



Mt Pleasant Parks and Recreation

Flag Football Rules

(Revised 8/19/2017)

Uniform

1. Players provided MPPR youth flag football jersey. Shirts must be tucked in during game play.
2. Flags are to be placed over shirt.
3. Players may wear rubber cleats or tennis shoes. Shoes must be closed toed. **Cleats must be rubber and cannot be metal, plastic or polyurethane.**
4. Mouth guards are recommended, but not required.
5. Players may play with a cast or hand brace if protective padding is pre-approved.

Equipment

- Youth Football
- Flag belt

Field Dimensions

- 70 X 30
 - 50 yard field with two (2), 10 yard end zones

Game Play

1. Scoring and standings will not be kept.
2. Teams will play 5 v 5 on both offense and defense.
3. All players should play an equal number of minutes or as close to it as possible during games. Coaches should make a conscious effort to ensure players are receiving equal play.
4. Coach will act as quarterback only for 5/6 year old division.
 - 7/8 and 8/10 year old division, players act as quarterbacks
5. Games will be played as four (4), ten (10) minute quarters, running clock.
 - There will be a 5 minute half time.
6. Teams will be allowed one (1), 30 second time out per quarter.
7. To achieve first down or touchdown, ball and feet must be across the line.
8. NO punting or kicking.
9. NO fumbles. Play will stopped and possession beginning at point of fumble. Exception to this rule is when a quarterback fumbles a snap. Play may resume.
10. Interceptions may be returned. Ball will be placed at point of interception or at the point of which interception has been returned to.
11. Extra points and two point conversions **will not** be attempted.
12. There is no diving, jumping or sliding to tackle or avoid tackles. All effort should be made to stay on their feet and avoid injury. Naturally these may occur during game play, however proper coaching should be instructed not to do so.
13. Inadvertent Whistle – If whistle blows prior to ball carrier crossing line of scrimmage, down is replayed. If ball carrier is past the line of scrimmage, offensive team get the option to accept play as is or replay down.

Offensive Possession

1. Team listed first will start game.
2. All offensive possessions will begin at teams own 5 yard line. Exception to this rule is interceptions.
3. Teams will have 4 downs to reach midfield to gain 1st down. Once team has crossed gained 1st down, team has 4 downs to score a touchdown.
 - a. If team does not gain first down or score touchdown within the 4 downs, opposing team shall receive ball on their own 5 yard line.
4. The offense has **30 seconds to snap** the ball after it has been set by referee.
5. Ball can be snapped between the coach's legs or side snapped. (Center will stand to the side of the ball with shoulders perpendicular to the line of scrimmage.)
6. There is a **no run zone** 5 yards before midfield and 5 yards from edzone. If ball is in these areas, teams must pass the ball. Exception to this rule is if team has gained 1st down and was pushed back into no run zone. In this circumstance, team may rush ball.
7. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
8. Dead ball occurs when:
 - a. Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - b. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - c. Ball carrier makes contact with ground other than with feet or hands
 - d. Ball carrier's flag falls off
 - e. Touchdown is scored
 - f. Fumble (unless quarterback fumbles snap)

Passing

1. Only one forward pass per down.
2. The quarterback can rollout, but must pass, handoff, or lateral while in backfield.
3. The quarterback cannot advance for positive yards.
4. The quarterback has a **(7) seven-second pass clock**. If pass is not thrown within seven-seconds, play is dead, completion of down and ball placed back at original line of scrimmage. (Same applies if QB is in end zone)
 - o Once ball is handed off, seven-second rule is no longer in effect.

Formations

1. Offensive team must have a minimum of 1 person (center) on line of scrimmage to begin play.
2. Quarterback must be directly behind center or in shot gun formation directly behind center.
3. All snaps can come from between centers legs or side snapped.
4. Snap can only go to quarterback, no wild cat.

Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive a pass.
2. Only one player allowed to be in motion parallel to line of scrimmage before ball is snapped.
3. A receiver must have one foot in bounds and maintain control throughout the catch.
4. In case of simultaneous possession by both offense and defense, possession goes to offense.
5. If a receivers flag inadvertently falls off prior to receiving ball and/or after the reception without contact from a defender, player will be ruled down at the spot flag fell off.

Running

1. The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
2. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted.
3. NO laterals or pitches.
4. The player that takes the direct handoff can throw the ball from behind line of scrimmage.
5. Spinning is allowed, however player cannot leave feet and must not flag guard.

Flag Guarding

1. Flag guarding is prohibited. Acts of flag guarding include, blocking opponents attempt at grabbing the flag, shirt pulled over waist, or using any part of hands, arms or ball to block flag.

