



BLUE CHIP FLAG FOOTBALL

General Rule Book

**Division Specific Rules are Discussed in
Each Season's Coach's Meeting

Table of Contents

- 3. Game Play
- 4. Terminology
- 6. Eligibility
- 6. Equipment
- 7. Field
- 8. Rosters
- 9. Game Clock
- 10. Overtime
- 11. Scoring
- 12. Onside Possession
- 13. Coaches
- 14. Live Ball / Dead Ball
- 15. Running
- 16. Passing
- 17. Receiving
- 18. Rushing the Passer
- 19. Flag Pulling
- 20. Formations
- 21. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- 22. Penalties
- 24. Contact Us



Game Play



- ❖ At the start of each game, team captains meet at midfield for the official coin toss. The visiting team calls the toss.
- ❖ The winner of the coin toss chooses offense or defense. The teams will switch offense & defense in the second half, no matter what. The loser selects field direction. Teams may not defer.
- ❖ Games consist of four (4) 10-minute quarters, with a 1-minute water break between each quarter.
- ❖ Teams switch field direction at the end of each quarter to account for sun/wind conditions.
- ❖ The offensive team begins possession at its own 5-yard line.
- ❖ The offense has four downs to cross midfield (25-yard line). If successful, they are awarded four more downs to score.
- ❖ On 4th down, the offense may attempt to gain the first down or elect to “punt” and give the opponent the ball at their 5-yard line.
- ❖ All possessions begin at the 5-yard line, except after an interception or failed 4th down, where the opponent starts at the dead-ball spot.
- ❖ No return is allowed on loss ball/fumbles. The ball is dead at the spot of the recovery.
- ❖ If a team leads by 28 or more points, they must reduce to 4 players. The trailing team continues with 5. If the lead drops below 28, play returns to 5v5.
- ❖ If a team only has 4 players, the opposing team may still play with 5. The team with the correct number of players is not penalized.
- ❖ If a team fails to field the minimum of 4 players, it results in a forfeit. The final score is 28–0 in favor of the opposing team.
- ❖ At halftime, teams switch sides. The team that started on defense begins the second half with possession.

Terminology

- ❖ Boundary Lines: the outer perimeter lines around the field, including the sidelines and back of the end zone.
- ❖ Line of Scrimmage (LOS): an imaginary line running through the football across the width of the field.
- ❖ Line to Gain: the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
- ❖ Rush Line: an imaginary line 7 yards into the defensive side from the line of scrimmage. All blitzers must start from behind this line.
- ❖ Offense: the squad with possession of the ball.
- ❖ Defense: the squad opposing the offense to prevent advancement.
- ❖ Passer: the offensive player throwing the ball, may or may not be the quarterback.
- ❖ Rusher: defensive player(s) rushing the quarterback to pull flags or block the pass.
- ❖ Downs (1-2-3-4): the offensive squad has four attempts to advance the ball.



Terminology (cont.)



- ❖ - Live Ball: the period immediately before or after a play.
- ❖ - Whistle: the sound that stops play for timeouts, halftime, or end of game.
- ❖ - Inadvertent Whistle: a whistle made by an official in error.
- ❖ - Charging: movement of the ball carrier directly into a defender who has established position.
- ❖ - Flag Guarding: any act to block access to the runner's flags.
- ❖ - Shovel Pass: an underhand pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
- ❖ - Lateral: a backward or sideways toss of the ball.
- ❖ - Unsportsmanlike Conduct: rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or language.

Eligibility & Equipment

Eligibility

- ❖ Only registered and paid players, or those who received scholarships, are eligible.
- ❖ No participation is allowed without being on a team roster.
- ❖ Player accounts must be in good standing.
- ❖ Ineligible players will be removed from play until registration is complete.

Equipment

- ❖ Each registered player is provided with a flag belt and team jersey.
- ❖ Players must wear shoes. Football cleats are encouraged (no metal cleats).
- ❖ Tape, gloves, elbow/kneepads, and braces (without exposed metal) are allowed.
- ❖ Watches, earrings, and jewelry deemed hazardous must be removed.
- ❖ Jerseys must be tucked in; shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped.
- ❖ Soft-shell helmets must be worn during play.



Field



- ❖ Games are played 5v5 on a 25-yard wide by 50-yard long field with two 10-yard end zones.
- ❖ Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
- ❖ No-Run Zones are 5 yards before midfield and the end zone.
- ❖ No-Run Zones are marked with red cones; midfield is marked with green cones.
- ❖ Referees mark the 7-yard rush line before each play.
- ❖ Down indicators and scoreboards are placed on the home team's sideline.

