

Intramural Flag Football Rules
Salisbury University
Campus Recreation Department
146 Maggs Gym
410-548-3266

The rules governing this intramural sport activity are derived from rules used by the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) and rules unique to the SU Intramural Sports Program. This rules sheet is not meant to be all-inclusive; rather it is a summary of the more common rules, policies, and procedures used by the Intramural Sports Program. All important policy information can be found in the Intramural Sports Guidelines, which are available on our website. All team managers and players are responsible for reading this document and understanding the rules, policies, and procedures prior to participating in this activity.

General/Eligibility: See the IMS Guidelines for complete listing of eligibility.

Club Team Players: Team Members are eligible to participate in intramural flag football; however these players must play on an Highly Skilled-level team and there may not be more than two (2) club players on a roster. ***Penalty: More than two (2) club players will automatically forfeit every game in which the ineligible player(s) participated. During playoffs, use of an ineligible player will result from the team being removed from further competition.***

Intramural Team Participation: Individuals may only play on one team per flag football season.

Identification: All players **MUST present a GULL Card** to the IMS Supervisor prior to each game.

Team Rosters: The official team roster consists only of those individuals who are eligible and who have signed the official roster/waiver. Individuals must be listed on the official roster by the end of regular season play in order to be eligible to participate in playoffs. Confirming that all players are listed on the official roster is the responsibility of the Team Manager.

Games:

- 1st game starts at 6:00 pm
- Last game starts at 10:00 pm

Players: Teams will be comprised of seven (7) players; however rosters may list as many players as desired. A team may start with no less than five (5) players. In the event a team is playing with the minimum number (5) of players, and a player becomes injured or has to leave (other than an ejection) the game will continue until it is deemed a farce as determined by the officials and supervisor.

Substitutions: Teams are allowed unlimited substitutions. Substitutes can enter on any dead ball situation. The substitution must be completed before the ball is put in play (when ball is dead). Existing players must go directly to their sideline.

Communication with IMS Staff: Team managers are the only individuals permitted to speak with the officials regarding calls or questions. Team managers must give verbal confirmation that they would like to protest only rule interpretations or player eligibility (not judgment calls) before the start of the next snap. If you lose a protest, you lose one (1) timeout.

Jerseys: Will be provided. Shirts must be tucked in at all times in flag football!

Footwear: Turf shoes, cleats, and soft, pliable, rubber bottom shoes are permitted. METAL CLEATS, SANDALS & OPEN TOED SHOES ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Jewelry: All jewelry must be removed or taped. This includes, but is not limited to, necklaces, headgear, newly pierced earrings, facial piercings, bracelets and watches. Tape will not be provided.

Footballs: Teams are encouraged to bring their own football(s) to practice (warm-up) with and use in the game if agreed upon by both teams. A regular size football will be used for all Men's games. An intermediate size football will be used for all Women's.

Equipment Warning: If any player is issued an equipment warning after the start of a game, the offending player's team will receive a **5-yard penalty** and the player will be asked to sub out of the game until the problem has been corrected.

Duration of Game

Captains' Meeting and Coin Toss: Five (5) minutes before the game, the officials will conduct a "Captain's Meeting" with the team/assistant managers of each team. Home team calls toss (team listed first on schedule; if overtime then away team chooses). The team winning the toss shall have their choice of the options for the first half or second half. The options for each half shall be:

- Team winning the toss: chooses whether his/her team will take the ball OR chooses the goal his/her team will defend.
- Team losing the toss: the manager shall exercise the remaining option.

Game Length: Two (2) twenty (20) minute halves with a running clock. During the final two (2) minutes of the 2nd half, the clock will stop for the following:

- Incomplete pass—starts on the snap
- Out of bounds—starts on the snap
- Score—starts when the kick is legally touched
- Penalty—starts on the snap
- Team time-out—starts on the snap
- Officials time-out—starts on the ready
- Touchback—starts on the snap
- 1st Down—starts on the ready

Game Time is Forfeit Time! All intramural events are tightly scheduled based on facility availability to allow for maximum participation, so keeping the games on schedule is very important. Please have your team at the field checked-in and ready to play at least ten (10) minutes before your scheduled game time. If one team is late/is not present, the team's manager that is present and has the minimum number of participants required ready to play will be given two (2) options (once a decision is made it cannot be changed):

- Take the forfeit immediately.
- Give the team five (5) minutes to show.
- If the team shows, the game must be played with only the remaining amount of time left. If the team still does not show, it will be a forfeit.

