



## YMCA Flag Football Rules 7-8, 9-10,11-12yo League (edited 82018)

**Registration:** We invite YMCA members and non members alike to play in our league. Teams are defined by the available practice time you chose on the registration website. <https://www.ymcabham.org/register-for-programs>. All sign-ups begin @ 1201AM on the 'open registration date', and expire on the end date. Our registration process and payment is first- come, first-serve until team rosters have reached a prescribed and defined 'maximum' number of players. All participants must be paid in full to secure a roster spot. Team rosters cannot be expanded beyond the maximum. All players must conform to the age chart. Players may play up in age, but not down. Coaches may select a team, but the registration process is the same for everyone. First come- first serve. Coaches cannot register separately, nor 'hold spots'. To select a team, all registrants are recommended to register early on the first day to improve your chance for a particular team. All players must be registered through the YMCA. Rules herewith are a blending of YMCA and NFL rulemaking.

Every player will play at least one half of every game, unless injury or child wishes not..

- Any violation of the participation requirement will result in a forfeiture of the game.
- Each player must have the proper equipment: athletic shoes, Y Jerseys, mouth-piece. Uniforms must be tucked in. No jewelry is allowed.
- All players must wear YMCA approved 'flag belts and velcro flags'
- All teams must play with approved size footballs that are properly inflated.

### **Coaches:**

- All coaches are required to complete a **Volunteer Packet** prior to start.
- One coach from each team will be allowed to give team instructions on the field but well away from play.
- Coaches cannot question, comment, or exhibit disruptive behavior at anytime.
- All coaches must attend a coach orientation before the first practice and read and understand the rules.

### **Parents / Spectators: Code of Conduct**

All present watching or participating in youth sports at any Y facility or community venue, must exhibit good behavior at all times. Behavior deemed outside socially acceptable norms will receive a warning from any Y supervisor, employee or official. Most common is yelling or vocally criticizing or disruption targeting any player, coach, official or Y staff. A second offense will result in: Game stoppage until the person(s) have left the playing area.

### **Birmingham YMCA Flag Football Rules**

The Birmingham YMCA will comply with rules that apply evenly throughout all branches and maybe modified for age specific leagues and will include rules specific to YMCA 'best-practices' as agreed by the YMCA Rules Committee.

### **Special Rules**

No smoking allowed anywhere near a YMCA function- even in open space areas.

1. Parents are to provide supervision for all their children at all times.
2. No player will be allowed to participate in a YMCA Flag Football league while they are currently playing for a competitive same-time league.
3. All games are final. Make-up games maybe required for adverse weather. Forfeits will not be made up.
4. Forfeits will result in a scrimmage game among team players present.

### **Weather**

Assume all games will be played as scheduled, even in light rain. Exceptions and will be made by YMCA site supervisor at that field to hold, later start time or cancel games at that location. Each location may have different field status. The site supervisor at each location will communicate with all other Y locations and his teams assigned from that branch for any changes or updates. Notification to coaches will be at least (90) minutes prior to kick off. Coaches are responsible to inform their own teams.

