



*East Shelby Church
Recreation Association*

2022-23 Flag Football Rules

Ball Sizes

- Under 8: K2
- Under 10: TDJ
- Under 13: TDY

The Game

- Two halves; 20 minutes long with 5 minutes for halftime
- Clock stops inside 1-minute of 2nd half for all dead balls
- No Overtime
- Games WILL begin with prayer at mid-field
- Rock/Paper/Scissors will determine the start of play
- Winner: choose the ball / defer to 2nd half and decide which goal to defend
- Possession will alternate at the beginning of 2nd half
- Teams will switch ends of the field after halftime

Head Coach

- Identified at the pre-game Coaches Meeting
- Responsible for all behavior issues related to players and fans
- ONLY coach who can question Refs on rule clarification or interpretation
- Teams CLEAN UP the bench area after each game
- (1) U8 DIVISION Coach may be on the field for Offense and Defense
- **U10 & U13 Coaches MUST be on the sideline at the time of the snap for safety**

Players

- 5 v 5 Game – and a maximum of 5 players on the field at any time
- Maximum players on a roster, 10
- Every player must play at least 50% of the game if they are physically able
- **THERE IS NO GAMEDAY PENALTY FOR VIOLATING THE 50% PLAY RULE; please report to your Director and submit a complaint to the league**
- Each team must have at least five players to begin the game
- We strongly recommend playing the game even with borrowed players

The Score

- No league standings will be kept
- League's purpose is to emphasize fun, fellowship, and instruction
- Touchdown – 6 Points
- Extra Point – 1 Point (5-yard line)
- Extra Point – 2 Points (10-yard line)
- Safety – 2 Points (Flag pull, OR fumbled ball in the end zone by the offense)



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Rules of the Game

- ESCRA uses the 2016 NFL Flag Football Rules, with age rule modifications
- The offense takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to cross midfield, and after 1st Down, three additional downs to score a TD
- If the offense fails to get a 1st down at midfield or score a touchdown, the ball changes possession, and the new offensive possession takes over on its 5-yard line
- Possession changes (EXCEPT interceptions) start on the offense's 5-yard line
- When the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball
- **A 10-second warning will be given before the delay of the game penalty**
- Each team has (1) 30-second time out per half
- **35-Point Mercy Rule: 2nd Half is SHORTENED TO 15 MINUTES**

Offense

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play
- The Quarterback CANNOT attack the line of scrimmage (fake a run) or cross the line of scrimmage with the ball
- Quarterback Option plays are NOT allowed; they constitute the quarterback faking the run
- **All handoffs, tosses, and pitches MUST BE behind the line of scrimmage**
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush
- The offense may use multiple handoffs; however, the Defense can rush after the first handoff
- ALL PASSES - must be forward and across the Line of Scrimmage
- NO LATERALS (a backward overhand pass thrown to another player)
- "NO RUNNING ZONE," located 5-yards from each end zone and 5-yards on either side of midfield, is designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations
- A player taking a handoff, toss, or pitch may pass the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
- Spins and Dives are not allowed by either the Offense or Defense teams
- Offensive players cannot intentionally leave their feet to avoid a defensive play
- The ball is spotted where the flag is pulled, NOT the location of the ball
- **No downfield blocking or moving screens are allowed**
- **The quarterback has 7 seconds to handoff, toss, or throw after taking the snap**
- **The 7-Second Rule starts on the QB receiving the ball from the Center snap**

Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or pitched behind the line of scrimmage)
- Only one player is allowed to be in motion at a time
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception
- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage
- Interceptions can be advanced if the Defensive player has a flag belt on



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Dead Balls

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball
- When the ball hits the ground (even on Quarterback/Center exchange)
- The ball carrier's flag is pulled
- The ball carrier steps out of bounds
- When a Touchdown or Safety is scored
- The ball carrier's knee or elbow hits the ground
- The ball carrier's flag falls off (official's discretion may be used)
- Any penalties or infractions

Defense

- **"NEW" for 2022: NO DEFENSIVE RUSHERS (Until QB hands-off the ball)**
- Defensive Players may defend on the line of scrimmage but CANNOT cross the line of scrimmage until the **FIRST HANDOFF** is made
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- NO tackling or rough play is allowed

Defensive Penalties / Infractions

- **Offsides:** 5 Yards and automatic 1st down
- **Illegal Rushing the QB:** 5 Yard and automatic 1st down
(Note: before a handoff, or from inside the 10 Yard marker will result in off-sides)
- **Interference:** 5 Yards and automatic 1st down
- **Illegal flag pull** (before the receiver has the ball): 5 Yards and automatic 1st down
- **Diving:** 5 Yards from the spot of the infraction and automatic 1st down
- **Rough Play:** 5 Yards and automatic 1st down & Unsportsmanlike Warning

Offensive Penalties / Infractions

- **False Start:** 5 Yards and loss of down
- **Illegal forward pass:** 5 Yards and loss of down
(Note: this is a pass received behind LOS or passes made beyond LOS)
- **Flag guarding:** Dead Ball at the spot of the infraction, down counts
- **Blocking & Screening:** Deadball at the spot of the infraction, down counts
- **Intentionally spinning or leaving the ground:** to avoid having a flag pulled is a Dead Ball at the spot of the infraction
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
- (Note: Referees determine incidental that may result in the regular run of the play)

Sportsmanship

- If the officials witness any tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected
- **ROUGH PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**
- **Unsportsmanlike Behavior** will receive a warning. Player: 1st Penalty, sent to sideline, 2nd Penalty is ejection from Game--Coaches who are ejected will receive a 2-game suspension.
- Officials have the right to determine offensive language. At the discretion of the Officials, and Site Manager, violators of foul language (coaches, players, and or spectators), may receive a warning OR possible ejection. Repeat violators may be banned.



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The Equipment

- Tennis shoes or soft-cleated shoes
- Triple-threat type flags are MANDATORY for ALL PLAYERS
- Flag Belts (flags on sides and back) MUST be a different color from the uniform
- Matching shirts/jerseys are required; they must have numbers and the organization's name
- Mouthpieces are MANDATORY, with no exceptions

The Officials

- ESCRA will assign two (2) officials to enforce the rules of the game, instruction, fun, fairness, and safety in mind
- The referee(s) should briefly explain all infractions
- If a referee does not show up for a game, please inform the Site Director and YOUR organization's Director
- **PLEASE NOTE:** If officials do not show up for your game, please play the game with honor and respect

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide and promote recreation between churches in the Shelby County area in a Christ-honoring environment

Our Purpose

- Provide athletic competition for all ages
- Promote an environment for the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship
- Promote participation in team sports
- Encourage fellowship that honors Jesus Christ

Age/Grade Exemptions

- In particular circumstances, an exemption may be granted for a player to play in an age group for which they are too old
- Recreation Director must make all exemption requests by filling out the Exemption Form on the ESCRA website
- Churches will be notified concerning the status of the exemption
- All approved exemptions can be revoked if the exemption is deemed not appropriate

Team Rosters

- Rosters must be submitted to the League before the season by each Organization's sports director/coordinator to EscraSports@gmail.com
- ESCRA Flag football is an "ALL PLAY" League, and Girls are permitted to participate

Playing on More Than One Team

- Players cannot play on more than one team during the same sports season.
- Anyone playing for their school, playing on a competitive team, or playing in another league/association within the same sports season may not play in the ESCRA league.

Revised: AUGUST 17, 2022