Reserve Clause: the IM Staff reserves the right to make time adjustments to accommodate scheduling conflicts.

Half Time: Half time will not exceed three (3) minutes.

Time-outs: One (1) per team per half (45 seconds in length). Unused time outs do not carry over into the 2nd half or into any overtime period.

Mercy Rule: Upon the two-minute warning of the 2nd half, if a team is leading their opponent by nineteen (19) or more points the game clock will not stop. If a team scores DURING the last two (2) minutes of the second half and that score creates a point differential of nineteen (19) or more the game clock will not stop.

Playing Rules: (Games are governed by NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules with a few modifications/exceptions for intramural play as outlined below):

- The ball is dead on ALL running plays and passing plays as soon as the ball touches the ground.
- There are unlimited legal pitches and laterals on any play.
- Teams cannot recover a fumble.
- If a ball is muffed (does not touch the ground)—during a running or passing play or similar loose ball situation—the ball is live and may be gained by the defense (as long as the ball remains in the air). During a punt, if the ball is muffed and caught by the kicking team then the ball is DEAD at the spot and the kicking team gains possession.
- Players cannot dive to advance the ball; especially into the endzone. **Penalty; 10 yards from point of infraction.**
- On punts, players may advance the ball after it hits the ground, but not after the ball hits a player then the ground.
- Offense has twenty-five (25) seconds to put the ball in play after the official declares it ready. **Penalty: 5 yards.**
- The offense has FOUR (4) consecutive downs to advance to the next zone line. Zone lines are the 20-yard, 40-yard, and the goal lines.
- One (1) forward pass is allowed per down. All players are eligible receivers.
- Ball Responsibility—it is the responsibility of the OFFENSE to get the ball.

- The All But One principle as well as the Force-out and Momentum rules are in affect.

Snapping the Ball: Direct snaps are not permitted. Snaps do not need to be through the legs. However, the ball must remain on the ground and motionless until the actual snap. The snap must be received at least two (2) yards behind the line of scrimmage.

Scoring: One (1) foot must be inbounds. The line is considered out.

Touchdown = 6 points / Safety = 2 points

There are no field goals or kicking for a point after a touchdown (P.A.T.); however teams will have an opportunity to score on a P.A.T. by choosing the distance from the goal line in which they would like to attempt to score. Teams have the choice of three (3) different distances:

P.A.T. from (3yds) = 1 point

P.A.T. from (10yds) = 2 points

P.A.T. from (20yds) = 3 points

*****Note:** If the defense intercepts a P.A.T attempt and runs it all the way back for a touchdown it is worth three (3) points regardless of how many points the offense was originally attempted.

Penalties during P.A.T.

If on defense:

- If the attempt was unsuccessful, then replay the down and add the penalty enforcement.
- If the attempt was successful, the play stands (add penalty yardage from 14 yard line).

If on offense:

- If the attempt was unsuccessful and the penalty declined, the play is over and the attempt will not be repeated.
- If the attempt was successful, take the converted score away, mark off the penalty and the attempt will be repeated.
- A player must have at least one whole foot in bounds for a catch to be legal.

Simultaneous Catch: If a legal forward pass is caught by members of opposing teams, the ball shall become dead and belongs to the offense.

Pre-Snap Movement:

- Offense must have at least four (4) people on the line of scrimmage.
- Only one (1) player may be in motion at the time of the snap.
- No player may be in forward motion at the time of the snap.

Flag Rules: No article of clothing may cover any portion of the player's flag (**ALL SHIRTS MUST BE TUCKED IN AT ALL TIMES**). **Penalty: 5 yards.**

Wearing Flag Belt: Each player on the field must wear the flag belt provided by Intramural Sports. Belt must be properly attached at the waistline—one (1) flag should be placed over the center back with one flag over each hip. No Knots.

