



Flag Football Manual

General Information

All participants are responsible for the information contained in this manual.

Elastic Clause: The League Manager shall have complete charge of the Youth Flag Football League. Any and all situations not specifically covered by these rules shall be acted upon by the League Manager, and all actions by the League Manager will be FINAL.

If there are any further questions or ideas regarding the Youth Flag Football League, please contact the league manager.

Amendments

1. This manual or any section thereof, may be amended by the Town of Wellington Parks and Recreation through evaluation by, and with the feedback from, coaches, referees, etcetera, as deemed necessary.
2. If you have questions, ideas, or need information on the Youth Flag Football League, please call our office at (970) 568-7410 Monday through Thursday 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM and Friday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM.



Purpose

The purpose of the league run by Wellington Parks and Recreation is to provide kids with the opportunity for learning and fun in a safe environment. Friendly competition and sportsmanship will be emphasized. Our main goal is for all participants (players, coaches, parents, etc.) to have fun while building athletics, team, and social skills.

1. Field, Players, and Equipment

- a. The Field:
 - i. Size: Sixty (60) yards (goal to goal) x forty (40) yards wide, ten (10) yard end zones. The playing field will be divided into four equal zones.
- b. The Players:
 - i. No team may play without a certified coach present on the playing field.
 - ii. All ages play 5v5. If the opposing team has fewer than five players, they may borrow players from the other team to make the sides equal.
 - iii. Each player will have equal playing time if they attend practices.
 - iv. Each player must start at least half of the games.
 - v. Each player will play both offense and defense.
 - vi. Any number of substitutions may enter the game for either team when the ball is dead.
 - vii. Players must be on the Parks and Recreation official roster and may not participate if they have not registered for the sport through the Parks and Recreation department/website.
- c. The Equipment:
 - i. The ball is a pee-wee size ball for 7U and 9U and junior size for 12U, provided by Wellington Parks and Recreation.
 - ii. All participants wear official flag belts provided by Wellington Parks and Recreation. Flags are worn on the sides and in a manner that keeps it clear of any obstructions. **Shirts must be tucked in and not hanging over the flags.** Officials may whistle a ball carrier down immediately for deliberately placing flags in a non-legal position. If it is found that players have tied their flags, the ball will be immediately turned over to the opposing team, ten (10) yards from the end zone of the team who committed the infraction.



- iii. Player's attire
 - 1. Athletic shoes (no metal spikes).
 - 2. Protective mouthpieces are optional, but highly recommended.
 - 3. Jewelry is not allowed. Exceptions will be made for medical ID bracelets and religious medals which must be taped and approved by the referee or official.
 - a. Taping over any other jewelry is not permitted.
 - 4. Sunglasses are not allowed unless they are prescription.
 - 5. Each player is required to wear a Wellington Parks and Recreation blue and white reversible jersey (overtop of any other clothing) to participate in games. White will be the home team and blue will be the away team.
 - 6. Headwear must be soft and without any hard brims (**no helmets/ball caps**, etc.)
- iv. **Hoods on coats or other apparel must be tucked in and not hanging out.**
- v. Pads and safety equipment or attire deemed by the official to be unsafe are illegal.

2. The Game

- a. Timing:
 - i. The game consists of two halves, each twenty (25) minutes in length. Half time shall be five (5) minutes in length.
 - ii. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half. Each time-out will be one (1) minute in length.
 - iii. Time runs continuously for each half except for legal time outs or on field injuries. If no official is present, the home team shall designate a non-coach to be the official timekeeper. Approximately two (2) minutes before the end of each half, the official timekeeper calls out a two-minute warning.
 - iv. Game clock starts when one of the following occurs:
 - 1. Ball is hiked to start the game.
 - 2. Ball is hiked following a time-out.
 - 3. Ball is hiked following an on-field injury.
 - 4. At the direction of the official after any stoppage of time.
 - 5. If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the end of the down.



