



**Millard United Sports**  
**NFL Flag Football**  
**2019 Rule Book**



# Millard United Sports

## 7-on-7 “Expanded Flag” NFL Flag

### RULES

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## I. Game

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at the 40-yard line for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense or defer.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at the 40-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield (20-yard line). Once a team crosses midfield, they have four (4) plays to score a touchdown.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on the 40-yard line.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from the 40-yard line.
6. All possession changes start on the 40-yard line. Interceptions result in team starting at 20-yard line.
7. **After the first half, choice of offense or defense goes to the team that did not choose for 1<sup>st</sup> half.**
8. In the event of Overtime (playoffs), coin flip will take place, again. The visiting team shall call the toss.

## II. Terminology

1. **Boundary Lines** - the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and back of the end zone lines.
2. **Line Of Scrimmage** - (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
3. **Line-To-Gain** - the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
4. **Rush Line** - an imaginary line running across the width of the field 7 yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
5. **Offense** - the squad with possession of the ball.
6. **Defense** - the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
7. **Passer** - the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
8. **Rusher** - the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
9. **Downs (1-2-3-4)** - the offensive squad has four attempts or "downs" to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.
10. **Live Ball** - refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
11. **Dead Ball** - refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
12. **Whistle** - sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, half time, or the end of the game.
13. **Inadvertent Whistle** - official's whistle that is performed in error.
14. **Charging** - the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm, or the chest.
15. **Flag Guarding** - an act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carrier's flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, or by blocking access to the runner's flags with a hand or arm.
16. **Shovel Pass** - a legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot put type manner.
17. **Lateral** - a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier.
18. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** - a rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or language.
19. **Unnecessary Roughness** – any action that is beyond the normal physical play, per referee judgement
20. **Pass Interference** – No contact with receiver that impedes catch

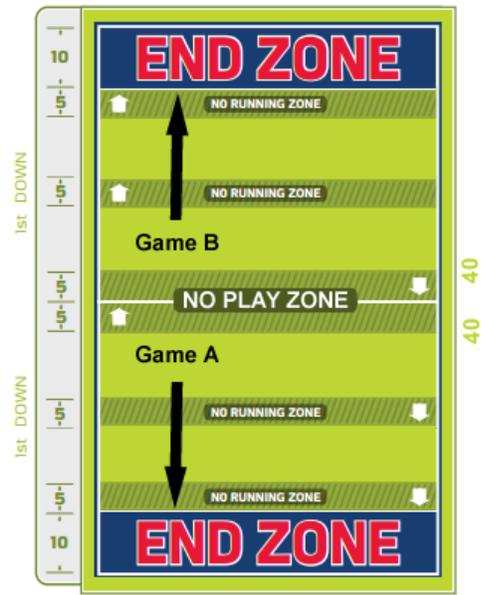
## III. Equipment

1. The league provides each player with a flag belt and NFL FLAG powered by USA Football NFL jersey. Teams will use the football provided by the refs. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and Girls teams will use the "Pee Wee" sized ball; 5<sup>th</sup> Grade and older will use the TDJ sized ball.

2. Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
5. Official NFL FLAG powered by USA Football NFL jerseys must be worn during play.
6. Players' jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line.

## IV. Field

1. The field dimensions are 44.33 yards wide (sideline to opposite hash/yardage markings) by 50 yards long with one 10-yard end zone, and a midfield line-to-gain. No-Run Zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards. However, field size may vary based on field availability for each league.
2. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones (a 5 yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
4. Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No-Run Zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
5. All coaches and players on the sidelines must be 2 yards off the sideline in the coaches box, extending the entire length of the field.
6. All fans, family members, or anyone not participating in the game as an athlete or coach must be away from the playing surface in the stands during games.



## V. Rosters

1. Home teams wear dark color jerseys; visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
2. Teams must consist of at least seven players, with a maximum of ten players.
3. Teams must start a game with a minimum of six players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with six players on the field, but no fewer than six.

## VI. Timing and Overtime

1. Games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock with two twenty minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts.
2. Halftime is 5-minutes long.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 35 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has one 60-second time out per half.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game shall be determined a tie.
8. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) Period will be used to determine a winner. OT format is as follows:
  - i. Each team gets one series of up to four plays (and possibly more pending penalty enforcement) starting from the 20 yard line.
    1. First possession choice goes to the winner of coin toss.

2. There is no Sudden Death, each team gets a minimum of one possession.
  - ii. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
  - iii. There are no time-outs.
  - iv. Each team will be scored based on points scored (same as regulation)
  - v. Change of Possession:
    1. Change of possession takes place when Team A's forward progress is halted on downs or scores a touchdown.
    2. Team B takes possession on the 20-yard regardless of whether or not Team A's possession ended in an interception.
9. Multiple OT periods:
- i. First OT period – shown above:
    1. Scoring teams can go for 1 or 2 point PAT.
  - ii. Second OT Period or any additional overtime period:
    1. First possession goes to loser of coin toss. **Choice of offense or defense goes to loser of OT coin toss**
    2. Scoring teams must go for 2 point PAT.

## VII. Scoring

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. PAT (Point After Touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line) Note: 1 point PAT is pass only, 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
  - i. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 12-yard line).
3. Mercy Rule: After one team is winning by twenty eight points or more, the losing team gets one offensive series to continue regulation play. If they do not score, the game ends.