Removing Flag Belt: When the belt is clearly taken from the ball carrier, the down shall end and the ball declared dead. The belt should be held over the head to assist officials with the call; however, if the flag belt is delayed in falling off as a direct result of an attempt by the defensive player, the play will be whistled dead where the flag belt first starts to fall.

Legal Tag: If a player has inadvertently lost his/her flag belt, then a one (1) hand tag between the shoulder and knees constitutes a capture. No player shall intentionally remove a belt from any player that does not have possession of the ball. **Penalty: 10 yards.**

****NOTE:** The play is over only when officials blow their whistles (if there is inadvertent whistle, the entire play will be replayed).

Contact: In an attempt to remove the belt from a ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body and shoulder of an opponent with their hands, but not their opponents face or any part of the neck or head. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag. **Penalty: All tackles will be penalized by a 10yd penalty and a possible ejection.**

Diving: Players may dive to catch a pass, defend a pass, and to remove an opponent's flag; however, no player may intentionally dive into another player to gain yardage.

Flag Guarding: Ball carriers shall not guard their flags in a manner that would prevent an opponent the opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt. A ball carrier may not use straight arm tactics, swing arm to deflect, or use other means to keep an opponent from pulling a flag. A ball carrier may not hurdle or lower his/her head or run in a fashion that hinders an opponent from pulling a flag. **Penalty: 10 yards from spot of foul.**

Falling Player: If the ball carrier touches a knee to the ground, the play will be whistled dead and spotted there. If the ball carrier slips and falls, but regains balance with the ball in contact with the ground (ball is extension of the hand), play shall continue.

Blocking Guidelines:

- Screen blocking only. Hands and arms must be behind the back, allowing one normal step between the blocker and an opponent.
- Individuals are not permitted to use feet, knees, elbows, dip shoulders, trip, or kick legs to initiate contact or perform a block.
- Contact with an opponent on the ground is prohibited.
- Helping a ball carrier through pushing or contact is prohibited.
- Defensive players must go around a block—no holding, tackling, aggressive pushing or other use of arm and hands.

Penalty: 10 yards from of line of scrimmage or point of infraction.

Punts: Can be performed on any down.

Kicking Procedure: The kicking team must announce intention to kick and then must kick (unless time-out or penalty, then re-declare). Quick kicks are not permitted at any time. The punter must have the ball snapped to him/her. The punter must immediately kick the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. Neither team may advance past the line of scrimmage until the ball has been punted.

Fumbled Punts: Fumbled punts are dead. If fumbled from within field, but lands in the end zone, a safety will be awarded. If the ball is fumbled forward, then the ball will be spotted where the player was not the end result of the fumble.

Long Punts: If the punt is received in the end zone, it may be advanced out of end zone.

Fair Catch: Not enforced. During any punt, the kicking team members must allow receivers an attempt to make a play on the ball. The kicking team shall not obstruct their path to the ball. This applies even if a fair catch is falsely signaled and opponents have not yet touched the ball. **Penalty: 10 yards from previous spot and replay of the down OR choose an awarded catch on the spot of the foul.**

Note: The defense may not bat, hit, strip, or swat at the ball while it is in possession of the ball carrier. **Penalty: 10 yards from the spot.**

Overtime:

There is no overtime during regular session. Games that end in a tie will be recorded as such. During tournament play the following apply:

- The away team captain will call the toss and the winner has the option of offense, defense, or direction.
- All overtime periods will be played toward the same goal line.
- Each team will start 1st and goal from the opposing team's 10 yard line (unless moved by penalty).
- The object will be to score a touchdown (followed by a P.A.T.).
- An overtime period consists of each team receiving a set of FOUR (4) downs.
- If the team that is awarded the ball scores, the opponent will still have a chance to re-tie, or lose the game.
- If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown they win the game. If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the ball will be placed on their 10 yard line to begin their series of FOUR (4) downs.
- If the score is still tied after one period, the teams will go to a 2nd overtime period, or as many as needed to determine a winner.
- Each team is entitled to one (1) time-out per overtime period.

