



APU Flag Football Rules and Policies

1. Starting the Game

- Choice of goals and first possession: best of three “Rock, Paper, Scissors” will be used to determine choice of kicking/receiving and end zone. The loser gets choice of the remaining options. The choices will be reversed at the half.
- Putting the ball in play: the kicking team will kick from 10 yards out from the end zone.
- Receiving team will have three receivers on the field and only the kicker will be on the field for the kicking team. If a receiver catches the ball in the air, the offense starts from that point plus five yards. If the kick hits the ground at any point, the offense will start from wherever the ball is first touched by a receiver. This format will be used at the start of each half, and after any score.

2. Number of Players

- Each roster may carry a maximum of 18 players and no less than 7 players.
- Seven players (7) on the field constitute a full team.
- All linemen are eligible to receive!!!
- Teams must have a minimum of five (5) players on the field at all times.
- If a team does not have at least five (5) players within five minutes after a scheduled game time, they will forfeit the game.
- Free substitution when the ball is not in play.
- Players may only play for one IM football team. Violation results in forfeit and possible dismissal of the team from the season.

3. Eligible Players

- Only CURRENT student, faculty, staff, or board members of the university are eligible for intramural athletics. Alumni and former students are not allowed to play. Captains who violate this rule will receive forfeits for games played with ineligible players and their status of future intramural participation will be jeopardized.
- Current collegiate varsity football players are not eligible to play- please see student athlete policy which can be found online.
- Participants may only play on one team for each sport.

4. Player Equipment

- Shoulder pads, helmets, arm-guards, pads, etc. are not allowed.
- Metal cleats of any kind and bare feet are not allowed.
- All teams must have a team jersey or all the same color.

5. Length of Game

-Two 20 minute halves with a five minute halftime. Running time will be used for the entire game with the exception of the last two minutes of the game. These two minutes will be in stoppage time for all dead balls.

-Mercy rule- if a team is up by 3 touchdowns going into the final two minutes a mercy rule will go into effect and the clock will run.

-Each team is allowed three (3) one minute time-outs per game.

6. Injuries

- If time is stopped due to injury or suspect of injury the injured player(s) is to come directly off the field and can return once the injury is taken care of and the play has resumed. The injured player must sit out at least 1 play. Report all injuries to first responders.

-Any player who is bleeding must exit the field immediately and can return to play once the bleeding has been controlled and the wound is covered.

7. Pre-Snap

-While on offense four players (no more or no less) must be on the line of scrimmage.

-Offsides- A player is offside if the defender crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, a five yard penalty will be assessed

-Encroachment- If the linemen on defense move before the ball is snapped or if they touch the offensive linemen before the ball is snapped, a five yard penalty will be assessed

-False start- If a player on the offense crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is hiked or if the offensive lineman flinches before the ball is snapped, a five yard penalty will be assessed with no loss of downs

-Delay of game- if the offense fails to snap the ball within 30 seconds, the play will become a delay of game and a loss of five yards with no loss of downs.

-Illegal motion- If an eligible receiver is in vertical (north/south) motion while the ball is snapped, it will result in a five yard penalty.

8. Yards and Downs

-There are two 25 yard zones and the end zones are 7 yards deep.

-The team with possession has four (4) downs to move the ball into the next zone, no matter where in the zone they start from.

-Any penalty that moves the line of scrimmage past the first down marker is a first down. Any penalty that moves it back behind the previous zone, the original first down zone remains.

9. Out of Bounds

-A player catching a pass on the sidelines must have one foot in-bounds and must have control of the ball. If a player is inadvertently pushed out of bounds, it is up to the referee's discretion as to whether or not the ball was catchable (or if they would have had possession in bounds without being pushed).

10. Forward Passes

-All forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

-Every participant is eligible to catch the ball.

-No Intentional Grounding will be allowed.

11. Punts

-If a punt is to be made, the punting team must announce it to the officials and the opposing team. No fake punts.

- The team receiving the punt must have four men on the line of scrimmage.
- Punts may still be returned by the receiver after the ball hits the ground or is dropped.
- If the receiver fumbles the ball, (see Fumbles heading).
- When the ball comes to a stop after a punt, the ball is dead and cannot be advanced.
- The team receiving the punt may only block on the line of scrimmage. There will be **NO DOWNFIELD BLOCKING on punts!!!**
- *NOTE: for all punts and kick-offs- If a kick lands in or carries out the back of the end zone in the air, the ball will be placed at the 5 yard line (yellow line of soccer box at Dillon) and will have four downs to cross the next marker.
- If a kick lands in bounds before the end zone and then rolls out the back, the ball will be placed on the receiver's 7 yard line (top of soccer circle at Dillon).
- If a kick carries out of bounds in the air on the sideline, the referee will mark the point it crossed the boundary plane and the receiving team will have the option of starting at that point, or two yards in front of the down marker. From either place they will have four downs to cross the next zone.
- For Punts:** If a kick rolls out of bounds on the sideline, the receiving team will start from the point where it went out.

12. Running with the Ball

- Direct quarterback runs will be allowed.
- It is a penalty for the ball carrier to flag-guard, stiff-arm, charge into, knee, kick, knock over, or intentionally run into a defender.
- No jumping or diving with the ball.** It is a violation when the ball carrier jumps to avoid a defender from pulling his/her flags. The ball will be spotted from the point the player jumped and will receive a five yard penalty.

