

North Weymouth Flag Football League Official Rule Book





NWFFL Official Rule Book

Contents

Game	2
Equipment	2
Rosters	3
Timing / Overtime	3
Scoring	4
Live Ball/Dead Ball	5
OFFENSE	6
Formations	6
RUNNING	6
PASSING	7
Receiving	7
DEFENSE	9
Basics	9
Flag Pulling	10
Division 5 RULES	10
Playoff RULES	11



Game

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
3. 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.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
5. 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.
6. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

Equipment

1. The league provides each player with an official flag belt, black shorts, and NFL FLAG team jersey. Teams will use footballs provided by their league.
2. Players must wear a protective mouth guard. Extra mouth guards are available to purchase at the concession stand on game day. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
3. Players must wear cleats. Metal spike cleats are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all jewelry, and hats – baseball caps or hats with visors are not allowed. Winter hats are allowed.
5. Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts at all times. If a jersey comes untucked during the game play it must be tucked in before the next snap.
6. Players' flags must be unobstructed at all times. Flags must be positioned on the players sided above both hips. Flags should not be positioned behind or in front of a player.



Rosters

1. Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
2. Teams play with five players on the field. Teams with insufficient players to field a five-man roster may play with a minimum of four players.
3. Players arriving after the start of the second half of a game are not eligible to play in the game.

Timing / Overtime

1. Games are played with a 40-minute continuous clock, with two 20-minute halves. The clock will only stop for timeouts or injuries.
 - a. Stop time is used during the last two minutes of each half. During Stop Time, the clock will stop for timeouts, injuries, out of bounds, and incomplete passes.
 - b. The clock also stops at the two-minute warning.
2. Halftime is Two minutes.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has two 30-second timeout per half.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, an overtime period will be used to determine a winner.

OVERTIME RULES

Overtime format is as follows:

1. A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
 - a. 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.
2. All regulation period rules and penalties remain in effect.
3. There will be no Time Outs for either team in Overtime.



NWFFL Official Rule Book

4. The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
5. Overtime begins with the ball placed at the defensive team's 20-yard Line.
6. The Offense has one series (3 downs) to score a touchdown.
 - a. If the Offense scores, the team may attempt either a 1 or 2 point conversion.
7. Teams will rotate possessions until one team has more points after an equal number of possessions.
8. Defensive penalties resulting in an automatic first down will be enforced and extend the offensive series.
9. Interceptions may be returned for a touchdown. If a defensive touchdown is scored in overtime the game is over.

Scoring

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. Point After Touchdown (PAT) Conversions:
 - a. 1 point (5-yard line): 1 Point Conversion must be PASS ONLY
 - i. Interception of 1 Point Conversion – 1 Point
 - b. 2 points (10-yard line): 2 Point Conversion may be a pass or a run.
 - i. Interception of 2 Point Conversion – 2 Point
 - c. 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).
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.



Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
 - a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered inbounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play. The foot must be the lead foot. If the lead foot steps out of bounds prior to the catch, the pass will be ruled incomplete.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
 - a. If the Offense substitutes a player (or more), the Defense is allowed time to substitute players as well.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. 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.

8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the down will be replayed from the original line of scrimmage.



OFFENSE

Formations

1. Offenses must have a minimum of two players on the line of scrimmage (the center being one) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. Players not on the line of scrimmage must be located BEHIND the quarterback. Players must either be on the line of scrimmage, or behind the quarterback.
 - b. Stacked receivers are not allowed.
 - i. A player may never line up behind another receiver
 - c. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and must be parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - d. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
2. 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.
3. The center must snap the ball between or to the side of his/her legs to a player in the backfield

RUNNING

1. The ball will be spotted where the player's feet are when the flag is pulled, not the position of the ball. Forward progress is measured by the ball carrier's front foot.
 - a. At the Goal Line, a player may NOT extend the ball to reach over the line for a Touchdown. A player must cross the goal line with the ball to be considered a Touchdown.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
4. 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).
5. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
6. Laterals are allowed in Divisions 1-4. Only one lateral is allowed after the ball crosses the line of scrimmage.



NWFFL Official Rule Book

7. Once the ball has been handed off behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
9. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
10. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.
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.

PASSING

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - a. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes.
 - b. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of 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, 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.
 - a. After 5 seconds, defensive players may rush the quarterback.
 - b. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the play will result in a safety.

Receiving

1. 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 toward the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at 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.



NWFFL Official Rule Book

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 in Divisions 1 – 4. Interceptions are not returnable in Division 5, and the ball will be placed at the spot of the Interception.
7. Interceptions are returnable on conversions after touchdowns in Division 1 – 4:
 - a. If an Interception is made on a 1 point conversion attempt – 1 point
 - b. If an Interception is made on a 2 point conversion – 2 points



DEFENSE

Basics

1. All players must be a minimum of five yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
2. During a pass, any number of players can rush the quarterback after a **five second pass clock** has expired. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
3. Once the ball is handed off, the **five-yard rule**, and the **five second pass clock** are no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
4. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line five yards from the line of scrimmage.
 - a. 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 from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5 yards from line of scrimmage 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 from the line of scrimmage and first down).
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.



Flag Pulling

1. 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. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
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

Division 5 RULES

Division 5 has some slightly modified rules to allow the youngest players a chance to learn the league, the rules, and focus on building fundamental skills. The rule variances are noted above and are summarized below:

1. Laterals of any kind are not allowed
2. Fake handoffs are not allowed in No Run Zones
3. Interceptions may not be returned. The play is ruled dead and the defense takes possession of the ball at the spot of the interception.
4. During Passing plays, the Defensive line of scrimmage will remain the 5-yard buffer, except at the Goal Line
 - a. Defensive players may not enter the buffer area
 - i. The intent for Division 5 is to allow players the space to learn to pass and catch successfully. By enforcing the buffer rule on Passes, the players are given more room to develop these skill sets.
 - b. At mid-field in the No Run Zone, the Defensive players may line up at the 50-yard line, but not beyond.
 - i. Regardless of where the Offense has the ball between the 45-yard line and the 50-yard line, the 50-yard line will be maintained as the Defensive line of scrimmage.
 - c. The 5-yard buffer is eliminated in the Goal Line No Run Zone
 - i. The Defense may line up to the Offensive line of scrimmage with no buffer.



Playoff RULES

..... coming soon