

Western Washington Intramural Sports

Flag Football
Rules Clinic

www.wvu.edu/campusrec

Pre-Game Conference

- Do Every Time
 - Should be done at least 5 minutes before game time.
 - Do Earlier If Possible
- Set The Tone For The Entire Game
 - This is your first chance to let the teams know what kind of game they are going to have
 - Take Control But Don't Be Pushy
 - Have Fun But You Have To Be Taken Seriously

Pre-Game Conference

- Every member of the crew should introduce themselves.
- Make sure the score sheet is filled out correctly.
- Verify both teams have the minimum number to start
 - Men's/Women's: 5
 - Co-Rec: 6

Pre-Game Conference

- Remind Captains:
 - Subs only on Dead Ball
 - Clock only stops on Time-Outs and in the last 2 minutes of the 2nd half.
 - 35 point mercy rule at halftime or anytime in the 2nd half.
- Explain Co-Rec differences if applicable

Pre-Game Conference

- Explain that officials must de-flag players after a score.
- Shirts MUST be tucked in at all times.
- No Contact—explain screen blocking.
- Remind Captains:
 - They are responsible for your team and spectators
 - If there is a problem, the captain should address officials
 - Take control of your team early to prevent problems later

Pre-Game Conference

- Decide who will receive choice
 - Coin Flip, Rock/Paper/Scissors, Odd or Even, etc.
- Winner can choose:
 - To start on Offense or Defense
 - What Goal to Defend
 - Defer to the Second Half
 - Don't let a team make a bad decision
- Loser will pick the remaining option.

Field and Equipment

- Playing field is divided into three zones.
- Men's Leagues will use a regulation size ball; Co-Rec can use intermediate or regulation size.
 - Teams can use their own ball if they choose as long as it is a legal ball approved by official.
 - Offensive team is responsible for retrieving the ball after every play.
 - Two ball spotters will be used to mark line of scrimmage and neutral zone.
 - Should be about 1 yard apart

Equipment

- Players must wear appropriate shoes
 - No metal cleats or studs more than ½ inch long
- Every player must have a set of flags on before the play begins
 - Penalty—Failure to Wear Required Equipment
 - It is illegal to tamper with the belts (i.e. tied them) Penalty—Unsportsmanlike Conduct and possible ejection.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Equipment

- Jewelry is illegal equipment.
 - If it can be seen it must be taken off.
 - Taping over it does not count.
- Blood Rule
 - If a player is bleeding, they must sub out and have it taken care of.
 - 5 minutes will be given to stop the bleeding if that drops the team under the minimum to play. If it doesn't drop the team under the minimum, the game continues without the player.

Game

- 7 players on the field make up a team in men's; 8 in Co-Rec.
- Minimum number to start and play is 5 in men's and 6 in Co-Rec.
 - Must also finish with this number.
- Two 20 minute halves played.
 - Clock only stops on time-outs and on dead balls in last 2 minutes of the 2nd half.
- Each team gets 2 time-outs per game.

Game

- Offensive team has 25 seconds to snap the ball after it has been put into play by the referee.
 - Penalty—Delay of Game
- Possessions start on the 10 yard line at the beginning of each half and after touchdowns, touchbacks, and safeties.

Game

- Teams have 4 downs to gain the next zone-to-gain or score.
 - If a penalty occurs, zone-to-gain will be established after enforcement.
- When the ball becomes dead, the spot of the ball is directly under the position of the BALL.

Snapping

- For Men's, must have at least 4 players on the line of scrimmage. Co-Rec: 5.
 - Players in motion are not considered on the line.
 - Penalty—Illegal Procedure
- Player receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage
 - Penalty—Illegal Procedure
- Sleeper Play not allowed. Players must be within 15 yards of the ball after it is put in ready for play.
 - Penalty—Illegal Procedure

Screen Blocking

- Blocks shall take place without contact.
 - The person initiating the contact will be the one who is penalized.
 - Penalty—Personal Foul, Illegal Contact
 - Example—Taking a Charge In NBA
- Must allow the opponent time/space to avoid contact
- Defense may not use their hands or arms to gain an advantage
 - Penalty—Personal Foul, Illegal Contact

