



Summer Iowa Games | Flag Football Rules

I. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All athletes must be eighteen (18) years of age or older prior to July 28, 2018.
- B. No person who is currently or in the last year is/was a member of a professional football team is allowed to participate.
- C. No more than two (2) student athletes from a current NCAA Division I or Division II institution may participate on a team.
- D. **In order for a team to be eligible to compete in the tournament, the person or persons registering the team must be a CURRENT RESIDENT OF THE STATE OF IOWA and must present proof of residency during athlete check-in prior to participation in the tournament (SEE ITEM E BELOW). After satisfying the preceding requirement, there are no further state residency restrictions for the remaining athletes on the team. All remaining athletes on the team are welcome to compete with any residency.**
- E. All players must present proof of their identity AND age of eligibility during athlete check-in PRIOR to participation in the tournament. Athlete's identification must include a picture I.D. in the form of: (1) a state or federally issued I.D., (2) passport or (3) school I.D.

II. ROSTERS

- A. Each team must submit a completed roster/team entry form.
- B. It is the responsibility of the team manager/representative to determine that rosters are completed accurately and submitted to the Iowa Games.
- C. At no time will a roster contain fewer than seven (7) or more than 20 players.

III. CONDUCT

- A. Players, coaches and fans are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner. Please display good sportsmanship at all times. The Iowa Games Football Committee has the authority to suspend any player, manager, representative or team for violations of tournament rules. A person may be ejected for any action not addressed in the rules that is determined to be detrimental to the good conduct of the tournament.
- B. The game officials will be in charge during play, and their decisions will be final. Matters of protest will be submitted to the Football Committee and/or Commissioner. Steps must follow those outlined in section XV.
- C. Alcohol and tobacco are not allowed at any time on the tournament premises by athletes or spectators.
- D. Game officials have the authority to eject any person from a game for serious misconduct. This includes unsportsmanlike conduct and offensive language. An ejected athlete will leave the playing field and the sideline area (out of sight and sound) immediately or the game will be forfeited.
- E. Prior to the game, each team must designate a team captain or captains for the opening coin toss. The captains are the only game participants allowed to communicate with the game officials. A coin toss will determine opening possession of the ball.

IV. UNIFORMS

- A. Opposing teams must wear jerseys of contrasting colors. Team members all must wear jerseys of the same color.
- B. Athletes may wear any type of pants. Pants cannot be the same color as the flags used (The Iowa Games flags are red and yellow).
- C. Protective equipment other than knee braces, mouth guards, and ankle braces will not be allowed. No hip, thigh, forearm or hand pads are allowed.
- D. Athletes may wear molded rubber cleats. **NO STEEL CLEATS ALLOWED.**
- E. The Iowa Games will provide flag belts to athletes for gameplay. Athletes must wear two flags, placed on their hips at all times.
- F. Wrapping, tying or securing the flag to the pants or belt is unsportsmanlike conduct and officials will penalize the athlete accordingly.
- G. All shirts must be tucked in to allow complete access to the entire flag.
- H. Each team must provide a football of high school, college or professional regulation size.

