



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 one (1) student athlete 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 four (4) or more than nine (9) 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 XIV.
- 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 & EQUIPMENT

- 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 5-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 the second half.
 3. All offensive plays must begin with a snap of the ball (**see V. PLAYING REGULATIONS, K. Snapping, Handing, Passing, or Running the ball**).
- B. The offensive team is not allowed to block a defensive player at any time.
- C. There are two zones. The offensive team has three (3) downs to advance the ball from the 5-yard line, past mid-field (25-yard line), and then another three (3) downs to score. Failure of the offensive team to reach the next line-to-gain will result in a turnover on downs and the ball will be put back into play at the opposing team's 5-yard-line.
- D. An interception cannot be advanced by the defensive team. An interception by a defensive player will result a change in possession and a dead ball at the spot catch. If an interception occurs in the end zone, the result of the play is a dead ball, a touchback, and the ball spotted on the 5-yard line after the change in possession.
- E. Fumbles: Any time the ball is fumbled, the ball is dead at that spot. A fumble cannot be recovered or advanced by the defensive team.
- F. No stripping or attacking the ball will be allowed.
- G. Stiff-arming is not allowed. Spinning is legal, however the ball carrier must be in control of his/her person at all times. Diving is allowed, however the ball carrier cannot make contact with a defender while in the act of diving.
- H. A defensive player may rush the ball-handler any time after the ball has been snapped into play.
- I. A defensive player is not allowed to make any physical contact on an offensive player.
- J. Tackling – It is a foul to tackle, trip, kick, push, shove, or elbow the ball carrier or blocker. The runner's forward progress cannot be impeded in any way.
- K. A play becomes dead when:
 1. An official sounds the whistle or declare the ball dead;
 2. The ball touches the ground;
 3. The ball carrier touches out-of-bounds;
 4. When any part of the ball carrier's person other than the hand or foot touches the ground;
 5. When a touchdown, interception, touchback, safety, or try for point is made;
 6. When a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players;
 7. When a backward pass or fumble by a player touches the ground (ex: a snap);
 8. When a ball carrier has a flag belt removed legally by a defensive player. If the flag ball incidentally falls off, the defensive player must touch the ball carrier with one hand below the shoulders to be called dead. 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; and
 9. Any fumbled ball is dead at the spot of the fumble.
- L. Snapping, Handing, Passing or Running the ball:
 1. All offensive players are eligible receivers.
 2. An offensive player may not advance the ball after directly receiving a snap from the center. An offensive player may only advance the ball via one of the following:
 - a. a forward pass;
 - b. a direct handoff; and/or
 - c. a lateral occurring beyond the line of scrimmage.
 3. All forward passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage. Multiple forward passes may be used as long as they originate from behind the line of scrimmage.
 4. A team gets fifteen (15) seconds to put the ball in play after it is signaled ready for play by the referee.
 5. The snapper does not need to have their shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage or snap the ball between their legs in order for the snap to be legal. The snapper may not snap the ball to them themselves.
 6. A team may legally spike the ball to prevent loss of time in the final two (2) minutes of second half of the game.
 7. All four offensive players must be visible participants on the field prior to the snap of the ball.

8. The offensive team must have at least one player on the line of scrimmage at the snap. Remaining offensive players must either be on the line of scrimmage or behind the backfield line.
- M. Receivers must have one foot in bounds and control of the ball for a reception.
- N. Once a player “voluntarily” goes out of bounds, he is no longer an eligible receiver for that particular play.
- O. 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.
- P. No ball carrier may try to run over a defensive player. The offensive player or ball handler **MUST** attempt to avoid contact with a defensive player at all times.
- Q. Any run play no team member may advance to block.
- R. Backward passes (Lateral) may be used beyond the line of scrimmage.
- S. 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 - OUTS

- A. Each team is entitled to two 1-minute time-outs per game. In case of overtime, each team gets an additional one minute time-out.
- B. The clock will stop during all time-outs.
- 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 four (4) players.
- B. Substitutions: Unlimited substitutions may be made, except when the ball is in play.
- C. Teams must have four (4) players to start and continue play. Failure to have the minimum number of four (4) players will result in a forfeit.

VIII. LENGTH OF GAME

- A. The game will be played in **two 24-minute halves**, with four (4) minutes between halves.
- B. **Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 28 or more points at any point with 12-minutes or less remaining in the second half of the game, the game is over.**
- C. The clock will start when the ball is legally snapped at the beginning of each half of the game. The clock will run continuously during the first half and first 22 minutes of the second half, except for a team or official's time-out.
- D. During the final two minutes of the second half, the clock will start accordingly:
 1. Incomplete pass – starts on the snap
 2. Out-of-bounds – starts on the snap
 3. Penalty and Administration – depends on previous play
 4. Touchdown – starts on the succeeding snap after the extra point try
 5. Team time-out – starts on the snap
 6. First down – depends on previous play
 7. Officials time-out – starts at the referee's discretion
 8. Touchback – starts on the snap
 9. Safety – starts on the snap
 10. New series for team B – starts on the snap.

IX. PLAYING FIELD

- A. The official size of the football field will be 50 yards long and 30 yards wide.
- B. Field lines will be marked at the end zones and mid-field (25-yard line). End zones will be 10 yards long.
- C. The in-bounds (hash marks) will be 10 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 (1)-point conversion from the five-yard line.
 - b. Two (2)-point conversion from the 10-yard line.
 - c. Three (3)-point conversion from the 25-yard line.

3. If the defensive team intercepts the ball on the extra point attempt, the ball is called dead and the ball goes to the defensive team's 5-yard line to start their possession.

C. Safety

1. After a safety, the ball is placed on the opposite 5-yard line.
2. A safety is worth two (2) points.

XI. FOULS AND PENALTIES

A. 5-Yard Penalties

Delay of game	Illegal forward pass (also loss of down)
False start	Illegal contact
Encroachment	Illegal participation
Illegal procedure	Illegal substitution
Illegal motion	Illegal formation
Illegal shift	Failure to wear required equipment
Illegal snap	Helping the runner
Sideline interference	Illegal equipment
Flag guarding	Holding
Illegal batting	

B. 10-Yard Penalties

Offensive pass interference (loss of down-assessed from the original line of scrimmage)	Defensive pass interference (automatic first down-assessed from the original line of scrimmage)
Roughing the passer (automatic first down-assessed from the original line of scrimmage)	Unsportsmanlike conduct (offense-loss of down/defense-automatic first down)

- C. 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.
- D. 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 two steps to the ejection process:

1. First Infraction – 10-yard penalty.
2. Second Infraction – 10-yard penalty and ejection from the particular game in which the athlete is participating (out of sight and sound of the game—to be determined by the Football Commissioner).
3. 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.
- 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 Football 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 5-yard line.
 3. If the score remains tied after the first overtime period, the teams will begin the second overtime period at the 10-yard line. The teams will reverse the choice of having the ball offensively or the choice of direction as determined by the coin toss in 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.