**Weather Lines: PH Y: 205-685-6530 /GS: 205 -566-6025 /AI: 205- 663-7240 /SV 205- 870-9622**

- The Game:** Flag Football is a non-contact sport. Intentional contacts will result in penalty.
- Ball Size:** 7-8yo, Pee Wee / 9-10yo, 11-12yo Junior size ball. All footballs must be properly inflated.
- Field Dimensions:** 90 feet x 210 feet where field space is adequate (field size may vary depending on location restrictions).
- Field Markings:** Sidelines, Front and Back of Endzone . Midfield or 50 yard line aka (first-down). In addition (2 white) lines before and after the midfield line and before each endzone line or touchdown line, aka and referred as “No-Run Zone”. After a touchdown, the ball is placed on white line and serves as "going for one" point after (Pass Only). This line also serves as ball placement starting a new series of downs as well as ball placement following a safety.
- Time of Play** Game will consist of two (20 minute) halves. Halves are played with a running clock. Clock will stop for official and coach timeouts or injuries. NOTE: Just prior to the half, there will be a One-Minute Warning. The official will stop the clock at the one minute mark. If a play is in progress at the one minute mark, then the official timeout will come at conclusion of play. Inside of one minute, the game clock will stop on incomplete passes, dropped balls, runner out of bounds, score, points after attempts and change of possession. Clock will restart at time of snap on next play.
- Players on Field:** All games are designed to be played in a 5v5 format. (Exceptions are allowed to expand to 6 v 6 with the administrators and league agreement in advance of the season). Otherwise, the minimum number a team may play with is 4 players. Failure to field 4 players will result in a forfeit. No makeup games will be scheduled due to forfeiture.
- Referee Actions:** In a live play if a referee sees a penalty, they will throw a flag/marker on the ground and allow play to continue. At the end of play, the referees only may discuss the call amongst themselves for agreement. A referee call on a ‘dead-ball’ foul, ie: Offensive False Start, the referee whistles and stops play. Once the referee announces the call to the coaches- IT IS FINAL! If a coach needs clarification of the call, it will be allowed, but will cost the coach a timeout. Any coach/player/parent/fan who verbally harass or physically touches an official can be penalized and or ejected from the field. Official clock will be kept by referee on the field or a designated referee/YMCA employee on the sideline.
- Number of Downs:** Offense will be awarded three (3) downs to gain a first down. Once a team successfully crosses the midfield/first down line, they will be awarded a new set of downs to attempt a score. If the offensive team fails to gain a first down in three

(3) plays, they will be given two options; Turnover the ball. Opponent starts at their own white line). OR elect a (4<sup>th</sup>) down option. If the offense fails to gain a first down, then the opposing team takes over at that spot.

- Start of Play:** Winner of coin toss elects offense or defense to start the game. Team that starts the game on defense, choose the goal line to defend. Reverse possession at start of 2nd half.
- Substitutions:** The YMCA practices a 'ALL PLAYERS PLAY EQUAL TIME' Rule. It is suggested to make substitutions on the change of a possession.
- No Run Zones:** These are white lines painted in front of the each touchdown line and in front of and behind the mid field line . The line painted in front of the end-zone is actually used for ball placement following a touchdown and attempted (1) point after. For one point, the play must be a forward pass and must pass over the LOS. If the offense desires to go for (2) points following a touchdown, the ball is walked off and additional (5) strides from the white line. At that distant point, the offense can either run or pass. If a pass the ball must travel beyond the LOS. Note: In the (NRZ) the QB can evade rushing defenders and scramble of positive yardage. At mid-field, the white lines are a NO-Run-Zone and require a pass only.
- Forward Pass:** A FORWARD PASS is defined as any overhand or underhand throw, toss, pitch, or shovel that goes beyond the LOS. Only one FORWARD PASS may be attempted on any given play.
- Lateral:** A LATERAL is defined as any overhand or underhand throw, toss, pitch, or shovel that travels behind the LOS. Any number of LATERALS may occur on any given play as long as they take place behind the LOS. Illegal laterals: No LATERALS are allowed once the football crosses the LOS. That is an illegal play. The ball is placed at that spot and walked back for (5 yard penalty), loss of down.
- Change of Possession:** Failure to get a first down or touchdown will result in a turnover and the opposing team will start at the opposite end or point of interception.
- Interceptions:** If a player intercepts a pass, it may be advanced until flag is pulled or player scores. In the event of flag being pulled, ball will be spotted at that point.
- Interceptions ( PA):** Ball may be advanced the length of the field for a score resulting in the same number of point(s) as the original attempt. Failure to advance the full length of the field will result in a new possession beginning on the new offense white line.