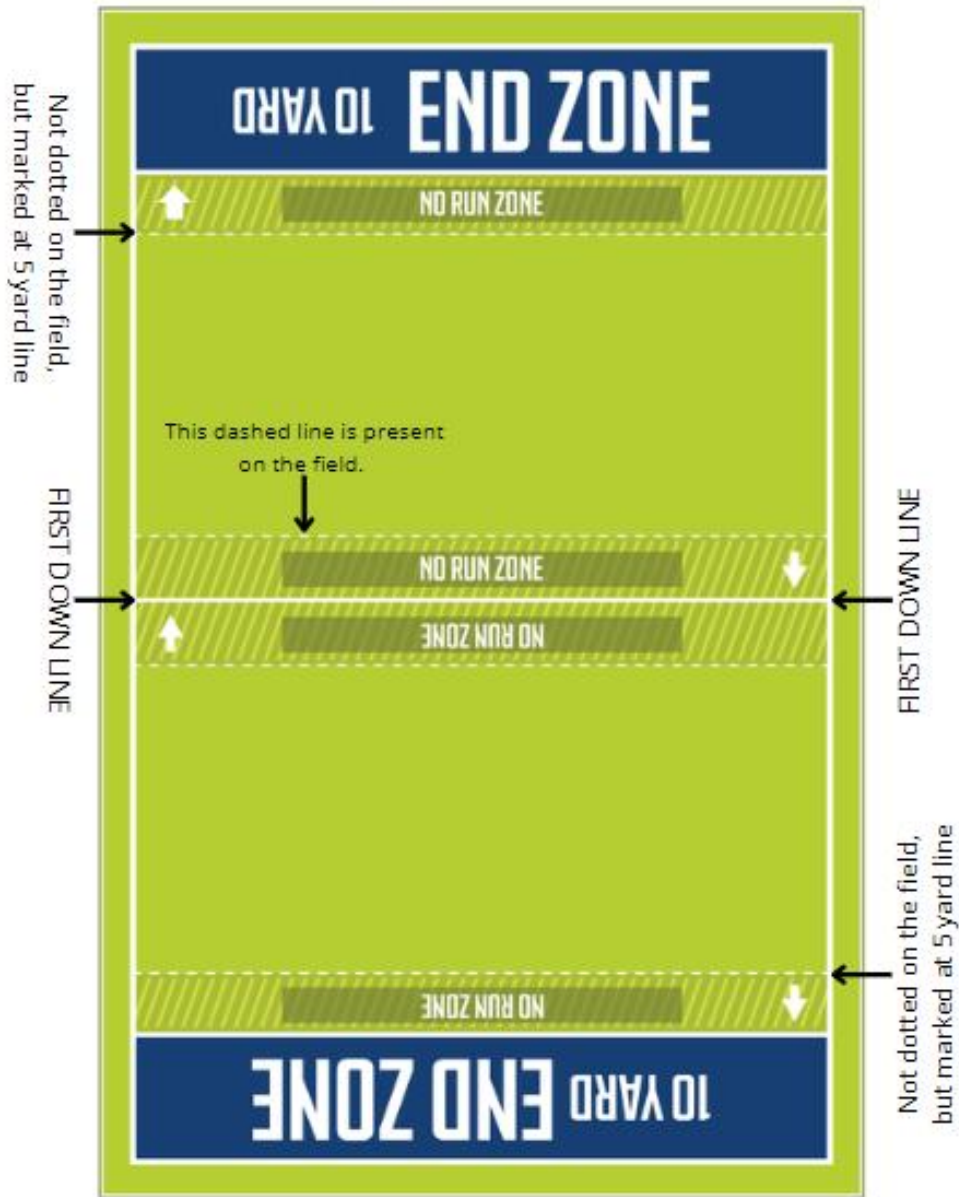
- b. Scoring:
- i. A touchdown counts as six (6) points. A touchdown shall be scored when, in an upright position, the ball carriers feet break the plane of the goal line.
 - ii. A point after the touchdown attempt (PAT) is awarded after a touchdown is scored. The defensive team cannot score on a PAT attempt. The PAT attempt shall consist of one (1) offensive play from the following options.
 1. Five-yard (5) line for a 1-point conversion (pass only).
 2. Twelve-yard (12) line for a 2-point conversion (run or pass).
 - iii. Safety counts as two (2) points.
 1. A safety is scored when the ball legally in possession of a player becomes dead behind their own goal line, provided the impetus which sent the ball into the end zone was given by a member of their own team. Points are awarded to the opposing team, and the team awarded points receives the ball on their ten (10) yard line.
 - iv. If at any point a team is up by twenty-eight (28) points or more, the score will no longer be kept but play will continue until the regular time is over.
 1. If the team up by twenty-eight (28) points scores again, no extra point attempts will be awarded. The opposing team is awarded the ball after the touchdown.
**The Town does not keep score, but officials do for game purposes.
- c. Start of the game:
- i. A coin toss will determine which team will have their choice of starting with the ball or deferring to start the second half with the ball. The team who did not win the coin toss chooses the direction. The home (white jersey) team captain shall call the coin toss.
 - ii. Teams start with the ball on their own five (5) yard line.
- d. Touchback:
- i. An interception downed in the end zone comes out to the five (5) yard line.



