

CAPS Fieldhouse Flag Football Rules



GAMES PLAYED ON FRIDAYS

GAME TIMES RANGE FROM 5:00PM - 9:30PM

For any questions, please contact the commissioner:

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CAPS Fieldhouse Flag Football Rules

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CAPS Fieldhouse Flag Football Rules

I. Terminology:

Boundary Lines	The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines and back of the end zone lines.
End Zone	The two end zones, located on opposite sides of the field, are the scoring areas. The goal line, which a player must cross to score a touchdown, is the start of the end zone.
Line of Scrimmage	(LOS) An imaginary line that expands the width of the field and runs through the point of the football. It indicates where teams can't cross until the play has begun.
Backfield	The part of the field directly behind the line of scrimmage
Line-to-Gain	The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.
Pass Only Zone	Pass only zones are located five yards before each goal line and the midfield. If the ball is spotted within a pass only zone, the offensive team must use a pass play to earn a first down or touchdown. The objective is to prevent power football in tight spaces, limiting contact.
Offense	The team with possession of the ball.
Defense	The team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball.
Passer	The offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.
Rusher	The defensive player is assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/ her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
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.
Dead Ball	Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.
Whistle	Sound made by a referee using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, halftime or the end of the game.
Inadvertent Whistle	Referee's whistle that is performed in error.
Charging	An illegal movement of the ball-carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head or initiating contact with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.
Flag Guarding	An illegal 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, arm or ball.
Shovel Pass	A legal forward pass across the LOS underhand, backhand or by pushing the ball forward.
Lateral	A backward or sideways toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language.

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II. Game:

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine possession. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has four downs to cross midfield. Once the offense crosses midfield, they have four downs to cross the end zone and score a touchdown.
 - a. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield after 3 downs, and elects to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts their drive from their own 5-yard line. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross midfield, the opposing team will start their possession from the spot of the down.
 - b. Offensive teams **MUST** declare 4th down intent to referee.
4. Teams do not need to change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
5. Substitutions:
 - a. Coaches are free to handle substitutions as they deem appropriate on a play by play basis.
 - b. Please be respectful of all players and we encourage you to provide your players equal playing time.

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III. Equipment:

1. Players are required to wear the same color jersey on their team.
 - a. In the event of a jersey color conflict with another team, the home team is responsible for changing jersey color. With this in mind, please bring an alternate jersey color each game.
2. All players must wear official NFL FLAG belts and flags. All players MUST wear mouth guards at all times while on the field. NFL FLAG game balls should be age specific (BLACK for K-3rd. WHITE for 4th-6th and 6th-8th grade divisions).
3. Players must wear close toed shoes. Firm-ground cleats or turf indoor shoes are highly recommended. Soft-ground cleats with metal studs are NOT permitted. Athletic shoes are acceptable.
4. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, sleeves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not permitted.
5. Players must remove all jewelry such as chains/necklaces, bracelets, and earrings. Brim hats are not permitted on the field, however, winter beanies are allowed.
6. Players may wear soft shell helmets and are highly recommended.
7. Jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
8. Participants must bring their own official NFL FLAG belts and mouth guards to the field. Extra belts and mouth guards are available for purchase.
9. NFL FLAG footballs will be provided per team (2 for every 5 players).
 - a. Flag belts and flags cannot be the same color as the shorts or pants
10. Inspections will be made at midfield prior to each game. Players without mouthguards are not permitted to participate in either games or practices.

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IV. Field:

1. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
2. Receivers must line up behind the LOS.
 - a. Referees may help with line up, but they are not required to.
 - b. It is the receivers' job to make sure they line up correctly.
3. Snappers are allowed to snap the ball from under their legs or from their side.
4. It is considered a touchdown once the ball crosses into the endzone.
 - a. Players may reach with the ball to cross into the end zone however they cannot dive for touchdown.
5. Receivers are considered ineligible if they go out of bounds and back in bounds to catch a pass.
6. Defense must be behind the LOS until the three second rush count has been expired by the referee.
7. Pass ONLY zones are located five yards prior to the line to gain and five yards prior to the endzone in the offense's direction.
 - a. While in the Pass ONLY zones, teams cannot run the ball in any fashion.
 - b. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
 - c. Screen plays are considered a run, the ball must go past the LOS to be considered a pass
8. The purpose of these zones is to lower the chance of contact/injury along with preventing teams from running the football with potential blockers.