13. Blocking

- In all instances a player must have both feet in contact with the ground, during and after contact is made with the opponent.
- Elbow leads, cross body blocks, chop blocks, leg sweeps, hands to the face, clipping, and other such blocks are illegal.
- A player may not block the opponent above the shoulders or below the waist.
- Down the field blocking is not allowed on pass plays until the ball is caught.
- All blocks must be performed with hands in front of the body.
- Any block leading with the forearms or the elbows will be penalized five yards.
- No player may block with the head or shoulder, this is a ten yard penalty and possible ejection.

14. Tackling

- A player is down when the flags are pulled.
- If flags accidentally fall off of the ball carrier, one hand touch will come into play.
- Defensive players may leave their feet to block a pass or pull flags.
- Actual tackling, tripping, kicking, shoving, or elbowing the ball carrier is a penalty.
- Roughing the passer results in an automatic first down or upon a scoring play the offense may choose to decline the penalty.
- Players **MAY NOT** grab the ball carriers waist in attempt to bring down the flag belt. A five yard penalty will incur for the violation. This is at the referee's discretion.
- Any type of excessive physicality or intentional violence used while pulling flags (or any other time) is illegal and will be penalized 15 yards, as well as possible ejection of the game/league.

-If a ball carrier is near the sideline or headed out of bounds, a player may not push him out of bounds as a means of stopping the play (5 yard penalty) he/she must attempt to grab his flags.

15. Fumbles

- No fumble recoveries. Any ball fumbled by a runner is dead at the point the player dropped it.
- In the event of a missed pitch, hand-off, or snap, the player intended to receive the ball only may pick it up and continue the play. The defense will attempt to pull the flags of that player and if successful the ball will be down at the point of tackle.
- The defense may not go after the ball in any circumstance there is not opportunity for turnover. If this is violated, the ball will be marked at the place the ball was lost plus five yards and no loss of down.
- ***Any player that dives for a loose ball will be penalized 5 yards and receive a warning of ejection.
- In order to stop a player from picking up a miss pitch play or a muffed snap, the defense needs to pull the players flags.

16. Ball in Play

-A team is allowed 30 seconds to put the ball in play after signaled by the referees.

17. Sleeper Plays

- Teams do not have to huddle, but if the team does huddle, all players must be in the huddle.
- If you wish to try a trick play first confirm with the referees to make sure it is legal and to allow no confusion within the referee staff.

18. Flags

- All defensive and offensive players need to wear flags.
- The flags are to hang down vertically along the side seam of the shorts and in the back.
- Shirts must be COMPLETELY tucked in at all times for players wearing flags.
- The flags must be buckled properly and worn on the outside of the shorts. Tucking flags into the shorts is illegal and will be penalized five (5) yards.
- If a player is caught holding or tying their flag belt where it is unable to be pulled off by the opposing team, that player will be immediately EJECTED.

19. Player/Spectator Regulations

-Teams are responsible for keeping players and fans at least 5 yards from the sidelines on their half of the field. If this becomes a problem teams will be penalized. After a team's first warning, there will be a five (5) yard penalty assessed. Each additional violation will be a fifteen (15) yard penalty.

20. Coaching

- The role of coaches does not supersede the role of the captains.
- Coaches are not allowed on the field with the exception of timeouts and halftime.
- Coaches are not permitted to talk to referees (only captains)**

21. Scoring

- Touchdown = 6 points
- Extra point = 1 point from 3 yards out, 2 points from 5 yards out, 3 points 10 yards out.
- Safety = 2 points

22. Overtime Policy

-“Rock, Paper, Scissors” is used to determine possession and direction. The ball will be placed on the 15 yard line and the offense will have four downs to score. If the team scores on their first down, then, the other team will only have one down to score from the 15 yard line as well. If the first team scores in two downs, the other team will have two downs to score and force another overtime or score in one down and win the game. An interception is considered a dead ball and the defense then has 4 downs to score (no running back a pick-off). **Regular season games will not have overtime periods.** Playoff games will have as many overtime periods as necessary to determine a winner. One timeout will be given to each team at the start of the overtime.

23. Important Notices

-Only captains (2 max) can approach the referees with a complaint or argument. The first time this is violated it will be a 5 yard penalty, then 10, and then a possible team disqualification.
-While the games are being played, the referees have complete authority over the players, captains, and spectators. If the referee feels a player should be ejected, the referee’s decision will stand. **It is mandatory that all ejections be referred to the intramural staff so that suspension or disqualification can be discussed further.**

24. SUMMARY OF PENALTIES

Five yard penalties:

- Less than 4 players on the line
- Delay of game
- Illegal forward pass
- Intentional grounding
- Infractions of formation rules
- Illegal motion
- Illegal pitch
- Offsides
- Encroachment
- More than 7 players per team on the field
- Unintentional tackle (holding runner)
- Infraction while running the ball (stiff arming, etc.)
- Illegal blocking
- Failure to announce punt
- Offensive pass interference
- Defensive pass interference: intentional, place of infraction and first down penalty
- Interfering with punt receiver
- Illegal use of the hands
- Clipping
- Protecting the flags or flag guarding

Fifteen Yard Penalties:

- Any block made in the areas above the shoulders or below the knees
- Unnecessary roughness, illegal tackling
- Unsportsmanlike conduct including LANGUAGE and ATTITUDE and FIGHTING
- Sparring, kneeing, kicking, and striking

Automatic First Down Penalties

-Roughing the passer

**Official rules of Flag Football will be in affect and at the discretion of the Intramural Staff and the referees of the game being played.