

# PAL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

## A. Equipment:

1. 9 players, offense or defense (9 minimum to start the game, 7 or less - team forfeits). Uniform shirts (tucked in) required. **Mouth guards are required.** Only molded cleats (no screw-on). Game-time (on schedule) is forfeit time.
2. Teams provide their own football and flags. (Ball may be regulation or intermediate, not junior size. No colored footballs. Flags (2) must be standard length and width = 16" x 2" and easily detachable by velcro. All players **must** have **flags of an alternate color from pants/shorts.**)
3. Pads are not allowed unless covering an injury (soft pad only, **up to the official if OK'd prior to game**).

## B. Periods/Time factors:

1. Game time = four 10 minute periods with running time, last 2 minutes of half and game are stop.
2. 25 seconds allowed between plays; delay of game = 5 yard penalty.
3. Stop clock for penalty, restart when ball is **spotted** after foul.
4. Halftime is 8 minutes (or less by agreement of coaches).
5. Time outs (1 minute) - each team gets 2 timeouts per half, no carryover. 1 coach may go on the field during TO.

## C. Field/First down:

1. Field total = 80 yards. 60 yard field (divided into 4 - 15 yard increments) & 2 - 10 yard end zones.
2. First down every 15 yards. First down when offense passes mark on play or penalty within 4 downs.

## D. Kickoffs:

1. Kickoff from 15 yard line. Kickoff into end zone, ball is down, automatically placed at 15 yard line.
2. First kick OB - receiving team option - **re-kick or spot**. Second attempt OB - ball placed at midfield.
3. Dropped kick - ball is down, team starts from spot where ball touches ground, if in end zone, 15 yard line.
4. Onside kick - Ball must travel **15 yards** before it is live. First team to touch after 15 yards, gains possession.

## E. Punts:

1. Kicking team has to declare intention to punt and must have 5 men on the LOS. No rush or block allowed.
2. Receiving team - not less than 3 men on the LOS (cannot form a wedge, screen block OK.) Penalty = 5 yards.
3. Fair-Catch rule is in effect (also on kickoffs), bad snap on punt allowed, punter can pick up ball and kick. Teams cannot move until the ball is punted. Penalty = 5 yards.
4. Officials allow time for change of personnel, up to individual officials discretion (no quick kicks!)

## F. Scoring / Points after touchdown (PAT):

1. Touchdown = 6 points. Offense must declare intention to go for 1 or 2 points. **Captains** first decision final.
2. 1 point from 3 yard line, 2 points from 5 yard line.

## G. Line of scrimmage (LOS) / Stance / Shift:

1. Offense must have 5 men on LOS; Penalty = 5 yards. 3 interior linemen (Gd, Center, Gd) are ineligible. **No unbalanced lines (Guard position is never eligible).**
2. Defense must have 3 men on LOS minimum; outside defensive lineman inside shoulder must align with the outside shoulder of the offensive lineman. (Use the interior box as a guide - if WR's are up and only three interior G-C-G, defense must line up on their outside shoulder.) No 3 or 4 point stance allowed (standing only); penalty = 5 yards.
3. No direct dive within **five yards on either side of center** (draw or misdirection, OK). QB must show ball above shoulder as if to pass in order to run a draw (QB or RB) inside this **10 yd. zone**, RB/WR may reverse field from outside the **10 yd. zone**, in order to cut up field within the **zone**. Penalty = 5 yards.
4. All players, except one man in motion, on offense must be set before ball is snapped. Defense cannot try and draw offense offside with **words or actions**. Penalty = 5 yards.
5. Offensive player goes in motion only after all players set for 1 count before ball is snapped. Penalty = 5 yards.
6. Encroachment / off-side (offense or defense) into the neutral zone - **automatic** 5 yard penalty.

## H. Blocking:

1. No blocking below the waist or from behind; No contact by any player above the shoulders; Penalty = 10 yards.
2. No drive blocking - No bull rush of Center - Must rush Ctr/Gd gap. Penalty = 10 yards.
3. Down field Shield or Screen block only-screener can move but not initiate contact-no extension of hands/fists away from body; blocker may not lower his shoulder or "throw a block"; Penalty = 10 yards.
4. Pro pass block allowed behind the LOS - key points - palms face forward, arms can be extended / locked - no fists in punching motion. No grabbing of jersey to control rusher. Holding - 5 yards.