<b><u>Uniforms/Fags:</u></b>	YMCA jersey must be tucked in. Flag belt should be tightly secured on the waist with two flags attached to the belt by Velcro. Flags must be worn on opposite hips.
<b><u>Mouthpieces:</u></b>	MOUTH PIECES ARE REQUIRED AND MUST BE WORN! No mouth piece- no play
<b><u>Touchdown:</u></b>	SIX (6) Points
<b><u>Scoring One Point:</u></b>	1 POINT- Following a touchdown, ball is placed at the white line. <b>Play must be a pass.</b>
<b><u>Scoring Two Point:</u></b>	2 POINTS- Following a touchdown, ball is placed an additional (5 yards) beyond the white line. <b>This attempt may be a run or pass play.</b>
<b><u>Safety:</u></b>	2 POINTS- Awarded to the defense when offensive ball carrier has flag pulled, falls down, steps out of bounds, or pass clock expires while standing in their own end zone. Following a safety, ball is awarded to the defense and will begin possession at opposite end of field at the white line.
<b><u>Rushing QB:</u></b>	Any defensive player may cross the LOS to attempt to pull a flag on the ball carrier <b>once the ball</b> has been passed, lateralled, or handed off by the QB behind the LOS. However, defensive player(s) designated as 'rushers' must be positioned at the "RUSH CONE", at a designated point 10 strides, from the LOS. <b>These RUSHERS can break toward at the QB once the ball is in motion from the center to the QB, not at the sound of hike. NO Contact can be made with the QB while attempting a pass. A (5 yd) penalty will result from the LOS and an automatic first down is assessed.</b>
<b><u>Play Clock:</u></b>	Referee will set the ball and blow the whistle. The offensive team will have 40 seconds to snap the ball. Failure to do so will result in a 5 yard <u>Delay of Game</u> penalty. NOTE: On the first play only of a new offensive series, the official will not allow a play to be run until the defense has had the opportunity to make substitutions and is ready for play. Following this initial play of a possession, the offense may elect to snap the ball as soon as the ball is spotted and whistled into ready for play. Referees should make every effort to spot the ball as quickly as possible following a play.
<b><u>Pass Clock:</u></b>	The QB or any subsequent ball carrier will have ( 7) seconds to advance the ball beyond the LOS. <b>Note: Even after the QB hands off, the new ball carrier assumes the time remaining to gain positive yards.</b> Failure to do so will result in a Delay of Game, dead ball penalty and assessed (5 yard) penalty, repeat the down. The ball will be spotted at the original LOS.

- Play Stoppage:** A play is deemed over any time a ball carrier's: flag is pulled or comes off while running, a body part other than hand touches the ground, ( To regain balance one had may touch the ground) the ball is dropped or hits the ground, or player steps out of bounds, an official or coach time-out or injury.
- Formation (Offense):** Any offense formation is allowed. However, only one player may be in motion parallel to the LOS, before hike. **The (7) second count-down starts when the center moves the ball to the QB and continues to run down as any lateral, handoff, secondary pass is executed BEHIND the LOS. Any number of handoffs, laterals or secondary passes may occur behind the LOS, as long as the play clock has not expired. Failure to release the ball or run beyond the LOS within (7) seconds, is a delay of game.**
- Hike Procedure:** The only allowable transfer of the football is between Center and QB. **The transfer of the ball to the QB can be accomplished by the center in either of two ways: Under the center legs or side-swipe across the centers legs. The QB audibles, "HIKE" and must be positioned directly behind the center either up close or in a 'shot-gun' formation. **NOTE: Play begins not at "Hike", but as the ball is motion from the center to the QB.****
- Hidden Ball Tricks:** **Meaning, a team or ball carrier, cannot deliberately hide the ball from view as a tactical advantage- Hence: No HIDDEN BALL TRICKS are permitted.** Examples:1. **Any reasonable person would observe a play that is 'trickery' in its execution. Example 2. Offense cannot huddle after 'hike' and hide the ball among themselves in a cluster in the back field and run a play. An illegal play 'dead-ball' foul is called and (5 yard) penalty against the offense- repeat the down.**
- Formation (Defense):** Any defensive alignment is allowed. Defense must line up beyond the LOS. **The rusher cone and players as Designated RUSHERS must be positioned (10) strides, (poitioned by the defensive official) beyond the LOS. Rushers may 'break' toward the LOS only after the ball has moved from the centers hands to the QB. NOT at the sound of hike!**
- Advancing the Ball:** **Ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled. Not out stretched arms.**
- Flag Guarding:** Flag Guarding is a subjective penalty call, but demonstratable in its actions. Player carrying the football is encouraged to carry the football in a tucked position with arm bent at the elbow. Flag Guarding will be called if the ball carrier swings either his ball hand or his free arm down/across to prevent the defense from pulling his flag. **A penalty of (5) yards is assessed from that point. Next down.**

**Ball Carrying Styles:** Ball carrier cannot vertically jump nor leap forward or dive to avoid a flag pull or gain yardage. Ball carrier cannot extend ball with arm or dive for improved ball spotting. Runner cannot stiff arm or swipe at defensive players hands . However, ball carrier may run, juke, twist, pivot, jump cut or spin. But arms cannot drop to sides while doing so.