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V. Timing & Overtime:

1. Regular Season Games are played on a continuous clock with two 17-minute halves. Halftime is 3 minutes. Teams receive two 60-second timeouts per half.
 - a. If a team gains a 35-point advantage, the game score will be set and the game will carry on with a continuous clock.
2. Each time the ball is spotted, the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
 - a. Teams will receive one warning before delay of game penalty is enforced.
3. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
4. If the score is within an 8 point difference, the clock is stopped in the final 2 minutes of the game.
 - a. During this time, the clock will stop for all incomplete passes or when a ball carrier steps out of bounds.
5. If the score results in a tie game during the regular season, the game will result in a DRAW. However during playoffs, overtime and sudden death will be used. Format for a playoff overtime is below:

Playoff Overtime:

Each offense has 4 downs starting at the opponent's 10-yard line. One complete overtime period is defined as each offense having had one opportunity to convert. A coin toss at midfield will be made to decide possession (HOME Team calls toss).

To the extent an offense converts their opportunity into a touchdown, they will then attempt an extra point. They may choose to go for either 1 or 2 points. The opposing team will then have the opportunity at tying it up or winning the game. If the first team does not score and the second team does, the game ends and there will be no extra point attempt.

If both teams are tied after overtime, the game will go into sudden death. The team who did not win the overtime coin toss will have possession. The first team to score from the 5 yard line wins. There will be no extra point attempts. Teams awarded one down per possession. They will go back and forth until a winner is settled.

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VI. Scoring:

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line)
 - a. Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
3. Interceptions may be returned for touchdowns or receive the distance returned when changing possession. Interceptions returned for points on an extra point attempt will be rewarded (amount of points are dependent on if the opposing team went for a 1pt or 2pt conversion).
4. Safety: 2 points
 - a. Occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, when their flag falls out, when they step out of bounds, when their knee/arm touches the ground, or when a fumble occurs in the end zone. A safety will also occur if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.
5. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether they wish to attempt a 1-point conversion or a 2-point conversion. Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
6. After one team is winning by 35 points or more, the game is over. Once a 35 or more point advantage is gained, no PAT will be attempted.
7. Forfeits are scored 35-0 for the winning team.
8. The coaches & referees must review the scoresheet together once every game is over. All scores are FINAL once inputted into our system.
9. Standings:
 - a. Official league standings and playoff seedlings are determined based on the following:
 - i. Win/Loss Winning PCT (All games are included)
 - ii. Head-to-Head
 - iii. Average Points Allowed per game
 - iv. Coin Toss

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VII. Roster Size & Coaches:

1. 12 player maximum roster size
2. Players on the field: 6v6 = QB, RB, C, TE, WR1, WR2
3. Only players and registered coaches/team managers are permitted within the fields and bench areas. All spectators must watch from outside the field.
4. Any coach using a "fill-in" player not from the team roster will forfeit the game in which they were used.
5. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines and code of conduct.
6. Coaches are permitted to coach on the sideline.
 - a. Divisions K-3rd & 4th-6th are allowed one coach on the field per team.
 - b. All team photographers, managers, position coaches, team moms, fans, etc. are required and must remain off the field in a designated viewing area (behind the netting).
 - c. Coaches, this is your responsibility to keep your fans and any other team associated members in the designated areas. Any misconduct from fans or team associated members will result in immediate ejection and possible league ban.