Summary of Penalties:

5 Yard Penalties:

- Equipment worn illegally (from the line—replay down)
- Delay of game (from the line—replay down)
- Substitution infraction (from the line—replay down)
- False start (from the line—replay down)
- Encroachment (dead ball—replay down)
- Illegal snap (from the line—replay down)
- Illegal formation – 4 players not on the line (from the line—replay down)
- Player out-of-bounds when ball is in play (from the line—replay down)
- Illegal shift/motion (from the line—replay down)
- Intentional fumble [illegal pass] (from the spot or line, whichever is greater – loss of down)
- Illegal forward pass (from the spot or line, whichever is greater – loss of down)
- Intentional grounding (from the line—loss of down)

10 Yard Penalties:

- Aiding runner (from the spot or line, whichever is greater – replay down)
 - Quick kick (from line and re-kick OR take kick)
 - Fair catch interference (from spot and if contact, possible ejection)
 - Forward pass interference—offensive (from the spot—loss of down)
 - Forward pass interference—defensive (from the line—automatic 1st down)
 - Illegally secured belt (on score from line & loss of down & no score if on TD)
 - Spiking, kicking, throwing ball by offense (if after TD from 14yd line, all other from end of play)
 - Attempt to steal or hit the football from the hand of an opponent (from the spot—replay down)
 - Tripping; (from the spot or line, whichever is greater—replay down)
 - Contact with opponent on ground [unsportsmanlike]
 - Hurdling player (from the spot—replay down)
 - Illegal removal of belt (from the spot—replay down)
 - Clipping (from the spot—replay down)
 - Illegal use of hand or arms – holding/blocking (from the spot—replay down)
 - Flag guarding (from spot—replay down)
 - Illegal participation (from the line –replay down)
 - Intentionally kicking or attempting to strike an opposing player or official [unsportsmanlike]
 - Unsportsmanlike player/coach/bench conduct – verbal (taunting) or physical abuse of an official (from the line or end of play, whichever is greater—possible ejection)
 - Tackling or throwing a player to the ground [unsportsmanlike]
 - Roughing the passer; intentional (from the line—automatic 1st down)
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- Half the distance penalty is enforced half the distance to the goal when:**
 - 5 yard penalty—on or inside of the 10 yard line**
 - 10 yard penalty—on or inside of the 10 yard line**

Salisbury University Team Sportsmanship Rating Explanations:

5 will be given to an organization which demonstrates qualities of extremely good sportsmanship both in regard to the other team and to the officials. It will be given where there is an attitude of complete cooperation by all the members of the team and its spectators throughout the entire game.

4 will be given to an organization if there is not an incident of poor sportsmanship.

3 will be given to an organization as an average grade where unsportsmanlike conduct is not present in the game except for rare minor infractions, but where the conduct is such that the game progresses without undue problems.

2 will be given to an organization when a team has to be warned about unnecessary roughness in a game. This rating will be given if players other than the captain persist in questioning the officials or if any player repeatedly argues with the officials. If the spectators clearly related to a team fail to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion or if a team fails to cooperate with the officials to keep the game running in an orderly manner, an organization will be given a “D” rating. A “2” will also be given when 2 or more players are ejected by an official for abusive remarks or when such remarks are made repeatedly by player or spectators toward an official or opponent.

1 will be given to an organization which disregards repeated warnings of unnecessary roughness or where a team is so antagonistic to an official that the game cannot be played with proper order and control (this is also grounds for discontinuation of the game). This rating will be given if a player is ejected for striking or shoving an official or opponent. A “1” rating will be given for disorderly conduct by spectators clearly related to a team whereby such conduct involves violation of university regulations or where a team displays general roughness whereby the safety of the participants is jeopardized (this shall include action by any player where the intent is to bring about physical harm to another player). A “1” rating will also be given to an action of a team showing disregard for the rules or policies of the intramural program.