Rosters

- ❖ Teams must wear the jersey color designated by the league each week (typically dark for home, light for away).
- ❖ Rosters are capped at 8 players but may include up to 10 players if approved by the site director or coach.
- ❖ Teams must start the game with a minimum of 4 players.
- ❖ If a team only has 4 players, the opposing team may still play with 5. The team with the correct number of players will not be penalized.
- ❖ - If a team fails to field at least 4 players, the game is considered a forfeit.
- ❖ - In the event of injury, teams may continue with 4 players, but not fewer. A team that drops below 4 players during the game will forfeit.



Game Clock



- ❖ Games are played with a 40-minute continuous clock, divided into four 10-minute quarters.
- ❖ A 1-minute water break occurs between each quarter.
- ❖ The clock stops for: Timeouts, Incomplete passes, Change of possession, Out-of-bounds plays (only in the final 2 minutes).
- ❖ Final 2-Minute Rule (Pro Clock): In the final 2 minutes of the 4th quarter, the clock stops for incomplete passes, out-of-bounds plays, timeouts, and changes of possession.
- ❖ During a Point After Attempt (PAT) in the final 2 minutes, the game clock remains stopped and resumes on the snap of the next possession.
- ❖ Each team has two 60-second timeouts per half.

Overtime

- ❖ Overtime consists of a maximum of 3 scoring rounds, followed by yardage-based sudden death rounds if necessary. No ties are allowed.
- ❖ Round 1: One play (run or pass) from the 10-yard line.
- ❖ Rounds 2 & 3: One pass-only play from the 5-yard line.
- ❖ Round 4 and Beyond (Sudden Death): Teams switch field direction and run one play from the 5-yard line, away from the end zone. The team with more yardage wins.
- ❖ If yardage is equal, another sudden death round is played. In sudden death, 6 points will be given to the winning team.
- ❖ All OT scores in rounds 1–3 are worth 6 points.



Scoring



- ❖ Touchdown: 6 points
- ❖ PAT from 5-yard line (pass only): 1 point
- ❖ PAT from 10-yard line (run or pass): 2 points
- ❖ Safety: 2 points
- ❖ All scoring plays must be declared. Interceptions on PATs are dead at the spot.

Onside Possession

- ◆ Teams may attempt a Modified Onside Possession Play only if:
- ◆ They are losing
- ◆ Under 2 minutes remain in the 4th quarter
- ◆ They have just scored a touchdown or PAT
- ◆ One untimed play from the opponent's 20-yard line.
- ◆ If successful (touchdown only), team keeps possession and starts new drive from own 5-yard line. No points are awarded.
- ◆ If unsuccessful, opponent takes over at the dead-ball spot. Interceptions are dead.



Coaches



- ❖ Coaches are typically volunteers and must support player development.
- ❖ On-field coaching is allowed in Pee Wee, Junior, and Major Divisions (1 coach per team).
- ❖ Coaches must remain 5 yards behind the deepest offensive player or 10 yards behind the deepest defensive player before the snap.
- ❖ All coaches must attend the season's pre-season meeting or Zoom call.
- ❖ All coaches must complete the required background screening, concussion awareness, and abuse training modules.

Live Ball / Dead Ball

- ❖ The ball is live at the snap and remains live until the official blows the whistle, the ball hits the ground, a player steps out of bounds, or a score occurs.
- ❖ A fumble or loss of possession is live only while the ball is in the air.
- ❖ If the offense recovers the ball behind the line of scrimmage before it hits the ground, they may continue the play for yardage.
- ❖ If the defense recovers the ball before it hits the ground, the play is dead at that spot, and they will now have possession of the ball.
- ❖ If the ball hits the ground, the play is dead at the spot of the loss. The offense retains possession unless it was 4th down.
- ❖ No return is allowed on a fumble. No gain or loss is recorded unless offense legally continues the play.
- ❖ A fumble is different from an interception. Interceptions may be returned; fumbles may not.
- ❖ Absolutely no stripping of the ball to force a loose ball is allowed.



Running



- ❖ The ball is spotted where the runner's hips are when the flag is pulled.
- ❖ The quarterback cannot directly run the ball.
- ❖ Handoffs must occur behind the line of scrimmage; laterals beyond LOS are illegal.
- ❖ Once the ball is handed off, all defenders can rush.
- ❖ Runners may not dive or jump forward to avoid a flag pull. Jumping backwards or side to side is allowed.
- ❖ Spinning is allowed; lateral movement is permitted.
- ❖ Flag obstruction is not allowed; jerseys must be tucked and flags visible.
- ❖ No blocking or screening is permitted.
- ❖ No running plays allowed in No-Run Zones.