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VIII. Live Ball/Dead Ball:

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the referee whistles the ball dead.
2. The referee will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
 - a. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regards to the neutral zone, the referee may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. 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 conduct penalty.
4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
5. Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - i. If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
 - b. The ball-carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - e. The ball-carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
 - f. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flags.
 - g. The 7 second pass clock expires.
 - h. Inadvertent whistle.
 - i. Ball-carrier leaves their feet other than jukes, spinning or to avoid a downed player on the field of play.
 - j. Ball-carrier’s flags are NOT positioned at the hips. The referee shall determine when a defender is close enough to make a flag pull and spot the ball there.
 - k. If a player’s flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball becomes a dead ball. Once fumbled, the ball will be spotted where the ball carrier lost possession.

6. If inadvertent whistle occurs the offense has two options:
 - a. take the ball where the whistle blew and the down is consumed
 - b. replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
 - i. If it occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.
7. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question a referee’s rule interpretation. If the referee’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Referees should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.
8. Referees should all agree in order to change a call on the field that is in dispute.
 - a. Teams must give referees space to discuss the call being challenged.

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IX. Running:

1. Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
2. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
3. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball unless blitzed.
4. Hand-offs, laterals, and pitches are allowed per NFL Rules. 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.
 - a. "Center sneak" play is not allowed (handoff to the center).
 - b. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
 - c. Once the ball has been handed off from the quarterback, the three second rush count is eliminated and all defensive players are eligible to rush.
5. If a player receives a hand-off, lateral, or pitch in the Pass **ONLY** zone, the player must throw the ball past the line of scrimmage to a receiver for it to follow the Pass **ONLY** rule.
6. A forward lateral or pass in the backfield is considered a **RUN** play in the Pass **ONLY** zone. The ball must cross the line of scrimmage in the air to be considered a forward pass. (Screen passes are not allowed in the Pass **ONLY** zone.)
7. Once the ball has been handed off, lateraled or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding. (5-yard penalty from the spot of the dive/jump).
9. Spinning/Jukes are allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
 - a. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
10. Ballcarriers may leave their feet to avoid a collision with another player and the play will continue without stoppage.
11. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
12. Offensive players in close proximity to the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
13. 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.
14. Players running with the ball must make an effort to avoid running though or insisting contact on the defensive player. Depending on the severity of the offense, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty may be assessed.

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X. Passing:

1. Pre-Snap Alignment: Offenses cannot have more than two players in a tight alignment, either stacked or next to each other. If three receivers are on the same side of the ball, receivers must be apart from one another with arms extended.
 - a. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed to motion.
2. All passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and ball out of hand prior to breaching the line of scrimmage.
 - a. There is no intentional grounding
 - b. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage are deemed as a RUN
 - i. Example: screen passes, jet sweep motion touch passes
 - c. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage to be deemed as an incomplete pass.
 - d. If there are any “throwaways” that do not go beyond the line of scrimmage, the ball will be spotted where the ball lands.
3. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
4. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock”.
 - a. Quarterback can run the ball if there is a blitz identified after the three second rush count and starts to rush after the quarterback.
 - i. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds behind the line of scrimmage, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
 - iii. Once the QB gets blitzed, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
 - b. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, there will be a loss of down and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).
5. If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.
6. If the QB is blitzed in the Pass ONLY zone, they will be allowed to run.

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XI. Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB, if the ball has been handed off, lateralled, or pitched behind the line of scrimmage as per NFL Rules).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion.
3. A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot or other body part contacts the ground in the field of play prior to another part of the body touching the ground out of bounds.
 - a. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
4. All interceptions may be returned for touchdowns or receive the distance returned when changing possession.
 - a. Interceptions returned for points on an extra point attempt will be rewarded (amount of points are dependent on if the opposing team went for a 1pt or 2pt conversion.)

