



BGC PRINCE WILLIAM/MANASSAS FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

1. GAME

- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have three (3) plays to score a touchdown.
- 2. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
- 3. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

2. FIELD

- The field dimensions are 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-Run Zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards.
- 2. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones (a 5 yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.

3. TIMING AND OVERTIME

- Games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock with two twenty minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts.
- 2. Halftime is one minute long.
- 3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- 4. Each team has one 60-second time out per half. **No timeouts in OT.**
- 5. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession. The only exception is if the first offensive team throws an interception. In this case, the game ends with the intercepting team winning.
- 6. First possession choice goes to the winner of regulation coin toss.
- 7. Each team gets a minimum of one possession.
- 8. Each team will be scored based on yardage gained or points scored:

- 9. Yardage gained – each team will be given one complete series to drive the field as far as they can. The yardage gained will be noted by the official. The team with the most yards gained wins. If both teams score touchdowns and complete the same amount of points in conversions, the process is repeated.

4. SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
- 2. PAT (Point After Touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line)
 - a. Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
- 3. Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.
- 4. Safety: 2 points
 - 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 or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
- 5. Mercy Rule: After one team is winning by twenty eight points or more, the losing team gets one offensive series to continue regulation play. If they do not score, the game goes into scrimmage mode playing up to the fifteen minute mark in the second half if time allows. After the fifteen minute mark, the game is over.

5. RUNNING

- The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
- 2. The quarterback cannot run with the ball. The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the back field, but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
 - a. "Center Sneak" play – The ball must completely leave the center's hands on the snap and he/she must step backwards off the line of scrimmage in order to receive a direct handoff from the QB before advancing the ball.
- 4. Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind.
- 5. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

- 6. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- 7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to void a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
- 8. Spinning is allowed, but players may not leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Jumping in the air in a forward motion to advance the ball, while attempting to avoid a flag pull, is not allowed. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.
- 9. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.
- 10. Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
- 11. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

6. PASSING

- 1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line scrimmage.
- 2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 3. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.
- 4. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.

7. Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- 2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
- 3. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- 4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession **is awarded to the offense.**
- 5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
- 6. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.

8. RUSHING THE PASSER

- All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- 2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- 3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 4. A legal rush is:
 - i. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7 yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - iv. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
- 5. A penalty may be called if:
 - i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Offside (5 yards LOS and first down).
 - iii. Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
- 6. Special circumstances:
 - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven second clock in effect.
 - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before they play, however, if they do send a rusher, the rusher must verify with the official that they are in the correct position.
 - iii. If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced.
- 7. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- 8. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
- 9. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback’s feet are when flag is pulled.
 - a. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

9. FLAG PULL

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- 2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- 3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
- 4. 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.
- 5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- 6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey

10. FORMATIONS

- Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
- a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
- 2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
- 3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- 4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

11. UNSPORTSMANLIKE

- If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
- 2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
- 3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
- 4. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

12. PENALTIES

- Spot Fouls
- 2. Defensive Pass Interference Automatic First Down
- 3. Holding +5 yards & Automatic First Down
- 4. Stripping + 10 yards & Automatic First Down
- 5. Defensive Unnecessary Roughness + 10 yards & Automatic First Down
- 6. Screening, Blocking or Running with the Ball Carrier - 5 yards & Loss of Down
- 7. Charging -10 yards & Loss of Down
- 8. Flag Guarding -10 yards & Loss of Down
- 9. Offensive Unnecessary Roughness -10 yards & Loss of Down
- 10. Offside + 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
- 11. Illegal Rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) + 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
- 12. Illegal Flag Pull (Before the receiver has the ball) + 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
- 13. Roughing the Passer + 10 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
- 14. Taunting + 10 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
- 15. Defensive Pass Interference SPOT FOUL, Automatic First Down
- 16. Holding SPOT FOUL, + 5 yards & Automatic First Down
- 17. Stripping SPOT FOUL + 10 yards & Automatic First Down
- 18. Defensive Unnecessary Roughness SPOT FOUL + 10 yards & Automatic First Down
- 19. Offside / False Start - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
- 20. Illegal Forward Pass (Pass received behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)- 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
- 21. Offensive Pass Interference - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
- 22. Illegal Motion (More than one person moving) - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
- 23. Delay of Game - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
- 24. Impeding the Rusher - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
- 25. Screening, Blocking or Running with the Ball Carrier SPOT FOUL, - 5 yards & Loss of Down
- 26. Charging SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
- 27. Flag Guarding SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
- 28. Offensive Unnecessary Roughness SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down