Passing

- ❖ Passes may be forward or backward; only one forward pass per play is allowed.
- ❖ Shovel passes are legal beyond the LOS in the no-run zone. Shovel passes behind the line of scrimmage are allowed outside of the no-run zones.
- ❖ All passes in No-Run Zones must be beyond the LOS.
- ❖ A 7-second pass clock is in effect; if expired, it's an incomplete pass.
- ❖ There is no intentional grounding rule.



Receiving



- ❖ All players are eligible receivers.
- ❖ Only one player may be in motion at a time and must move parallel to the LOS.
- ❖ Offensive shifts are allowed with a one-second pause before the snap.
- ❖ One foot must land in bounds for a completed catch.
- ❖ Simultaneous possession goes to the offense.
- ❖ Interceptions change possession at the spot of the return.
- ❖ Interceptions are returnable (except on PATs and in OT).

Rushing the Passer

- ❖ Rushers must be 7 yards from the LOS at the snap.
- ❖ All defenders may rush once a handoff occurs.
- ❖ A rush is legal from 7 yards back or after a handoff.
- ❖ If the rusher leaves early, they must reset before rushing again.
- ❖ Pee Wee, Junior, and GEMS Junior & GEMS Major divisions do not allow rushing.
- ❖ Rushers may attempt to block the pass but must avoid contact.
- ❖ Impeding a rusher's path is a penalty.
- ❖ The rusher has a straight line path from where they line up to the quarterback without interference. If the quarterback starts to roll out left or right, there is no longer a straight line path and impeding the rusher will not be called at that point.
- ❖ Sacks are marked where the QB's **hips** are when the flag is pulled; a sack in the end zone is a safety.



Flag Pulling



- ❖ A legal flag pull occurs when the ball carrier is in possession.
- ❖ Diving to pull flags is legal; tackling or holding is not.
- ❖ If the flag falls off before possession, the player is down at the catch.
- ❖ If a player's flag falls off while in possession of the ball, the play is dead at the spot.
- ❖ Pulling a non-ball-carrier's flag is a penalty.
- ❖ Flag guarding includes stiff arms, dropping the head, or covering the flag.

Formations

- ❖ Offense must have one player on the LOS (center); up to four on LOS total.
- ❖ The QB must be off the line of scrimmage.
- ❖ One player may go in motion parallel to the LOS before the snap.
- ❖ Players must be set for 1 second before the snap.
- ❖ Pee Wee centers may snap from the knee.



Unsportsmanlike Conduct



- ❖ Intentional fouls, cheap shots, and verbal abuse result in ejection.
- ❖ Offensive or confrontational language warrants a warning, then ejection.
- ❖ Fans/coaches must show good sportsmanship; violations result in penalties or bans.
- ❖ If a fan, parent, or any other person that is not a coach, statistician, or staff, refuses to leave the sideline of a game, the team in question will receive personal foul 15 yard penalties until the person leaves the sideline.

Penalties

- ❖ Referees call all penalties and determine incidental contact.
- ❖ Most penalties are from the LOS; some are spot fouls.
- ❖ Games may not end on a defensive penalty (unless declined).
- ❖ Half-the-distance enforcement applies when needed.
- ❖ All referee calls are final once confirmed; no photo, video, or any other evidence will be used to aid the referee's call.



Penalties (cont.)

Spot Fouls

- ❖ Defensive Pass Interference: Automatic First Down
- ❖ Holding: +5 yards & Automatic First Down
- ❖ Stripping: +10 yards & Automatic First Down
- ❖ Charging: -10 yards & Loss of Down
- ❖ Flag Guarding: -10 yards from spot; down is consumed

Defensive Penalties

- ❖ Offside: + 5 yards
- ❖ Illegal Rush: + 5 yards
- ❖ Illegal Flag Pull: + 5 yards
- ❖ Roughing the Passer: +10 yards & 1st down
- ❖ Taunting: +10 yards & 1st down
- ❖ Pass Interference: spot foul & 1st down
- ❖ Holding: +10 yards & 1st down
- ❖ Stripping: +10 yards & 1st down

Offensive Penalties

- ❖ False Start: -5 yards, replay down
- ❖ Illegal Motion: -5 yards, replay down
- ❖ Delay of Game: -5 yards, replay down
- ❖ Illegal Forward Pass: -5 yards & loss of down
- ❖ Pass Interference: - 5 yards & loss of down
- ❖ Impeding the Rusher: Spot Foul
- ❖ Screening: Spot Foul
- ❖ Charging: Spot Foul
- ❖ Flag Guarding: Spot Foul

Contact Us



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