Running

- Runners may not cover or guard their flags in any way.
 - Swinging the hand or arm over the belt, placing the ball over flag, etc.
 - There can't be flag guarding if there is no attempt to grab it.
 - Penalty—Flag Guarding
- Runner cannot stiff arm
 - Penalty—Personal Foul, Illegal Contact
- Charging—A runner cannot charge into an opponent.
 - Just like screen blocking, player who initiates contact is who the penalty is on.
 - Penalty—Personal Foul, Illegal Contact

Running

- Spinning is legal as long as the player is not flag guarding.
- Hurdling—An attempt to jump over another player that has both their feet on the ground.
 - You Will Not See This!!!
- Obstruction of the Runner—The defense shall not obstruct the runner in any way.
 - If a player grabs for the flags and gets shirt instead, they must let go immediately.
 - If they do there is no penalty.
 - Penalty—Holding/Obstruction

Passing, Handling the Ball

- Any player may hand and pitch the ball backward at any time.
- Only one forward pass may be made on a play and it must be made behind the line of scrimmage.
 - Penalty—Illegal Forward Pass
- Every player is eligible to receive a pass. The passer becomes eligible only after another player has touched the ball.
 - Penalty—Illegal Forward Pass
- Intentional Grounding—Quarterback may throw the ball into the ground to stop the clock (immediately after the snap), but not to avoid a loss of yardage.
 - Penalty—Intentional Grounding

Dead Ball

- It is a Dead Ball when:
 - A fumble, muffed ball, center snap, lateral, or backward pass hits the ground.
 - Any part of the runner other than their hand or foot contacts the ground.
 - A runner is down.
 - Flag Belt is removed. A player is considered down as soon as the clip separates.
 - If the flag belt falls off for no reason, the runner is tagged with one hand between the shoulders and the knees.

Scoring

- After scoring, a player must go to an official and have their flag removed.
 - If the flag has been tampered with it is a penalty.
 - Penalty—Unsportsmanlike Conduct (possible ejection)
- Points:

Touchdown—	6 points
Safety—	2 points
Extra Point—	1 point from the 3 2 points from the 10

In Co-Rec play if a touchdown is scored by woman by pass, catch, or run it counts for 9 points.
Throw It or Score It

Scoring

- Extra Points
 - 1 point from the 3, 2 points from the 10
- If the defense intercepts pass and returns it they get 2 points
 - Doesn't matter what the offense went for.
- Once a team has declared what they are trying for, they can't change the decision unless a time-out is taken.
- If a game ends in a tie during the regular season, it is a tie.
- Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 35 points at half time or any time in the second half the game is over.

Kicking

- Players cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
 - Penalty—Illegal Procedure
- A punt is not dead until it has been touched, muffed, or fumbled.
- Punts that cross the goal line will be automatic touchbacks.
- There are NO FAIR CATCHES. Fair catch signals will be ignored.

Kicking

- A team must announce when they are going to punt.
 - Penalty—Illegal Kick
- Once a team declares a punt, they must punt.
 - Only way to change a decision is after a penalty or time-out.
- Player must kick the ball immediately
 - Penalty—Illegal Procedure

Force Safeties

- Must consider what team is responsible for putting the ball in the goal.
 - Who threw, carried, or kicked the ball into the end zone.
- Safeties
 - Player is de-flagged or fumbles the ball in their own end zone (exception: Momentum Rule)
 - When the ball goes out of bounds behind your own end zone.
 - A player commits a penalty whose basic spot of enforcement is in the end zone.

Momentum Rule

- When a player intercepts a forward pass or fields a punt between their own 5 yard line and the goal line and his momentum carries them into the end zone where the ball becomes dead.
 - The ball becomes theirs at the spot where possession was gained.

