

Mesa Public Schools

Junior High Athletics

7 on 7 Flag Football Rules

I. GENERAL RULES:

a. Game Length:

- i. 2 halves lasting 20 minutes each.
- ii. Running clock until last 2 minutes of each half.
- iii. The clock is stopped for all:
 - a. Time-outs
 - b. Touchdowns and during extra points.
 - c. Only during the last two minutes of the half and of the game for:
 1. A dead ball (i.e., incomplete pass, fumble, out-of bounds)
 2. Penalties
- iv. Each team will have 2 time outs per half. Timeouts will not carry over to 2nd half or overtime.

b. Field: (Regulation 100 yard field.)

- i. Width = 53 1/3 yards
- ii. Length = 120 yards (100 yards of field + 2 end zones (10 yards ea)
- iii. Team Area = 2 yards from each side line and between the 20 yard markers.
- iv. Zone Lines to Gain = Five 20 yard zones.

c. Players:

- i. Team consists of at least 7 players.
 1. Minimum of 5 players to play a game.

d. Equipment

- i. Shoes
 1. General Requirements:
 - a. Must be soft pliable upper material (i.e. canvas/synthetic) that completely cover the foot and is attached to a one-piece molded composite bottom (i.e. tennis shoes).
 2. Turf Shoes (No Cleats allowed):
 - a. Molded rubber only (No screw in cleats).
 - b. NO metal cleats or baseball cleats allowed.
- ii. Shorts / Pants:
 1. General Requirements:
 - a. May NOT have pockets.
- iii. Shirts / Jersey:
 1. General Requirements:
 - a. Must cover the players' shoulders, chest and back.
 - b. Must long enough be able to be tucked into pants, or short enough that they are 4" above the players' waistline.
 - c. Should have both a light colored and a Dark colored shirt.
- iv. Flags (To be provided by League):
 1. General Requirements:

- a. A one-piece flag belt (Triple Threat or Flag Tag) without any knots.
 - b. The flags must be permanently attached.
- v. Football:
 - 1. General Requirements:
 - a. Pebble grained or rubber covered football.
 - b. Youth and intermediate sizes. Schools may choose their ball size.
 - c. No requirements regarding ball pressure.

II. GAME PLAY RULES:

a. Offense:

- i. Blocking (at the line of scrimmage):
 - 1. Players are allowed to screen block only. NO contact will be allowed.
 - a. Blocker must keep their arms inside the frame of their body while screening the quarterback from the rushers.
- ii. Blocking (Beyond the line of scrimmage):
 - 1. Players are allowed to block down field using the following criteria:
 - a. NO contact between the blocker and defender.
 - b. Blocker CANNOT continue moving once they reach the defender.
- iii. Passing:
 - 1. The offensive team may NOT more than one forward pass per play.
 - 2. The offensive team MAY throw an unlimited number of backward passes during any one play.
 - 3. The QB cannot throw the ball forward once they have crossed the line of scrimmage (LOS).
- iv. Hiking:
 - 1. The ball must be hiked from the ground, but does not have to be hiked between the legs.
 - 2. The ball may be hiked to any person at least 2 yards behind the LOS.
- v. Rushing:
 - 1. ALL players are eligible receivers and running backs.
 - 2. NO limit on the number of rushing attempts by a team by all Non-Quarterbacks.
 - 3. Quarterback can only run the ball ONCE per SET OF DOWNS.
 - 4. The QB MAY intentionally ground the ball by throwing the ball into the ground or out of bounds to avoid a sack. If the ball is thrown laterally or backwards it is considered a fumble and the ball will be placed at the spot where the ball crossed the out of bounds demarcation or hits the ground. If the pass is thrown forward it is considered an incomplete pass and will be placed at the previous spot.
 - 5. **NO RUN ZONE:** A team can not run for a first down when the ball is spotted less than 5 yards from the first down line.
- vi. Receiving:
 - 1. A reception is deemed made if:
 - a. The receiver possesses the ball before the ball makes contact with the ground.