Blocking

1. NO INTENTIONAL CONTACT of any kind is permitted.
2. Offensive line ONLY may use "chicken wing" style of blocking, but cannot make intentional contact with defensive players rushing.
3. Downfield blocking or screening is illegal. Any offensive player who continues running AND impedes the progress of a defensive player who is attempting to pull the ball carriers flag will be called for illegal blocking.

Defense

Game Play

1. Zone or man to man coverage is permitted.
2. All players must be (7) seven yards from line of scrimmage as indicated by marker.
 - o **5/6 and 7/8 division only.**
3. No rushing the QB. Players may rush beyond line of scrimmage once ball is handed off.
 - o In 7/8 year old division, defensive player covering QB may not cross line of scrimmage.
4. Defensive players may not bump or jam offensive players at the line.
5. No swatting at ball to cause fumble.

Rushing the Passer – 8-10 year old Division ONLY

1. Only those lined up at 7 yard marker may rush the QB.
2. Players NOT rushing may line up at the line of scrimmage.
3. Any number of players may rush the QB as long as they are at the 7 yard marker.
4. Rushers must take an angled path toward the QB. Any contact made by offense and the rusher, offensive impeding penalty will be called.
 - a. Once angle is set, player cannot change their path to QB. If path changes, they will lose right of way and if any contact is made it will be called by initiating player.
5. If offense draws player beyond the 7 yard marker prior to the snap, player may NOT rush.
 - a. Jumping the rush is not a penalty unless they cross line of scrimmage prior to hand off or passed ball.

Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when defender pulls flag from offensive player in possession of the ball.
2. Defensive players cannot tackle, pull or hold player or players clothing in process of removing flag.
3. Defensive players cannot intentionally pull flags from those that are not in possession of the ball.

Penalties

Offensive - All penalties are 5 yards

- Illegal Motion
- Offensive Pass Interference
- Illegal Contact (blocking, making intentional contact with another player, sliding, etc.)
- Delay of Game (play should occur within 30 seconds)
- Flag Guarding
- Charging/Offensive Impeding (not attempting to avoid defense)

Defensive – All penalties are 5 yards

- Off sides
- Interference
- Illegal Contact (blocking, holding, etc.)
- Illegal Flag Pull (before offensive player as possession)
- Stripping the ball

Terminology Player Should Know

Understanding the Positions

- **Quarterback(QB)** – Player receiving the ball or the snap from the center to begin the play. QB's may throw the ball to a receiver or handoff the ball to the running back.
- **Center(C)** – Player that hikes or snaps the ball back to the QB.
- **Running Back(RB)** – Player that receives handoff from the QB behind the line of scrimmage. RB's typically line up in the backfield behind the QB.
- **Wide Receiver(WR)** – Player that starts play on line of scrimmage on either side of ball, outside of the center. WR's typically run a pattern and receive a pass from the QB.
- **Defensive Back(DB)** – Player that covers offensive players.

Understanding the Field

- **Sideline** – The line that designates the outer boundary of the field.
- **Out of Bounds** – Area outside the side lines that surround field of play.
- **End Zone** – The scoring portion of the field. There is an end zone located at each end of the field.
- **Field of Play** – The portion of the field inside the side lines and excluding the end zone.
- **Goal Line** – The line that separates the field of play and endzone. A team scores anytime the player advances the ball from field of play into endzone.
- **Line of Scrimmage(LOS)** – The imaginary line that extends from sideline to sideline from where the ball is marked to start the play.
- **Backfield** – Any part of the field directly behind the line of scrimmage.

Understanding the Game

- **Snap** – The act of putting the ball into play typically by having the center move it from the LOS into the QB’s hand. The player moving the ball is said to be “snapping” while the betting the ball is “receiving the snap.”
- **Pass** – When the QB attempts to advance the ball by throwing it from behind the LOS, forward to a receiver.
- **Down** – Each team gets a series of 4 downs to advance the ball to the scoring area or first down. A down is the period from the snap of the ball until the end of the play.
- **Formation** – The pattern in which the offensive team lines up at the LOS prior to snapping the ball.
- **Huddle** – When the offensive team gathers together before a play to set up their formation and plays to be used for that down.
- **Incompletion** – When the offense attempts a forward pass but the ball is not caught or is caught out of bounds.
- **Interception** – When a defensive player catches a pass thrown by the offense. The defensive player can attempt to advance the ball towards the opponent’s endzone.
- **Tackle** – The act of stopping the ball carrier by pulling the flag from the flag belt.
- **Touchdown** – Score earned by advancing ball into the endzone.

Flag Football Fields

Fields 6 & 7

