

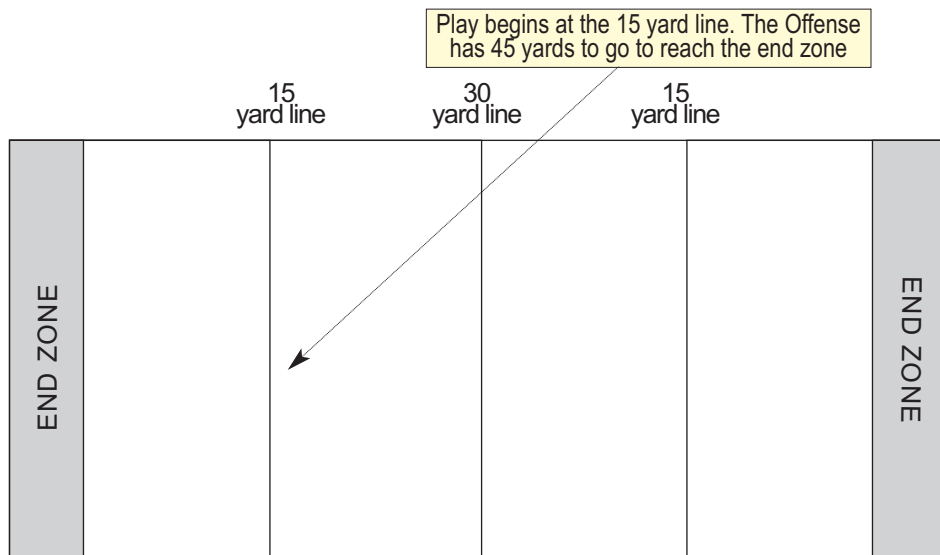
# CENTRAL SUBURBAN LEAGUE—FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

## TEAMS

Teams consists of **8** players on the field.

## FIELD

The field is 60 yards long—shorter than a regular tackle football field, which is 100 yards long. However, the field has a standard size endzone (10 yards deep) and a standard width (53 1/3 yards). Please see the following illustration:



## COIN Toss

Three minutes before the start of the game, a referee meets with captains from both teams for a coin toss. The visiting team calls the toss. The winner of the toss may defer their choice to the start of the second half or take first choice of:

1. Being on offense or defense (their choice) to start the game, or
2. Deferring their choice, in which case the deferring team will begin the game on defense and may select which end of the field they will defend the first half, with the teams switching directions in the second half.

At the start of the second half, the team that did not choose first (either because they deferred their choice or because they lost the toss) gets the first choice of options.

## No KICKING

There are no kick-offs, no field-goal, and no kicking extra point attempts.

## GAME TIMING

Games are played with 25 minute running halves and a 5 minute halftime. The clock will stop only for timeouts. Each team is permitted 2 timeouts each half (thus a total of 4 timeouts per game). A timeout lasts 60 seconds. Time may also be stopped for issues such as an injury. Any purposeful delays will be assessed a 10-yard penalty for delay of game and Referees have discretion to add time back to the clock.

Once the ball is spotted, the offense has 40 seconds to start the next play. Each team will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.

A 2 minute warning—an official's timeout at the end of each half that signals just two minutes remain—will be given. However, the clock does not stop.

Overtime will be started with a new coin flip. The team that wins the coin flip starts first, and has 4 downs starting at their opponents' 15 yard line. The defending team gets 4 downs from the 15 also, but is only guaranteed a second chance in the first round. After that, the first score wins.

## SCORING

Touchdown = 6 points

Extra Point = 1 point (from 3 yard line)

Safety = 2 points

## RULES—OFFENSE

### Eligible receivers

The offense must have a guard, center, guard alignment (these players are NOT eligible pass receivers). Each guard must line up within 3 yards of the center, and on opposite sides of the center.

### First downs and changes in possession

The offense has 4 downs to make a first down at the next 15 yard line from where the ball was first spotted (unless a loss pushes the offense back behind another line, in which case the offense needs to cross both line markers for a first down).

On 4th down, the offense may declare “punt,” in which case the ball turns over to the other team at their own 15 yard line (there is no kick). If the offense chooses to go ahead on 4th down and fails to make a first down, the ball turns over at the spot at the end of the 4th down play.

### Blocking

Blocking is permitted, including the standard open-hand drive blocking technique, subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) When blocking, a player may not leave his feet;
- (2) Blocks must be to the front of a defender, above the defender’s waist. Crackback blocking (*blocking a player from a direction such that the defender is unaware of the oncoming blocker’s presence, such as on a reverse*) and chop blocking (*blocking at, or below, the knees*) are not permitted and will result in a penalty.