Co-Rec Modifications

- 8 players on the Field; 5 on the line of scrimmage.
- A male player may not run the ball across the line of scrimmage:
 - On a running play, penalty is Illegal Procedure.
 - On a loose ball play, penalty is Illegal Forward Pass.
- Open/Closed Plays
 - There cannot be two consecutive completions from a male player to another male player.
 - Rule also applies to tries.
 - Penalty—Illegal Forward Pass

Running vs. Loose Ball Plays

- Break every play down into its parts!!
 - Running Play → Loose Ball Play → Running Play
- Running Plays
 - Run that is not followed by a loose ball play (pass)
 - Run followed by an illegal pass.
 - Run Beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Loose Ball
 - Punt
 - Legal Forward Pass
 - Backward Passes or Fumbles Behind Offense's Scrimmage Line

Dead Ball Fouls

- Dead Ball Fouls—F.I.E.L.D.
 - False Start
 - Illegal Snap
 - Encroachment
 - Leaving the Field on the Wrong Side
 - Delay of Game
 - Personal Foul-UnSportsmanlike Conduct
- Whistle is blown immediately and penalty assessed.
- Enforced from the succeeding spot.
- Enforce all dead ball penalties.

Live Ball Fouls

- Live Ball Fouls
 - Whistle is not blown on any live ball or simultaneous to the snap penalty.
 - Throw your penalty flag and keep working.
 - After play is over, report penalty to the referee.

Penalty Enforcement

- Types of Penalties
 - Dead Ball
 - Live Ball
 - Simultaneous with the Snap
- If two live ball penalties occur on one team, other team must choose which penalty to accept.
- If live ball penalties occur on each team (doesn't matter how many), penalties will offset and you will replay the down.
- If a live ball penalty occurs followed by a dead ball penalty, both penalties will be enforced. Enforce in the order they occurred.

Penalty Enforcement

- Line to gain will always be established after all penalties have been assessed.
 - Dead Ball penalties that occur after the ball has been put into play will not change the down or line to gain.

Penalty Enforcement

- **Basic Spots**—The spot from which the penalty will be enforced from.
 - Fouls that occur simultaneous to the snap—Previous Spot.
 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct—Succeeding Spot
 - Running plays—End of the Run (exception: All-but one Rule)
 - Loose Ball plays—Previous Spot (exception: All-but-one Rule)
- **All-But-One Rule**—Any foul committed by the offense behind the basic spot of enforcement is administered from the spot of the foul.

Penalty Enforcement

- **Special Enforcements**
 - **Roughing the Passer**—End of the Run
 - **Half the Distance**—Can never take a team back further than half the way to their goal line.
 - **Kick Catch Interference**—Can either take penalty at spot of foul or previous spot with down replayed.
 - **Clean Hands Rule**—Team receive possession must decline penalty

Penalty Administration

- **Reporting a Foul**
 - Blow your whistle with two short, loud sounds to get the referee's attention so they don't move the cones.
 - Tell the referee the who, what, where, and when of the infraction.
 - Referee will give a preliminary signal of what the foul was.
 - Signals are on pg. 22 & 23 of the handbook.
 - Get together with the captain of the team that was fouled against and give them their options.
 - Mark off the resulting yardage from the penalty.
 - Announce the penalty (both verbally and with a signal.)