V. PLAYING REGULATIONS - Iowa High School Athletic Association Rules, except the following:

- A. Putting the ball in play:
 - 1. There is no kick-off. Play begins at the 20-yard line.
 - 2. The team that wins the coin toss may elect to have possession of the ball, choice of end zone, or defer their decision to the second half. Teams will change direction at the beginning of each quarter.
 - 3. All offensive plays must begin with a snap of the ball originating from "between the legs" of an offensive player to another offensive player (EXCEPT ON FOURTH DOWN, SEE V. PLAYING REGULATIONS, F. 2).
- B. First downs are granted by advancing from one 20-yard zone in four downs.
- C. Fumbles: Any time the ball is fumbled, the ball is dead at that spot.
- D. No stripping or attacking the ball will be allowed.
 - Blocking:
 - 1. In all instances, a blocker must be on his feet before and during contact with his opponent.
 - 2. Blocking can only be done with the hands, and contact may only be made against an opponent's torso, arms or hands.
 - 3. Under no condition shall a high-low block be permitted. (Approved ruling: In the event a blocker makes legal contact then loses footing or balance and in the process of falling makes contact below the hips, this will not be interpreted as a penalty unless the blocker continues to drive forward.)
 - 4. All blocking must be behind the line of scrimmage. **NO DOWN FIELD BLOCKING ALLOWED.** A blocker may not drive the opponent down field.
 - 5. Any member of the offensive team moving ahead of the ball carrier will be considered downfield blocking.
 - 6. **NO DOUBLE-TEAM BLOCKING WILL BE ALLOWED AT ANYTIME.**
- E. The ball is downed and becomes dead when:
 - 1. An opposing player pulls one of the flags from the ball carrier's belt. The player who removed the flag from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag above his head at the spot where the flag was taken.
 - 2. The player who removes the flag should remain at the spot where he downed the ball carrier and then hand the flag back to the ball carrier. Failure to do so will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
 - 3. Any fumbled ball is dead at the spot of the fumble.
 - 4. No offensive player may dive. Doing so results in the ball becoming dead at the spot of the dive. Exception: jump pass behind the line of scrimmage.
- F. Fourth down only:
 - 1. The offensive team captain must notify the defensive team and officials if they are going to punt.
 - 2. If the ball is to be punted, the offensive team must remain stationary until the ball is punted. The punter may walk up to the line of scrimmage to take the ball before retreating a minimum of 3-yards behind the line of scrimmage.
 - 3. The ball must be punted within 25-seconds of the snap. It is a 15-yard penalty for the team captain to change his mind.
 - 4. Upon notification of a punt, the defensive team must have a minimum of three men on the line of scrimmage until the ball is touched. They are given a 2-yard zone behind themselves to block.
- G. Receivers must have one foot in bounds and control of the ball for a reception.
- H. Once a player goes out of bounds, he is out of that particular play.
- I. If the ball is in the air and the defensive player pulls the flag too soon, it becomes an automatic two hand touch from the shoulder to the knees.
- J. No ball carrier may try to run over a defensive player.
- K. If an offensive player with the ball loses his belt without the other team touching it, the defender must touch the offensive player with one hand to down the ball.
- L. Any run play no team member may advance to block.
- M. Only the team captains are allowed to communicate with the game officials. Players violating this rule will be assessed a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
- N. Multiple forward passes may be used as long as they originate from behind the line of scrimmage.
- O. Backward passes (Lateral) may be used beyond the line of scrimmage.
- P. If the ball carrier has a "**clear path**" to the end zone and is tackled, held or illegally impeded from forward progress, the result of play will be a touchdown.

VI. TIME - OUT

- A. Each team is entitled to two 30-second time-outs during each half. First half time-outs will not carry over to the second half.
- B. The clock will stop during all time-outs.

VI. TIME – OUT (continued)

- C. A two-minute warning will be issued at the end of each half. The clock will stop for the notification; Clock will resume when the ball is spotted.

VII. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTION

- A. Players: A team will consist of at least seven (7) players.
- B. Substitutions: Unlimited substitutions may be made, except when the ball is in play.
- C. Teams must have seven (7) players to start and continue play. Failure to have the minimum number of seven (7) players will result in a forfeit.

VIII. LENGTH OF GAME

- A. The game will be played in four 10-minute quarters, with one (1) minute between quarters and three (3) minutes between halves. The last two minutes of the second half will be a regulation clock if the point differential is eight points or less.
- B. Mercy Rule:
 - 1. Upon a **28-point differential** at any time during the second half of game-play, the game is stopped. During the second half, a team is allowed one possession to reduce the score under the 28-point differential before game-play is stopped.

IX. PLAYING FIELD

- A. The official size of the football field will be a minimum of 80 yards long from goal line to goal line by 40 yards wide. (Regulation fields are used if available).
- B. Field lines will be marked every 20 yards. End zones will be 10 yards long.
- C. The in-bounds (hash marks) will be 15 yards from the sidelines on restricted fields (if available). Iowa High School regulations will apply on other fields.