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XII. Blitzing the Passer:

1. All players who blitz the passer must be behind the LOS and arms length away from both the center & receivers when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can blitz the quarterback after a three second rush count by the referee.
 - a. Blitzer must stay behind the LOS until the three second rush count has ended.
 - b. If any player blitzes the quarterback after the three second rush count, the quarterback is eligible to run the ball past the line of scrimmage.
2. If the QB is blitzed in the Pass ONLY zone, they will be allowed to run.
3. Blitzers cannot get a full running start and “jump” the snap.
4. Players blitzing the quarterback are NOT allowed to block the quarterback’s pass.
5. A penalty may be called if:
 - a. Blitzer runs past arm's length of center/receivers before the ball is snapped.
 - b. Blitzer rushes before the three second rush count.
 - c. Blitzer comes in contact with the quarterback (knocking them off feet).
 - d. Blitzer swats for the ball instead of going for the quarterback's flags.
 - e. Blitzer knocks a center/receiver over in the process of rushing the quarterback.
6. Special circumstances:
 - a. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback keeping the seven second clock in effect. (Pass clock is turned off once a player blitzes.)
 - b. Teams are not required to identify their blitzer before the play.
7. The offense cannot impede the blitzer in any way. The blitzer has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the blitzer directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the blitzer.
8. Any disruption to the blitzer’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the blitzer penalty if deemed intentional by the referee. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the blitzer’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.
9. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is once the flag is pulled.
10. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

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XIII. 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 a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. If a player who has one or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field once they catch the ball.
6. Illegal flag pull- A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
7. Flag guarding- An attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

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XIV. Formations:

1. The ball may be snapped between the legs or at the side of the Center to start play.
2. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. Teams may shift formations prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least 1 second before the ball is snapped.
 - b. One player may go in motion at least 1 yard behind the line of scrimmage.
3. False Start- Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion
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.
5. Defensive Coverage:
 - a. Defensive players may press wide receivers at the line of scrimmage. Contact should be limited and penalties will be enforced if a defensive player grabs, pulls, or pushes (NO "jamming") an offensive player.
 - b. As the field shortens, contact may occur, similar to playing defense in the paint during a basketball game.
 - c. There may be some contact when positioning but a defensive player cannot foul the offensive player. As long as the contact is not intentional, it is up to the referee's discretion.
 - d. Defenders must give free releases off the line of scrimmage to offensive players and are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
 - e. ROUGH PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

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XV. Unsportsmanlike Conduct:

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, 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 NOT allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language.
3. If offensive/confrontational language or physical/verbal abuse occurs with a player/coach/fan, the officials will determine if a warning or immediate ejection is warranted.
 - a. The game will not continue until the ejected party has left the premises. If they do not leave, the referee will forfeit the game immediately and award the win to the opposing team.
4. Anyone ejected from a game (player/coach/fan), for any reason, will not be allowed on the premises for the next game. If they are ejected a second time during the season, they will be banned from the remainder of the season and are subject to dismissal from the league. In such a scenario, NO REFUND will be issued.
5. Fans must adhere to good sportsmanship:
 - a. Cheer on your players, do not harass referees or other teams.
 - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
6. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:
 - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers and chairs off the field and outside of the netting of the field.
 - b. Stay outside the netting, not between fields.
 - c. Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.
7. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
 - a. Defense is +10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - b. Offense is -10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
8. Any player who is found playing down a division will be removed from the league with no refund. Games that were played with that player participating will be forfeited.

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XVI. Penalties:

A. General

1. The referees will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
5. Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
8. Spot fouls in end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down)/Offensive (Safety)

B. Defensive Spot Fouls

Defense Pass Interference	Automatic first down
Holding	+5 yards and automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards and automatic first down

C. Offensive Spot Fouls

Screening, blocking, or shielding of the ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging (not making an attempt to avoid the defender, thus causing contact)	-10 yards and loss of down
Flag Guarding	-10 yards and loss of down

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D. Defensive Penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down (possible ejection)
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down (possible ejection)
Roughing the Passer (blocking pass or running into quarterback)	+10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down (possible ejection)
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

E. Offensive Penalties

Pass clock violation (quarterback not getting rid of ball within 7 seconds with no blitz)	Sack & Loss of down
Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down (possible ejection)
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down (possible ejection)
Offside / False Start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Forward Pass (any pass thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick play or clear push off from/away defender)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Motion (more than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of Game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Taunting	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down