

NWFFL Rules

Updated 10/21/2014

A coin toss determines first possession. The visiting team calls the toss.

- 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. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes, possession changes and the clock stops for 2 minutes. This is half time.

Players/Game Schedules

- Teams must field a minimum of four (4) players and a maximum of (5) at all times.
- Any player arriving after the start of the second half of a game, is not eligible to play in the game.

Timing/Overtime

- Games are played to 40 minutes running time with a 2 minute warning in each half. It is stop time during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will stop for time outs, out of bounds and incomplete passes. There will be a 2 minute break at half-time.
- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime.
 - A coin toss determines first possession. The visiting team calls the toss. Winner may defer.
 - Ball is placed on defensive 20 yard line. Offensive team has one series to score.
 - Teams rotate possessions until one team has more points after an equal number of possessions.
 - Team scoring a touchdown may attempt either 1 or 2 point conversion try.
 - Defensive penalties resulting in automatic first down will be enforced, and extend the offensive series.
 - Interceptions can be returned for a touchdown.

- 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.
- Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

Scoring

Offense:

Touchdown: 6 points

Conversion Try: 1 point (played from 5-yard line) or

Conversion Try: 2 points (played from 10-yard line)

Defense:

Safety: 2 points

Interception returned for touchdown: 6 points (Pick 6)

Interception of a One Point Conversion Try for a touchdown: 1 point (Pick 1)

Interception of a Two Point Conversion Try for a touchdown: 2 points (Pick 2)

Running

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball. The first player to touch the ball from the center is the quarterback for the duration of that play. The QB may pass the ball, or catch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, but cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage at any time during that play.
- Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- Laterals are only allowed in divisions 1-4. Only one lateral is allowed after the ball crosses the line of scrimmage.
- "No-running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- In the no-running zone-no fake handoffs or handoffs.
- Any offensive player may throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off by the QB, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Passing

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Defensive players may not rush the quarterback until five seconds after the ball has been snapped. Once the quarterback hands off the ball to another offensive player, the five second rule is no longer in effect and the defense may rush. The referee will count off and indicate when the defense may rush.
- If the referee cannot see the ball to determine if it is a pass or running play due to multiple offensive players obscuring the ball, the play may be whistled dead with loss of down.
- Division 1-4: Interceptions are permitted and may be advanced for a touchdown. Only one lateral is allowed after an interception. Remember there is no blocking. It will result in a penalty.
- Division 5: Interceptions are permitted, and result in a dead ball at the point of interception. Defensive team takes possession.

Dead Balls

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, or off to one side, to start play. The center may 'pitch' the snap. The first player to touch the snap is considered the quarterback. The QB is not allowed to run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - At the point of an interception for division 5.
 - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier's flag falls out.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Rushing the Quarterback

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of five yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback (in "no-run" zones, the defensive players may line up on the line of scrimmage).

Once the ball is handed off, the five-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate five yards from the line of scrimmage.

Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the tournament. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Penalties

All penalties will be called by the referee.

Defense:

- Offsides 5 yards and automatic first down
- Interference: 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal contact:(holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal flag pull: (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal rushing :(starting rush from inside 5 yard marker) 10 yards and automatic first down
- If an offensive player is deliberately pulled down, tackled or intentionally tripped by a defender this will result in a spot foul and a fifteen yard penalty will be marked off. But if the offensive player has one man to beat and is pulled down or tackled after crossing the 50 yard line it will be at the discretion of the referee whether to call this a spot foul or a touchdown.

Offense:

- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) - 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) - 5 yards and loss of down
- Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) - 10 yards and loss of down
- Flag guarding - 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down
- Delay of game - Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

Other:

- **Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.**

- Defensive pass interference occurring in the end zone will result in automatic first down, and the ball spotted at the one yard line. All other penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
 - Defensive pass interference occurring during a two point conversion try will result in the ball being placed at the 6 yard line, and a re-try.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Attire

Cleats are mandatory. Metal spike cleats are not allowed. Inspections must be made. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions. No baseball caps or hats with visors.

Official NFL Flag jerseys must be worn during play.

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.