- e. Regular Play:
 - i. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its five (5) yard line and has 4 downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 downs to score a touchdown.
 - ii. If the offense declares a punt on 4th down, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its own five (5) yard line.
 - 1. If the offensive team decides to attempt the 4th down try, and fails, the opposing team will take over at the spot of the ball.
 - iii. Bean Bag markers will be utilized to mark the line of scrimmage and a seven (7) yard encroachment zone. (Marked by an official).
 - iv. Teams shall trade end zones defended after halftime break.
 - v. Quarterback is defined as a player, different from the snapper, receiving the ball from the player snapping the ball.
 - vi. Only five players per team are allowed on the field during a play.
- f. Blocking:
 - i. All blocking is screen blocking and must take place without contact. Screening principles in basketball will apply to screen blocking. No moving screen blocks are allowed.
 - ii. **Downfield blocking is illegal.** Any offensive player who continues running AND impedes the progress of a defensive player who is attempting to pull the ball carrier's flag will be called for illegal blocking.
- g. No Running Zones: In the no run zone, the center must give a direct snap to the quarterback, and there must be a direct pass beyond the line of scrimmage to advance the ball.
 - i. "No Running Zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations.
 - ii. All plays from within the no running zone must be a direct pass to advance the ball. No direct hand-offs, pitches, lateral or backward passes are allowed in the no running zone.

**Please refer to the diagram below

Flag Football



- Blitz behind 7 yard line
- Once you pass the first down line you can run



- h. Running:
 - i. The quarterback cannot run the ball.
 - ii. Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
 - iii. Only one (1) pitch, lateral or backward pass is allowed behind the line of scrimmage. Note: any pitch, lateral or backward pass that hits the ground will be spotted where it hits the ground.
 - iv. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
 - v. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot dive with the football or hurdle (jump over) opposing players.
 - vi. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
 - vii. For a snapper (center) to receive a handoff, they must turn one hundred-eighty (180) degrees and face their own end zone before the quarterback can hand them the ball.
 - viii. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage, provided the hand-off occurred outside the “no running zone”.
- i. Passing/Receiving:
 - i. All players are eligible to receive passes including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. Shovel passes (direct pass in front of the quarterback) are allowed.
 - iii. Forward passes do not have to cross the line of scrimmage.
- j. Dead Balls:
 - i. Balls must be snapped between the legs, not off to the side, to start the play.
 - ii. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
 - iii. Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - 1. Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - 2. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - 3. Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - 4. Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
 - 5. Ball carrier’s flag falls off.
 - 6. Ball hits the ground on a fumble.
 - a. Note: There are no fumbles (players cannot recover the ball if dropped); when a ball hits the ground on a fumble, the ball is spotted where hits the ground.



- k. Interceptions:
 - i. The defensive team, following an interception may make a return.
 - ii. An interception during an attempted extra point is a dead ball.
- l. Rushing the Quarterback:
 - i. 7U
 - 1. 7U age group is not allowed to rush the QB
 - ii. 9U and 12U
 - 1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any players who cross the rush line before the ball is snapped is considered offsides.
 - 2. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
 - 3. Once the ball is handed off, the seven (7) yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage.
- m. Sportsmanship / Roughing:
 - i. If the field supervisor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game. Foul play will not be tolerated.
- n. Penalties:
 - i. Defense:
 - 1. Offside – five (5) yards and automatic 1st down.
 - 2. Interference – ten (10) yards, automatic 1st down.
 - 3. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, contact on the ball carrier, etc.) – ten (10) yards, automatic 1st down.
 - 4. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball) – ten (10) yards from the spot of the foul, automatic 1st down.
 - 5. Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside seven (7) yard marker) – five (5) yards, automatic 1st down.



- ii. Offense:
 - 1. Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) – five (5) yards, loss of down.
 - 2. Illegal forward pass (forward pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage) – five (5) yards, loss of down.
 - 3. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off / away defender) – ten (10) yards, loss of down.
 - 4. Delay of game – five (5) yards, loss of down (clock stops until next snap in 2nd half)
 - 5. Flag guarding – ten (10) yards from spot of the foul and loss of down, this includes tying the flag.
 - 6. Illegal screen block – ten (10) yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down.
 - 7. Illegal Pitch – (more than 1 pitch, lateral or backward pass per play) – five (5) yards, loss of down.
- o. Other Regulations:
 - i. Referees determine incidental contact which may result from normal run of play.
 - ii. Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
 - iii. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
 - iv. Remember: Each time the ball is spotted a team has thirty (30) seconds to snap the ball.
- p. Coaching: Coaches are encouraged to call plays from the sideline when possible. One (1) coach is allowed on the field to assist players with plays.



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March 2026