Summary of Penalties and Signals

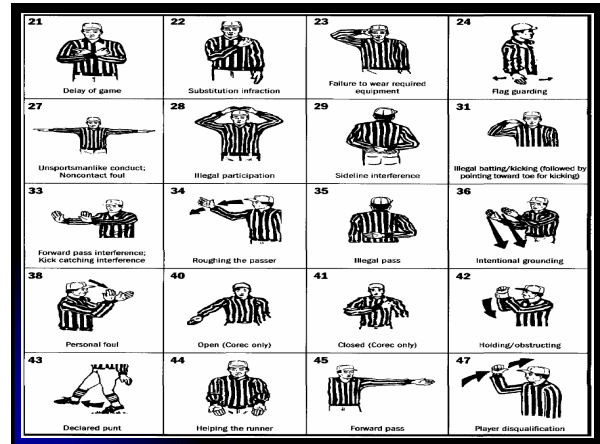
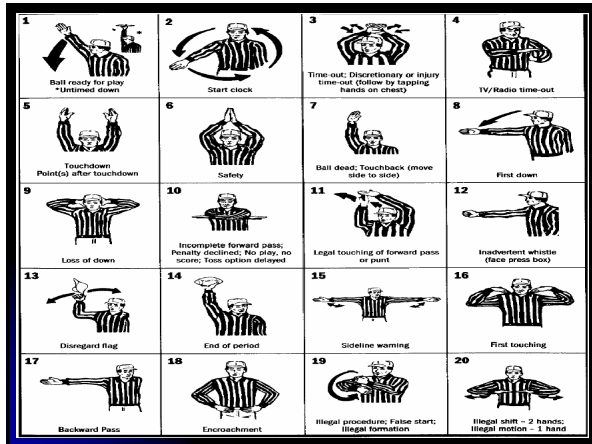
- **All fouls are on pg. 26 with their yardage**
 - Know these
- **Mechanics**
 - You will make your job much, much easier by being in the right place and having the right angles to see the play.

5 Yard Penalties

- Illegal Equipment (S23)
- Delay of Game (Dead Ball) (S7 - S21)
- Unfair Tactics (S27)
- Substitution Infraction (S22)
- Protected Scrimmage Kick Formation Infraction (S19)
- Encroachment (Dead Ball) (S7 - S18)
- False Start (Dead Ball) (S7 - S19)
- Illegal Snap (Dead Ball) (S7 - S19)
- Offensive Player Not Within 15 Yards of Ball (S19)
- Infraction of Scrimmage Formation (S19)
- Player Out-of-bounds when ball is snapped (S28)
- Offensive Player Illegally in Motion (S20)
- Player Receiving Snap within 2 Yards of Scrimmage Line (S19)
- Illegal Shift (S20)
- Illegally Handing Ball Forward (Loss of Down if by Team A) (S35 - S9)
- Advancement by Male Runner through Neutral Zone (Coed Only) (S19)
- Intentionally Throwing Backward Pass Out of Bounds (Loss of Down if by A) (S35 - S9)
- Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down if by A) (S35 - S9)
- Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down) (S36 - S9)
- Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down) (S35 - S9)
- 2 Consecutive Male to Male Forward Pass Completions (Coed Only) (S35 - S9)
- Male Catches Pass & Runs Beyond Scrimmage Line (Loss of Down) (Coed Only) (S35 - S9)
- Helping the Runner (S44)

10 Yard Penalties

- Quick Kick (S31)
- Kick Catch Interference (S33)
- Two or more consecutive encroachments in the same Interval Between Downs (S7 - S18)
- Offensive Forward Pass Interference (Loss of Down) (S33 - S9)
- Defensive Forward Pass Interference (Automatic First Down) (S33 - S8)
- Illegally Secured Flag Belt (Loss of Down, Player Disqualification)(Loss of Down if by A) (S38 - S47 - S9)
- Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct (S27)
- Spiking, Kicking, Throwing or Not Returning the Ball to Official During Dead Ball (S27)
- Steal, Strike, or Attempt to Steal Ball (S38)
- Trip an Opponent (S46)
- Contact with an Opponent on the Ground (S38)
- Hurdle any Player (S38)
- Contact Before or After Ball is Dead (S38)
- Unnecessary Contact of any Nature (S38)
- Drive or Run into a Player (S38)
- Clipping (S38)
- Position Upon Shoulders or Body (S38)
- Tackling Runner (S38 - S47)
- Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down) (S34 - S8)
- Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking (S38)
- Interlocked Interference (S38)
- Defensive Use of Hands (S38)
- Guarding the Flag Belt (S24)
- Stiff Arm (S38)
- Obstruction or Holding Runner (S38 or S42)
- Batting a Free Ball (S31)
- Illegal Kicking (S31)
- Illegal Participation (S28)
- Illegal Substitute/Replaced Player (S28)
- Pretend, Unfair Substitution (S28)
- Reentry of Disqualified Player (S28)
- Illegal Flag Belt Removal (S38)



Mechanics

- Referee
- Line Judge
- Back Judge