or passer may interfere for a player by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another.
 - i. Penalty is 10 yards from spot
- c. Clipping (blocking from behind) and any "low blocking" (below the opponent's waist) are illegal.
 - i. Penalty for both actions is 15 yards AND ejection from the contest

- d. Defensive players must go around the offensive players screen block. The arms may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the officials.
- e. Flags must be worn on the outside of the shirt and may not be protected by the use of the hands and arms.

10. DOWNS

- a. There will be four (4) downs to gain a first down.
- b. First downs go from one field line to the other.
 - i. For example, offensive team could have a first down and one yard or first down and 19.

11. FORWARD & LATERAL PASSES

- a. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down. A forward pass may be thrown from anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.
 - i. **Penalty is 5 yards and loss of down.**
- b. Any number of lateral passes may be thrown by any of the members of the team with the ball.
- c. A second attempted lateral pass behind the line of scrimmage is illegal if it results in two (2) passes in a forward direction.
 - i. **Penalty is 5 yards and loss of down.**
- d. Penalty for intentionally grounding the forward pass is 5 yards and loss of down.
- e. A catch is an act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight.
- f. A catch of an opponents pass or fumble in flight is an interception.
- g. Interceptions may be returned.
- h. Offensive players may not advance a fumbled lateral. The ball is dead at the spot where it hits the ground.
- i. If a player attempts to catch or an interception while in the air, the player must contact the ground inbounds with the ball in his/her possession prior to touching out-of-bounds, unless an opponent's contact causes him/her to first touch out-of-bounds.
- j. If ONE FOOT lands inbounds and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out-of-bounds.
- k. A catch by kneeling or prone inbounds player is a completion or interception.
- l. A loss of ball simultaneously with returning to the ground is not a catch or interception.
 - i. If in doubt, it is a catch.
- m. Pass Interference will be called for intentional early de-flagging.
 - i. **Penalty is 10 yards and automatic first down.**

12. PUNTS

- a. On fourth downs, the offensive team informs the referee whether they will kick or try for the first down.
- b. There are absolutely no fake punts.
- c. All defensive players except two must line up on the line of scrimmage.
- d. The other two may stay back to receive the punt.
- e. No climbing on other players.
- f. The ball is put into play by the center giving the ball to the punter.
- g. Only two men on the kicking team may go downfield to cover the punt, at that time.
- h. The ball must be kicked away within four (4) seconds after the center puts the ball in play. The referee will count off four (4) seconds, it is turned over to the receiving team at that spot.
- i. After the kick, all kicking team members may go down field to cover the punt.
- j. The receiving team may not rush the kicker. They also may not block any member of the kicking team at anytime during the punt play. NO Blocking allowed.
 - i. **Penalty for blocking by receiving team: Kicking team has the choice of 10 yards from the spot of the infraction.**
- k. The punt may be returned by either of the receiving team's deep men. If one of the linemen touches the ball, the receiving team takes over at that spot.
- l. If the ball is fumbled by a receiver, it is dead at the spot where it lands. The ball is dead anywhere it is touched by the receiving team.

- m. The receivers must be given a chance to catch the ball. The receivers may not be blocked or in any way obstructed from touching the ball, in the air or bouncing on the ground.
 - i. **Penalty is 10 yards and it is down.**

13. SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- a. "Side out" or "Sleeper" plays
 - i. Illegal on plays following subs. (Change of possession)
 - ii. Illegal if sleeper gets in prone position on the ground, hides behind screen, or is within 5 yards of sidelines.
- b. "No Gut" Rule
 - i. Whenever the offensive team has 5 yards or less to go for the first down or touchdown, the play may not be run from tackle to tackle. The offense must go outside the tackles or pass the ball.
 - ii. **Penalty for "running gut" in an illegal situation is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.**
- c. Inadvertent whistle – At the time of the inadvertent whistle the team with possession of the ball has the option of replaying the down or the result of the play during the inadvertent whistle.

14. WEATHER

- a. Games are played at their scheduled time.
- b. Generally the only time a game is postponed is when severe weather or lightening and thunder.
- c. Call x6463 if you are unsure about weather conditions.
- d. If necessary, the Intramural Site Manager will make the call on the weather on-site.

15. STARTING TIME

- a. All Teams must be present and ready to play with a minimum of 6 players at the scheduled game time.
- b. The game clock will begin and continue to run as scheduled. If the 6-player minimum is not fulfilled by 5 minutes into the official game, a forfeit will be called.
- c. Any team who forfeits a game is out of the league and will no longer be eligible to compete in Flag Football for the remainder of the semester
- d. All players on a team that is eliminated due to a forfeit are also ineligible to compete on any other team in the league for the remainder of the season.

16. FIELD POLICIES

- a. No food
- b. No drinks, except water
- c. No tobacco, drugs, or alcohol
- d. No bikes inside the fence or on the turf stadium area.
- e. No pets inside the fence or on the turf stadium area.
- f. Spectators may not come onto the turf during a game.

17. ROSTERS

- a. A team must turn in roster at the first game
- b. No additions to the roster after the first game
- c. All participating players must show a Wittenberg ID prior to the start of the game, and that ID must match the name on the roster.
- d. No Wittenberg ID, no play. No exceptions.

18. Quick Reference of Violations

- a. 5-yard penalties
 - i. Encroachment
 - ii. Not enough players on scrimmage line at snap
 - iii. Delay of game
 - iv. Batting or stealing the ball from another player whom has possession of the ball
 - v. Unintentional flag guarding
 - vi. Illegal snap
 - vii. Illegal motion
 - viii. Illegal shift
 - ix. Illegal substitution – too many people on the field

- b. 5 Yard Penalties + Loss of Downs
 - i. Illegal forward pass
 - ii. Illegally handing ball forward
 - iii. Intentionally grounding a pass

- c. 10 Yard Penalties + Loss of Down
 - i. Offensive pass interference

- d. 10 Yard Penalties + Automatic First Down
 - i. Defensive pass interference

- e. 15 Yard Penalties + Automatic First Down
 - i. Roughing the passer

- f. 15 Yard Penalties + DQ from Game
 - i. Any malicious, flagrant, unsportsmanlike foul
 - ii. Clipping
 - iii. Unsportsmanlike conduct of a player
 - iv. Foul, abusive, or racially derogatory language
 - v. Fighting or attempting to start a physical confrontation
 - vi. Tampering with flag belt in order to gain advantage – example -- knotting the belt
 - vii. Intentional or repeated flag guarding
 - viii. Contact blocking