### Advancing the ball

The quarterback (receiver of the snap) may NOT run with the ball over the line of scrimmage. He must pass or lateral within 5 seconds, or the play is blown dead as an incomplete pass with loss of down. Ball is spotted at same position as before the play.

### The ballcarrier is down / play is dead in the following circumstances:

- (1) The ballcarrier’s flag is pulled;
- (2) The ballcarrier’s flag falls off. If a player’s flag falls off prior to his receiving the ball, the ball is considered dead at the spot of the handoff/exchange or, if a pass, treated as an incomplete pass;
- (3) The ballcarrier’s knee hits the ground;
- (4) The quarterback has not thrown or handed the ball to another player and 5 seconds have elapsed from the time of the snap;
- (5) The ballcarrier fumbles the ball and the fumbled ball contacts the playing surface. Fumbles are dead balls and offense retains possession at spot of fumble. In the rare event that a defender catches—and maintains control—

of a “fumbled” ball before it reaches the ground, it is treated as an interception, and possession changes.

## **RULES—DEFENSE**

### Rushing the quarterback

There is NO direct rush of the quarterback by the defense. However, once the quarterback passes, hands off, or laterals the football, the defense may pursue anywhere.

### Three players on line

The defense must have at least 3 players within 2 yards of the line of scrimmage.

## **PENALTIES**

*Note: Referee’s have discretion on the enforcement of penalties and, with respect to severe penalties, listed below, have discretion to eject an offending player from the game. Second offenses, however, will automatically result in the offending player’s ejection from the game. Players cited in more than 1 game may face league suspension.*

### *Severe (15 yard penalty)*

- (1) Unsportsmanlike conduct;
- (2) Unnecessary roughness.

### *Moderate (10 yard penalty)*

- (1) Pass interference (either team);
- (2) Holding (either team);
- (3) Flag guarding;
- (4) Delay of game;
- (5) Illegal flag pull;
- (6) Illegal block (official has discretion to assess unnecessary roughness)

### *Mild (5 yard penalty)*

- (1) Offsides (either team);
- (2) Illegal rushing the quarterback;
- (3) Illegal motion;
- (4) Illegal forward pass (also results in loss of down).

## APPENDIX A: EXPLANATION OF PENALTIES

### *Flag guarding*

This penalty ensures that the defense has a fair chance at deflagging the ball carrier and stopping the run. Flag Guarding is a 10 yard penalty on the offense, enforced from the spot of the foul. The down will be repeated. Flag guarding includes:

1. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging;
2. Placing the ball over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging;
3. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt;
4. Any other motion that the referee views as giving the player in possession of the ball an unfair advantage over the player attempting to deflag.

### *Illegal flag pull*

Pulling a receivers flag before the receiver has the ball is treated as pass interference and results in a 10 yard penalty and automatic first down for the offense.

### *Illegal motion*

Having more than 1 offensive player in motion results in a 5 yard penalty for the offense. Note that, prior to the snap, defensive players may move as much as they like as long as they have are not on the offensive side of the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

### *Offsides / Encroachment*

5 yard penalty and repeat the down.

### *Pass interference*

During a down in which a legal forward pass is thrown, any contact that interferes with an eligible player is pass interference except when two or more eligible players are making simultaneous, legitimate attempts to reach, catch or bat the ball; eligible players of either team have equal right to the ball. Defensive pass interference results in 10 yard penalty from line of scrimmage and an automatic first down. Offensive pass interference (e.g., pushing away defender to have a better chance at the ball before it arrives) results in 10 yard penalty from line of scrimmage and a loss of down.

### *Unnecessary roughness*

Any action against the runner other than merely pulling his flag, such as tackling the runner, is unnecessary roughness. Similarly, a defensive player may not flagrantly push a ball carrier out of bounds. A penalty may be assessed if the official feels the action is flagrant.

Unnecessary roughness on the offense will result in a 10 pace/yard mark off from the line of scrimmage and a loss of down if the penalty occurs during a play. If the penalty occurs after the play the penalty will result in a 10-pace/yard mark off at the end of the play.

### *Unsportsmanlike conduct*

A 15 yard penalty assessed after completion of the play. Examples include trash talking, arguing with officials, taunting an opponent, excessive celebration following a scoring play, and feigning injury. When it occurs after a scoring play, 15 yards are assessed on the ensuing drive.