X. SCORING

- A. Touchdowns
 - 1. Teams scoring a touchdown will be awarded six (6) points.
- B. Extra Points
 - 1. There will be no kicks for extra point attempts, only runs or passes.
 - 2. Conversion options:
 - a. One-point conversions from the three-yard line.
 - b. Two-point conversions from the 10-yard line.
 - c. Three-point conversion from the 20-yard line.
 - 3. The defensive team is allowed to return intercepted passes for points. Extra points intercepted and returned to the end zone are worth one point regardless of the type of conversion the offense was attempting.
- C. Safety
 - 1. After a safety, the ball is placed on the opposite 20-yard line.
 - 2. All players are eligible receivers. However, players may not block downfield.
 - 3. A safety is worth two points.

XI. FOULS AND PENALTIES

- A. Any penalty occurring at the end of the run by the offensive team and accepted by the defense, will be assessed either the spot of the foul or at the end of the run (depending upon the infraction). The resulting spot of the ball after the penalty is assessed, will determine down & distance. If the penalty occurs during fourth down, the resulting spot of the ball after the penalty is assessed, will determine change of possession of the ball, first down. The penalty infraction will not create a repeat of the 'previously played down'.
- B. Illegal blocking: A penalty will be assessed to anyone who leaves their feet, blocks below the hips in an attempt to impede an opponent or **(NEW) performs any type double-team blocking against a defensive player**. (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down.
- C. No down field blocking: A penalty will be assessed for any offensive or defensive player who blocks downfield. Once the ball is across the line of scrimmage, offensive players must avoid contact. The offensive center only may be hit when fully upright and moving to a blocking position, never struck when down field. (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down.
- D. Tackling: A penalty will be assessed to anyone who tackles or rough another player. 15-yard penalty and loss of down or (Defense) 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.

XI. FOULS AND PENALTIES (continued)

- E. Stiff-arming: A penalty will be assessed to anyone who stiff-arms a defensive player. (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down or (Defense) 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.
- F. Pushing out of bounds: It will be a penalty for the defensive team to block or push any player out of bounds. The defensive player must make an attempt to pull the offensive player's flag. 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.
- G. Blocking in the back, (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down or (Defense) 15-yard penalty.
- H. Hands to the face/head, (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down or (Defense) 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.
- I. Roughing the QB any bodily contact other than incidental, (Defense) 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.
- J. No protecting the flag: A penalty will be assessed to any ball carrier who brushes away an opponent's hand or block a defender's attempt to grasp for the flag. 15-yard penalty and loss of down.
- K. Wrapping, tying or securing a flag to pants or a belt will result in a 15-yard penalty. (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down or (Defense) 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.
- L. Personal Fouls (or unsportsmanlike conduct) will be assessed a 15-yard penalty.
- M. The foul will be measured from the most severe spot on running plays.
- N. If the foul occurs behind the ball, the penalty will be enforced from the spot of the foul.
- O. On all running plays, fouls by the defense will be penalized from where the run ends.
- P. Offensive Holding, grabbing any player to stop movement to the ball. 15-yard penalty.
- Q. On kicks, passes, etc., the penalty will be enforced from the previous spot.
- R. Fouls by an offensive player behind the line of scrimmage are enforced at the spot of the foul.
- S. Cross body blocks will result in a penalty. (Offense) 15-yard penalty and loss of down.
- T. If an offensive player with the ball loses his belt without the other team touching it, the defender must touch the offensive player with one hand to down the ball.
- U. Failure by the defense to allow a 1-yard halo over the center will result in a 5-yard penalty and automatic first down. **No crossing in front of the center at the snap of the ball will be allowed.**
- V. Only team captains may communicate with game officials. Violation of this rule will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
- W. Failing to punt the ball when the team indicates it will do so will result in a 15-yard penalty and loss of down.
- X. Illegal Forward pass. 5-yard penalty and loss of down. From line of scrimmage.
- Y. Forward lateral, 5-yard penalty and loss of down. From spot of foul.
- Z. Offensive or defensive offsides, **No free play.** The play is whistled dead at the time of the foul. A 5-yard penalty is assessed from the original line of scrimmage.
- AA. Offensive or defensive offsides on **consecutive plays** will result in a 15-yard penalty being assessed on after the second of the infraction.
- BB. Referees – Any commissioner will be an 'observer' for the fields refereed by participants or volunteers. The referees may call an 'official's timeout' to clarify or confer with any commissioner. As an observer, the commissioner will remain impartial to contest being monitored and only offer rules or administrative assistance.
- CC. Any penalty occurring at the end of the run (i.e. flag guard) by the offensive team and accepted by the defense, will be assessed either the spot of the foul or at the end of the run (depending upon the infraction). The resulting spot of the ball after the penalty assessment, will determine possession of the ball, first down or down & distance. The penalty infraction will not create a repeat of the "played down".