### I. Grabbing the flag / dead ball / tackling:

1. No tackling allowed - defense must make an attempt for the flag, no encircling of arms, holding up the ball carrier. Ball carrier must tuck shirt and have alternate flag color from shorts or pants. Flags need to be on the players hips. If belt is pulled, official has judgement if intentional. Initial contact must be with hands, not head or shoulder. Penalty = 10 yards or play and automatic first down.
2. Intentionally pulling flag - 1 flag, player is live, can advance ball - option of penalty or play. (Penalty = 10 yds)  
- 2 flags ball is down at point of reception, option of penalty or play. (10 yards)
3. Accidental drop of flag(s) - receiver or DB is eligible, ball is down at point of reception. Officials judgement.
4. QB/RB with one flag - ball is down at point flag drops while player has ball, or at reception if prior to contact.
5. Ball is down anytime the ball is dropped to the ground (except by punter). Ball is placed where it was dropped.
6. **Stripping of the ball is not allowed.** Penalty is 10 yards from spot of foul.
7. **Ball carrier (offensive player) must avoid contact** with a defensive player who is in position directly in front of him. Judgement of the official if this is intentional or accidental. Penalty = 10 yards.
8. Coach and team captain must take responsibility for reminding players to keep flags on their side

### J. Pass completion / Interference / Eligible receiver:

1. Receiver must have one foot in bounds when making a legal catch. If receiver has control of ball and would land in bounds but is forced out by defense while in air, a catch can be allowed; discretion of official.
2. **DB can bump receiver within 5 yds of LOS** - must not hinder receiver from catching ball before ball reaches receiver while in air. Officials judgement - Penalty = 10 yards and automatic first down.
3. All backs are eligible pass receivers - outside ends (not guards or center), uncovered, are eligible. Penalty = 10 yds.
4. Linemen must remain behind the LOS until the ball is thrown, if the pass is beyond the LOS. Penalty = 10 yards.

### K. Other Penalties:

1. No pushing of ball carrier out of bounds without going for flags. Penalty = 10 yards from spot of foul.
2. No flag guarding of any sort, including straight arms, jumping, spinning in the air. **Pivoting on the ground is allowed.** Penalty = 5 yards from spot of foul.
3. No leaving your feet by ball carrier or blocker. Penalty = 5 yards from spot of foul.
4. Swearing or rude behavior is not allowed. Officials discretion! (Unsportsmanlike behavior - 10 yd. penalty)
4. Pass rushers **may raise hands during rush** cannot use them to strike an opponent, merely to distract the QB.
5. **Officials must make a declaration of penalties to both captains (not coaches) upon assessment of a penalty.**
6. All other penalties are applied according to high school rules; 15 yard penalties become 10, etc.
7. Players must wear a regulation uniform, including flags, consistent with other members of the team. No player may wear any jewelry, headbands, arm sleeves, wraps, gloves, face paint, hair paint, etc. Additional items brought to the attention of the league director may be disallowed. Officials ruling is final. Penalty = 10 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct. (Wrist bands and wrist coach sleeves are permitted.)
8. **No sleeper plays or unbalanced lines - a team must have a guard, center, guard - they are not eligible.**

### L. Team Box:

In order to alleviate the congestion and confusion surrounding the team / coach(es) there will be an established team box which will extend from the 15 yard line to the opposite 15 yard line when teams are on opposite sides and from 15 yard line to mid-field at sites with only same side space. **No spectators are allowed inside this area during the game!** Coaches are required to instruct their spectators prior to the season and at each game about the restriction of spectators in the team box. Violations will cause the team the following penalties; First Offense - Warning; Second Offense - 5 yard penalty; Third Offense - 10 yard penalty and loss of down. Spectators must be 5yards off the sideline.

### M. Player / Coaches Conduct:

As the PAL is a league established to foster a positive Christian attitude and encourage healthy sportsmanlike conduct so each coach is expected to foster these ideals in dealing with officials, players, opposing teams and parents. To this end, prior to each game, both teams will meet at mid-field to conduct a group prayer. The home team (first team listed on the schedule) will be responsible for the prayer. At the conclusion of each game, teams will shake hands.

**Coaches are also responsible for their team's conduct**, especially with regard to officials. Officials will be doing all that they can to keep control of the game. Each coach must take responsibility for their actions; **refrain from yelling at officials, positive comments or questions are OK and coach your players.** Any player or coach who is ejected will serve a one game suspension beginning with the next league contest and may not return to the contest in progress. If no other **certified** coach is in attendance, the game will be declared a forfeit.