- b. The receiver has at least one foot in the field of play after possessing the ball.
2. The receiver may NOT use their hands or arms to move a defender in order to make a reception.
3. **The center will be an eligible receiver.**

b. Defense:

- i. Rushing:
 1. Player can rush from any position on the field as long as they are 5 yards off the line of scrimmage.
 2. Rusher must attempt to avoid any blockers / Players. NO Contact is allowed.
 3. Rusher must avoid hitting the QB arm, even through the follow through motion.
 4. Rush Blitz: Any defensive player may rush the quarterback without being 5 yard behind the line of scrimmage as long as that player delays his rush until the player rushing from the running back position reaches the line of scrimmage.
- ii. Pass Defense:
 1. Receivers are allowed a free release from the line of scrimmage. NO “Bump and Run” coverage.
 2. Defenders are not allowed to play through the receiver to make a play on the ball.
 3. Interceptions occurs if:
 - a. See “RECEIVING RULES”
- iii. De-Flagging / Tackling:
 1. When de-flagging the ball carrier:
 - a. The defender may NOT impede the ball carriers progress while attempting to pull that player’s flag.
 - b. The ball carrier is down at point when the flag belt comes unclipped, NOT when it falls off.

c. Kicking

- i. Kick-offs:
 1. There will be a kick off at the beginning of each half.
 2. Touchbacks will be brought out to the 15 yard line.
- ii. Punting:
 1. Punts must be declared (i.e. no fake punts).
 2. Punts can NOT be blocked (i.e. no rushing).
 3. Receiving the Punt:
 - a. Once the receiver catches the kick they are allowed to advance the ball
 - b. If the receiver drops the kick, the ball is dead, and will be spotted at that point.
 4. Punts landing in the end zone are considered touchbacks and will be spotted at the 20 yard line.

d. Penalties:

- i. Offense:
 1. Illegal Contact:

- a. When an offensive player attempting to block a defensive player makes physical contact with that player.
- b. 10 yard penalty from line of scrimmage, repeat down.
2. False Start:
 - a. When an offensive player moves before the ball is snapped / hiked.
 - b. 5 yard penalty from line of scrimmage, repeat down
3. Offensive Pass Interference:
 - a. When an offensive player hinders a defensive player's ability to catch a pass by making physical contact with the defensive player.
 - b. 10 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage, repeat down.
4. Illegal Forward Pass:
 - a. When a player past the line of scrimmage throws the ball forward, or when more than one forward pass is thrown during a play.
 - b. 5 yard penalty from the spot of the infraction, loss of down.
5. Illegal Motion:
 - a. When an offensive player in motion moves towards the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped / hiked.
 - b. 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage, repeat down.
6. Flag Guarding:
 - a. When an offensive player, either intentionally or accidentally, inhibits a defensive player from de-flagging them by the use of their hands, arms, etc.
 - b. 10 yard penalty from the spot of the infraction, loss of down.
7. Illegal Formation:
 - a. When the offensive team does not have at least 4 players on the line of scrimmage.
 - b. 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage, repeat down.
8. Hurdling/Jumping:
 - a. A player leaving his feet in the proximity of a defender.
 - b. The offensive player is deemed to be down at the spot they leave the ground.
9. Diving:
 - a. When a player leaves his feet and dives forward.
 - b. 10 yard penalty and loss of down.

ii. Defense:

1. Illegal Rush:
 - a. When a defensive player rushes the QB from inside the 5 yard neutral zone.
 - b. 5 yard penalty, repeat down.
2. Illegal Contact:
 - a. When a defensive player makes contact with an offensive player.
 - b. 10 yard penalty spot of foul or line of scrimmage, repeat down.
3. Roughing the Passer:
 - a. When a defensive player makes contact with the QB while the QB is in the throwing motion, completing the throwing motion. This includes hitting the QB's arm after they have released the ball.