**Screening:** Any reasonable person would observe this offensive play is not a normal football run or pass route whose purpose is to prevent the defense from a flag pull. This is an offensive penalty. 1. Screening is called when another offensive player runs along side of, next to or behind or in front of the ball carrier in such a manner where the defensive player in pursuit, is inhibited and / or cannot have a free shot at a flag pull. 2. Screening is also called when one or more offensive players position themselves (back and shoulders) to the LOS, and position themselves directly in front of any defensive players, or pre defined spot or area, acting like a fence. The penalty is: Screening. Ball is spotted at that point. (-10) yards and loss of down .

**Safety:** 2 POINTS- Awarded to the defense when offensive ball carrier has flag pulled, falls down, steps out of bounds, or pass clock expires while standing in their own end zone. Following a safety, ball is awarded to the defense and will begin possession at opposite end of field at the white line.

**Records/Ranking:** Win/Loss records will be kept by the YMCA for seeding purposes if playoffs are offered.

**Time Outs:** Each team will have one timeout per half. Timeouts will not be carried over to the second half or overtime session. In the event of overtime, each team will be awarded one timeout.

**Coach on Field:** Only one coach is allowed on the field for each side of the ball. Coach must stay away from the play. Any coach that impedes a play will be assessed a 5 yard penalty.

**Mercy Ruling:** Teams reaching or exceeding a (35) point spread, reaches a Mercy Ruling. Both coaches are notified of the score, and can continue the game. It is mandated that the winning team rotate in players in new positions.

**Overtime:** If a game is tied at the end of regulation, then the officials will have a coin toss. The team that wins the toss will select offense or defense first. The other team will select the end of the field. During an overtime session, there will be no game clock- just a 40 second play clock. Teams will set up at the 5yd line for one point or the ten yard line for two points. Teams must match or beat the point gained by the opponent. There is a max. of two overtimes in the regular season, In tournament play, the OT continues until a winner is established.

## YMCA-NFL Modified Flag Football Rules (82018)

### i. General

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. A team time out will be counted. Players may not question calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

### ii. Defensive spot fouls

- \*Defensive pass interference auto **first down**. Offense can take the gained yardage from the play
- \*Holding Automatic **first down**
- \*Stripping (+10) yards and **first down**. Offense can take the gained yardage resulting from the play.
- \*Coach impeding play (+5) yards. Offense can take the gained yardage resulting from the play.

### iii. Offensive spot fouls

- \*Screening, blocking or running with the ball -10 yards and loss of down
- \*Charging (-10) yards and loss of down
- \*Flag guarding (-10) yards and loss of down
  
- \*Coach impeding play (-5) yards, loss of down.

### iv. Defensive Penalties

- \*Defensive unnecessary roughness +10 yards and automatic **first down**
- \*Defensive Unsportsmanlike conduct +10 yards and automatic **first down**
- \*Offside +5 yards from line of scrimmage. Repeat the down.
- \*Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) +5 yards from line of scrimmage. Repeat the down.
- \*Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball) +5 yards from LOS automatic **first down**
- \*Roughing the passer +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic **first down**
- \*Taunting +5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic **first down**

#### **v. Offensive penalties**

- \*Offensive unnecessary roughness (-10) yards and **loss of down**
- \*Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct (-10) yards and **loss of down**
- \*Offside / false start (-5) yards from line of scrimmage and **loss of down**
- \*Offensive pass interference (-5) yards from line of scrimmage and **loss of down**
- \*Illegal motion (More than one person moving (-5) yards from line of scrimmage. Repeat the down.
- \*Delay of game (-5) yards from line of scrimmage. Repeat the down.
- \*Impeding the rusher/Blocking (-5) yards from line of scrimmage. Repeat the down.
- \*Illegal Procedure / Trick Play ie: (Hidden ball trick) (-5) yards from line of scrimmage and **loss of down**
- \*Flag Guarding (-10yd) **loss of down.**
- \*Screening (-10 yards, **loss of down.**

**Note: Yards can be measured as adult sized strides.**