



CAMPUS RECREATION

Illinois State University

Intramural Flag Football RULES OF PLAY

Please consult the [Intramural Sports Participant Handbook](#) for the complete list of Intramural Sports rules.

NIRSA rules will be in effect except for the following modifications:

General Information

- Prior to Game Time:
 - Players must check in at the court they are scheduled to play. Valid IDs must be presented at check-in. Acceptable forms of IDs are:
 - Current Illinois State University student ID.
 - Current faculty/staff ID with photo ID.
- The carrying, smoking, burning, inhaling, or exhaling of any kind of lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette, hookah, weed, herbs, or other lighted smoking equipment is prohibited. This also includes products containing or delivering nicotine intended or expected for human consumption. Smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes are prohibited. Anyone found consuming alcohol or using tobacco products will be asked to leave the facility and may face additional disciplinary action. Participants who appear to be under the influence will also be asked to leave.
- Location for all intramural sport activities can be found on IM Leagues. Please give yourself plenty of time to get to your games ahead of schedule. Remember that all team members must be signed in and ready to play at game time to avoid a forfeit.

Players

- A legal team shall consist of 7 players. A team may start a game with the minimum of 4 players.
- A speaking captain must be designated for each team. They alone may appeal to the official, and then only on interpretations of the rules. Judgment calls may not be protested. If a protest occurs, the game is to be stopped immediately and proper documentation must be filled out before play resumes.
- Please reference the [Intramural Sports Participant Handbook](#) for any eligibility or sportsmanship clarification.

Equipment

- **No jewelry is permitted during play**
- **Pants or shorts may not have belt loops or pockets. Pockets cannot be taped or turned inside out.**
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- Leather, rubber, nylon or plastic cleats are legal. The cleats must be constructed of a material which does not chip or develop a cutting edge. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in, or detachable cleats. Exception: Screw-in cleats are allowed if the screw is part of the cleat. The official has the right to declare a shoe unsafe.
- Non-cleated athletic shoes may be worn (i.e., tennis shoes, running flats, etc.).
- Intramural Sports will provide jerseys, game footballs, and flag belts.
- **NOTE:** You must schedule an appointment with a Competitive Sports Administrator prior to playing if you have a special equipment need (i.e. religious or medical). All equipment decisions made on site by the Competitive Sports staff on duty shall be final.

Game Regulations

- Major Sports will be divided into competitive and recreational leagues.

- Competitive Leagues – Designed for players that want a more competitive environment and want to compete for a championship.
 - Format: Four scheduled regular season games. The top two teams of each pool will advance to a single elimination playoff, dependent on number of teams registered.
- Recreational Leagues – Designed for players that want to participate in sport with a more relaxed, recreational environment.
 - Format: Four scheduled regular season games. The top two teams of each pool will advance to a single elimination playoff, dependent on number of teams registered.
- The game shall consist of two 15-minute halves. The clock will start on the snap of the first play.
- It will run continuously until the final one (1) minute of the 1st half, and final one (1) minute of the 2nd half (unless it is stopped for an injury, team timeout or referee’s timeout).
- Two 30-second time-outs per team will be allowed per half. Unused time-outs do not carryover.
- The snapper must pass the ball from the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s) and can either snap the ball from between their legs or the side. Direct snaps (less than 2 yards; under center) are not allowed.
- Any snap or fumble that hits the ground is dead at that spot.
- A player has been “deflagged” when the flag belt becomes disengaged by another player. If a players’ flag belt inadvertently becomes disengaged, then a one-hand tag must be employed between the shoulders and the knees.
- A receiver must have control and at least one foot in bounds to define a legal catch.
- The team area shall be two yards from the sideline and between the 20-yard lines.
- Touchdowns are worth 6 points. After a touchdown is scored, the offensive team may elect to try for one (1) extra point (from the 3 yard line), two (2) extra points (from the 10 yard line), or three (3) extra points (from the 20 yard line).
- No overtime will be played in the regular season. Games will end in a tie if necessary.

Grace Period

- If at game time a team is not ready for play, a 10-minute grace period will be automatically enacted.
 - Step 1 - 0 – 9:59 minutes, a team which is not ready to play will be penalized and start the game down 9 points with a 0-9 score and cannot receive more than a 3.5-sportsmanship rating.
 - Step 2 – Competitive Sports Supervisor will call forfeit at the 10 minutes if a team is not ready for play (dressed, on the court, signed in) mark and a forfeited team will receive a 0-sportsmanship rating.

Minutes Late	Penalty	Sportsmanship
0-9:59 minutes	Starting score 9-0	Max 3
10 minutes	Forfeit	Max 0

