

MVFF FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

I. Games

1. Start with Coin Flip. Winner chooses offense or defense.
2. 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, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown.
3. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
4. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

II. Timing

1. Games are played on a central continuous running clock. There are two 15-minute halves and a two-minute halftime.
2. Overtime - If the score is tied at the end of regulation, an overtime period will be used to determine a winner. Overtime format is as follows:
 - a. A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
 - i. If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
 - ii. The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
 - b. Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two points is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that begins on offense converts the team that started on defense gets a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one- or two-point play of their own.
 - i. Example: Team A starts on offense and chooses to go for one point from the 5-yard line and is successful. Team B is then on offense and can choose to either go for one point from the 5-yard line to tie and force a second round of overtime or to go for two points from the 10-yard line for the win.
 - ii. If the second team on offense in an overtime round fails to beat or match the team that went first, the team that went first wins.
 - c. Both teams must "go for two" from the 10-yard line starting with the third round of overtime.
 - d. The final points earned by the winning team in the final overtime will be added onto the winning team's total score. The losing team will not receive any additional points.
 - i. Example: End of regulation time, score is 14-14. Team A scores one point and Team B score two points. Team B wins with a final score of 16-14. Points are only added to total score from final round of overtime.
 - e. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
 - f. There are no timeouts

III. Scoring

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line)
 - a. Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
 - b. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-point conversion (from the 10-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged

timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.

3. Safety: 2 points

- a. A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.

IV. Rules

1. DEAD BALLS - Play is ruled "dead" when:

- a. The ball hits the ground.
 - i. If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
- b. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
- c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
- d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
- e. The ball-carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
- f. The ball-carrier's flag falls out.
- g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
- h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
- i. Inadvertent whistle.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball-carrier's feet were at the time of the fumble.

2. RUNNING –

- a. 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.
- b. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
- c. 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.
 - i. "Center sneak" play is no longer allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
- d. Absolutely NO laterals of any kind.
- e. No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
- f. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- g. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- h. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
- i. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
 - i. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
- j. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
- k. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.

- l. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
 - m. 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.
3. PASSING –
- a. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - i. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes.
 - ii. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - c. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed, and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
 - i. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).
4. RECEIVING –
- a. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
 - b. 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 toward the line of scrimmage.
 - c. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
 - d. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
 - e. 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.
 - f. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.
5. RUSHING THE PASSER
- a. 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. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
 - b. 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.
 - c. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - i. A legal rush is:
 - 1. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - 2. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - 3. 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.
 - 4. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before he/she crosses the line of scrimmage, he/she may legally rush the quarterback.
 - ii. A penalty may be called if:

1. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5 yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 2. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5 yards from line of scrimmage and first down).
 3. 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 from the line of scrimmage and first down).
- iii. Special circumstances:
1. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
 2. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
1. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

6. FLAG PULLING –

- a. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- b. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
- c. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier’s possession at any time.
- d. 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. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
- e. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- f. 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.

7. PENALTIES –

ii. Defensive spot fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding	Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards and automatic first down

iii. Offensive spot fouls

Screening, blocking or running with the ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging	-10 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-10 yards and loss of down

iv. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive Unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush <small>(Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)</small>	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull <small>(Before the receiver has the ball)</small>	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

v. Offensive penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass <small>(Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)</small>	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion <small>(More than one person moving)</small>	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down