## VIII. Coaches

1. Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are encouraged to support the coach at all time.
2. One coach is allowed on the field to direct players; any coach must move to the sideline before the snap of the ball or 5 yards behind the deepest player and move away from the flow of the play.
3. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
4. There is a maximum of 3 coaches allowed on sidelines. They must be wearing coach's shirts.

## IX. Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - i. The ball hits the ground.
  - ii. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - iii. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - iv. A touchdown or PAT is scored.
  - v. The defense makes an interception.

- vi. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
  - vii. The ball carrier's flag falls off.
  - viii. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - ix. The 7 second clock expires. (Ball must advance past LOS by pass or run)
  - x. Inadvertent whistle.
8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
    - i. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
    - ii. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
  9. All calls by the official are final and not reviewable. While the head coach may ask for a rule clarification (explanation) any further challenging of an official's call is an automatic "unsportsmanlike" penalty and may result in an ejection.

**NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where possession is lost. Ball cannot be fumbled forward.**

## X. Running

1. **The ball is spotted at the foremost point of the ball when the flag is pulled.**
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. **The quarterback is the offensive player that receives the snap.**
3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
4. Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind.
5. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before the end zone and 5 yards prior to midfield (25-20 yard line) are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No-Run Zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
6. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. No blocking, "screening", or setting picks is allowed at any time. No impeding the defensive players attempting to get to the ball carrier. No running with the ball carrier.
9. Flag Obstruction – **All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins.** The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.
10. Hand off must result in ball crossing LOS after 7-seconds.

## XI. Passing

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

## XII. Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be **behind** the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball, resulting in team starting at 20-yard line

6. Interceptions are not returnable.

### **XIII. Rushing the Passer**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
  - i. A legal rush is:
    1. Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
    2. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
    3. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7 yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
    4. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
  - ii. A penalty may be called if:
    1. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush (5 yard penalty and replay down unless the penalty results in first down or half the distance to the end zone if within the 5-yard line).
    2. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Offside (5 yard penalty and replay down unless the penalty results in first down or half the distance to the end zone if within the 5-yard line).
    3. Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – Illegal Rush (5 yard penalty and replay down unless the penalty results in first down or half the distance to the end zone if within the 5-yard line).
  - iii. Special circumstances:
    1. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback, seven second clock in effect.
    2. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play
    3. If rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as defender with no offside penalty enforced.
4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
6. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback’s flag is pulled.

### **XIV. Flag Pulling**

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier’s possession at any time.
4. If a player’s flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.

6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.
7. Pulling the shorts will result in a penalty.

## XV. Formations

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to six players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
  - i. One player may go in motion behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
  - ii. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
  - iii. There **MUST** be at least one player on each side of the Center at the time the ball is snapped.
2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

## XVI. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Two **UNSPORTSMANLIKE** penalties will result in an ejection. Any ejection results in a 1-game suspension and will be reported to league by referees after the game. This goes for coaches and players.
5. Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
6. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
7. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:
  - i. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
  - ii. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
  - iii. Compliment **ALL** players, not just one child or team.
8. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
  - i. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the designated seating area.
  - ii. Stay in the designated seating area.

## XVII. Penalties

1. General
  - i. The referee will call all penalties.
  - ii. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
  - iii. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (spot fouls)
  - iv. Only the head coach may ask the **White Hat referee** questions about rule clarification and interpretations. **Players and assistant coaches may not question judgment calls.**
  - v. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
  - vi. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
  - vii. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

- viii. The offensive team may not be retreated beyond the 40 yard line, however loss of downs will continue to be enforced if applicable.

## 2. Spot Fouls

- i. **Stripping**: 5 Yards from the Spot of the Foul Shall be Enforced
- ii. **Flag Guarding**: 5 Yards from the Spot of the Foul Shall be Enforced
- iii. **Def. Unnecessary Roughness**: 10 Yards from the Spot of the Foul Shall be Enforced
- iv. **Charging**: 10 Yards from the Spot of the Foul & Loss of Down
- v. **Holding / Screening / Blocking**: 5 Yards from the Spot of the Foul
- vi. **Running with the Ball Carrier**: 5 Yards from the Spot of the Foul
- vii. **Off. Unnecessary Roughness**: 10 Yards from the Spot of the Foul

## 3. Offensive Penalties

- i. **Offside / False Start**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Loss of Down
- ii. **Illegal Forward Pass**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Loss of Down
- iii. **Offensive Pass Interference**: 10 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Loss of Down
- iv. **Illegal Motion**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Loss of Down
- v. **Delay of Game**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Loss of Down
- vi. **Impeding the Rusher**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Loss of Down

## 4. Defensive Penalties

- i. **Roughing the Passer**: 10 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Automatic First Down
- ii. **Illegal Flag Pull**: 5 Yards from the End of the Play
- iii. **Illegal Rush**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Replay Down
- iv. **Offside**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Replay Down
- v. **Defensive Pass Interference**: 10 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage
- vi. **Holding**: 5 Yards from the Line of Scrimmage & Replay Down

## XVIII. Eligibility

1. All players' legal guardians must agree to the online waiver form at NFLFLAG.com for their specific league before participating.

**Millard United Sports Reserves the Sole Right to Modify These Rules at its Sole Discretion**

\*Yellow Highlight  
denotes 2019 Rule  
Change