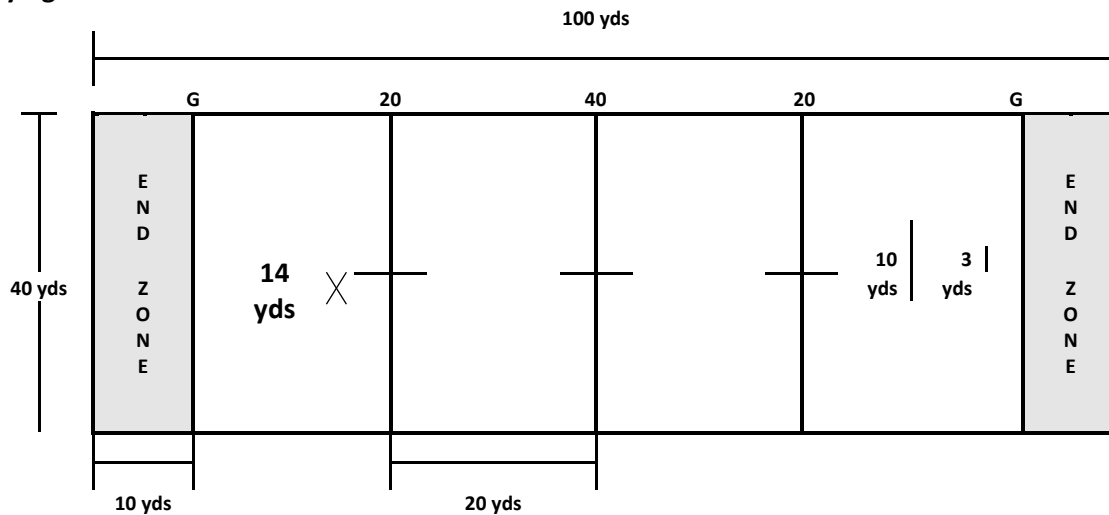
Mercy Rule

- If one team has at least a 20-point lead over the opposing team at any point in the last two (2) minutes of the game, the game will be declared over. If one team has at least a 30-point lead over the opposing team at any point in the last five (5) minutes of the game, the game will be declared over.

Substitutions

- Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. No substitute may enter during a down.

The Playing Field



- There are no kickoffs in flag football. The ball will be placed on the team in possession's 14-yard line to start each half or after a score.
- A team has 4 downs to reach a zone line in order to receive a first down. Teams may pass, run, or punt the ball during these downs.
- All punts must be declared before the play begins. Punts are not live until the ball has been kicked.
- Even if the ball hits the ground, punts may still be returned as long as the ball is fielded cleanly. If the ball is first touched by the kicking team, goes out of bounds, crosses the goal line, or is muffed by the return team, the play is considered dead.
- After a touchdown, the offense may elect to go for a one (1), two (2), or three (3) point try. These will be from the 3-yard line, 10-yard line, and 20-yard line respectively.

Onside Conversion

- In the second half only, teams may elect to try for an onside conversion.
- An onside conversion will take place after a touchdown and extra point(s) try.
- The ball is placed at the defense's 20-yard line, with the offense having one play to "score." No points will be awarded during an onside conversion.
- If the onside conversion is successful, the scoring team will receive the ball on their own 30-yard line.
- If the onside conversion is not successful, the opposing team will receive the ball at the scoring team's 30-yard line.
- A team leading by 19 points or more cannot attempt an onside conversion.

Special Rules

- **Flag Guarding:** Runners may not guard the flag belt, either intentionally or unintentionally, using their hands, arms, or the ball to cause contact between the runner and an opponent that denies the opponent the opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes, but is not limited to:
 - Swinging the hands or arms over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging or placing the ball over the flag belt for the same purpose.
 - Lowering the shoulders, placing the arm over the flag belt.
 - Using the ball to protect the flags.
 - **Note:** Contact must occur for flag guarding to be called
- **Offensive Screen Blocking:** The offense may only block without creating any contact. The blocker acts as a screen to ward off defenders. Offensive players must have their hands at their sides or behind their backs when

screen blocking. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands shall not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.

- Screen Blocking Fundamentals: A player who screen blocks shall not:
 - Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
 - Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent.
 - Take a position so close to a moving opponent that the opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player will determine this and the position will vary.
 - After assuming the legal screening position move to maintain it, unless moving in the same direction and path as the opponent.

5 Yard Penalties

- Delay of Game
- Encroachment
- False Start
- Illegal Snap
- Illegal Formation
- Failure to Wear Required Equipment
- Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down)
- Illegal Handing the Ball Forward
- Illegal Advancement (Co-Rec)
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Procedure
- Illegal Shift
- Illegal Substitution
- Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)
- Less Than Required Number of Players on the Scrimmage Line at the Snap

10 Yard Penalties

- Illegal Participation
- Kick Catch Interference
- Flag Guarding, Illegal Flag Belt Removal, Stiff Arm
- Two or More Consecutive Encroachment Fouls During One Interval Between Downs
- Illegal Bat, Illegal Kick
- Illegal Contact
- Holding
- Illegal Secured Flag Belt on Touchdown (Loss of Down)
- Pass Interference
- Personal Foul
- Roughing the Passer (Automatic 1st Down)
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Clock Stoppage (Final Minute)

- During the final minute of the each half, the clock will stop for:
 - Incomplete pass or illegal forward pass - starts on the snap.
 - Out-of-bounds - starts on the snap.
 - Safety - starts when the ball is snapped after extra point try.
 - Team timeout - starts on the snap.
 - First down - if play ends in-bounds clock starts on referee's whistle, if out-of-bounds clock starts on the snap.
 - Touchdown - starts on the snap (after extra point try).
 - Penalty and administration - dependent on the previous play.
 - Referee's time out - starts at their discretion.
 - Change of possession - dependent on the previous play.
 - Team A is awarded a new series - starts on the snap.
 - Team B is awarded a new series - starts on the snap.

Playoffs

- In order to make the playoffs, teams must meet the following criteria:
 - The top two teams of each pool will advance to a single elimination playoff, unless otherwise specified by Competitive Sports Professional Staff.
 - The team must maintain at least a 3.5 team sportsmanship rating throughout the season.
 - No team that forfeits any regular season game will be allowed to participate in the playoffs.
- In playoffs only, there will be overtime.

- Overtime will start with a coin flip. Winner has choice of offense/defense or side. Loser of coin flip has remaining choice. If additional overtime periods occur the other team will have choice of offense/defense to start.
- Unless moved by penalty, each team shall start 1st and goal from the 10-yard line.
- An overtime period consists of a series of four (4) downs by each team.
- If the score is still tied after one period, play will proceed to a second or as many are needed to determine a winner.
- When the defense secures possession, the ball is dead, and the series is over.
- Teams will only get one (1) time-out for all overtime periods.
- Teams are able to add players to their roster at any point, including playoffs.