XII. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- A. There are three steps to the ejection process:
 1. 1st Infraction – 15-yard penalty.
 2. 2nd Infraction – 15-yard penalty and ejection from the particular game in which the athlete is participating (out of sight and sound of the game).
 3. 3rd Infraction – 15-yard penalty, ejection from the game, ejection from the tournament and immediate evacuation from the premises.
 4. **Depending on severity of the infraction the athlete may be ejected from the tournament immediately.**

XIII. EJECTION PROCESS

An athlete may be ejected for any of the following reasons:

- A. Serious misconduct of any kind.
- B. Commission of fraud, such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying information on rosters or giving false information to program and game officials.

XIII. EJECTION PROCESS (continued)

- C. Physical violence by any person, involving officials, other participants or spectators proceeding, during or following a game.
- D. The Football Commissioner will conduct a hearing on all ejections. The accused party must appear before the Football Commissioner and may be represented by no more than two representatives of his choice.

XIV. PROTESTS

- A. Protests relating to rule interpretations must be made directly to the game officials and the opposing manager at the time of the violation and before play resumes.
- B. An official protest must be submitted to the Commissioner directly following the game and accompanied by a \$10.00 protest fee. The fee will be returned if the protest is upheld. **Judgment calls by the official cannot be protested.**
- C. A decision will be made on the protest before any subsequent tournament games will be allowed to begin. If a game must be replayed as a result of the decision, the Commissioner will notify all related parties.
- D. Eligibility complaints will not be regarded as protests. These complaints may be made at any time to game officials, opposing managers and the Football Committee for investigation and possible suspension, ejection or disqualification of the athlete. Violation of entry rules will result in forfeiture of any games in which the athlete has participated. The athlete is ejected from the tournament, but the team is allowed to compete in the next game if the format of the tournament allows for losing teams to continue playing.
- E. Video tape will not be used in determining the outcome of protests or officials rulings.

XV. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES

A. Overtime coin toss:

1. The referee will toss a coin in the presence of the two captains.
2. The visiting team will make the call in the coin toss.
3. The captain winning the coin toss will have the choice of having the ball offensively or determining the direction of the overtime period.

B. Tied Games

1. In the case of a tied game, each team will be given one series of downs in which to score.
 2. Both teams will start at the same 20-yard line.
 3. The teams will move back 10 yards if the score remains tied after the first overtime period.
 4. If a tie remains after two overtimes, teams will repeat step 3 until the tie is broken.
- C. Play for the overtime period will start one minute after the end of the fourth quarter.
 - D. A series interrupted by change of possession, intercepted pass or score will be considered a complete series.
 - E. No yardage or points will be awarded to the defensive team by a pass interception, recovery of a fumble or a kick. If this occurs, the ball is dead.
 - F. Penalties will be interpreted according to the regular rules under which the first four quarters were played.
 - G. Any time-outs left at the end of regulation will carry over into the overtime period. Teams will be given one 30-second time-out for the entire overtime period.

XVI. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

- A. Representatives of the Iowa Games Sports Festival, Site Commissioners, or other designees will monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
- B. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, or the thunderstorm is close enough to strike the event location with lightning, play will be IMMEDIATELY SUSPENDED.
- C. **Thirty-minute rule:**
 1. Once play has been suspended, no contest will resume until at least 30-minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 2. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count, resets the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
- D. **Resumption of gameplay:**
 1. If lightning occurs at any time during the first half of a contest, play will be continued after a 30-minute delay.
 2. If lightning occurs at any time after the second half of a contest has begun, play will be suspended. At the time of suspension during the second-half of a contest, the current score will be used to determine a winner. However, if a tie score exists, the 30-minute delay rule will apply for the resumption of a contest.