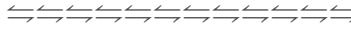




Fall 2022 San Francisco Womxn's Flag Football League Rules

SFWFFL is run and regulated by a volunteer board committee, team captains, and paid referees. These rules may be amended or edited at any time. Captains are responsible to communicate rules and rule changes to their respective teams.



1. The Game

- a. The game shall be played between 2 teams of 8 players each.
- b. A minimum of 6 players are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit.
- c. Eight offensive and eight defensive players are allowed on the field during live plays.
- d. All players are eligible receivers.
- e. Offensive teams have four downs to successfully advance (20 yards) to the next zone-line-to-gain and earn a new set of downs.
- f. Ball position when the flag is pulled determines the advancement of the ball for the spot of the following play.
- g. The playing field is 80 yards long end zone to end zone and 53 yards from sideline to sideline.
- h. The playing field is broken into twenty-yard zones for first downs.
- i. Each end zone is 10 yards long.
- j. Each half starts with the ball at the 20 yard line. After a touchdown's extra point conversion attempt, play restarts with the opposing team getting possession of the ball at their 20 yard line.
- k. On-field player substitutions are to occur between downs or during a dead ball foul.
 - i. Players must have flags on and shirts tucked in prior to entering the game.

2. Players

- a. Players must be womxn, trans, or non-binary and 18 years of age or over only.
- b. Rostered players must be registered, have signed the waiver and code of conduct, be eligible to play, and have paid dues to play and to avoid team forfeit.
 - i. Attempted participation of suspended or banned players would result in immediate forfeit.
- c. SFWFFL does not require a roster minimum nor a maximum.
- d. A player must have played in three regular season games in order to be eligible for playoffs.
 - i. Exception: a rostered, injured player must be present at three regular season games in order to be eligible for playoffs
- e. No player may be added to a team's regular playing roster after the start of the team's 3rd game unless the roster is suffering and to avoid forfeit or games played with less than 8.
- f. A team may use guest players per the following requirements.
 - i. One guest player may be enlisted if a team has only seven rostered players present.
 - ii. Two guest players may be enlisted if a team has only six or fewer rostered players present. (Six total players is the minimum number of players required to start a game.)



- iii. A SFWFFL player on another team may guest play for another team, but only once for that team per season.
- iv. A guest player may only guest play for a specific team once per season.
 1. Ex. Guest player Susie subs for Team A. Susie can only sub for Team A once. Susie can't sub for Team A again. She can sub for another team.
- v. Teams may use a maximum of two guest players per game.
- vi. Teams may use a maximum of four total guest players per season.
- vii. Guest players may not participate in any playoff nor championship games.
- viii. Guest players must sign our [waiver and code of conduct](#) prior to participating if they are not already registered in SFWFFL.
- ix. If a player is removed from a game or has to leave early, guests(s) may be added up to 8 total.
- x. Any violation of the guest player policy will be ruled a forfeit for that team.
- xi. Please communicate any use of guest players to SFWFFL board prior to guest players playing.

3. Captains

- a. Each team must have one offensive and one defensive on-field captain.
- b. Only these 2 womxn may communicate with officials regarding protest, penalty acceptance or decline, and possible player ejections.
- c. It is understood that the same 2 captains may not be able to attend every game. In that scenario, each team shall specify who the offensive and defensive captains are to the referees and opposing team's captains during the coin toss.
- d. Each team must have two captains representing team and sharing team/league communication responsibilities.
- e. Captains or representatives are responsible for submitting a game card after each game, no later than midnight the Monday following given game day.

4. Coin toss

- a. The team listed first on the schedule is the home team.
- b. A captain from the home team calls the coin toss.
- c. The winner of the toss is given their choice of defense, offense, or field direction - or may defer their choice to the second half. The loser will have their choice of any remaining options.

5. Pregame conference

- a. Pre-game conferences will occur on the first day of the season and at the halfway point.
 - i. After the coin toss and before the start of play, all players/coaches present from both teams shall meet quickly to meet the referees and discuss league play.
- b. The pre-game conference will be led by the SFWFFL referees.
- c. At this time, any concerns about equipment, protective equipment, uniforms, etc. should be brought to the attention of the referees. It is recommended that captains/coaches take this time to inspect their own teams equipment, finger nails, etc. for compliance.



6. Officials

- a. Three referees will officiate each game.
- b. Any player may ask for clarification, proper protests may be raised for rule clarification by captains, but judgment calls may never be argued nor contested.
- c. Referees are to be treated with the utmost respect or penalties and/or ejections will occur.
 - i. First offense awards that player's team a penalty. Second offense awards that player ejection from the game. However, referees reserve the right to eject argumentative or disrespectful players from any game at any time.

7. Equipment

- a. Equipment violations are issued one warning. Any subsequent violations by the same team are awarded a delay of game penalty.
- b. **Football**
 - i. Teams are to provide their own properly inflated football.
 - ii. Each team is responsible for getting their ball (retrieving after an incomplete pass and keeping it dry during adverse weather conditions) on and off the field after change of possession.
 - iii. Ball may be youth, junior, or adult sized and made of leather or synthetic leather.
- c. **Flag belts**
 - i. Ball and socket flag belts are provided by SFWFFL.
 - ii. The flag sockets must be facing outwards.
 - iii. Players must secure the flag belt tightly around their waist, to prevent the belt from spinning, with one flag at each hip.
 - iv. Flags that fall off inadvertently revert to one-hand touch between shoulders and waist.
 - v. Illegal alteration, securing flags, or advertently wearing flag belt inappropriately results in removal of the player from the game and a team penalty from the line of scrimmage.
 - vi. No article of clothing may cover any portion of a player's flag or belt or a flag guarding penalty is awarded. Officials should warn violators of this between plays. Shirt must be tucked in. ie can't hang over flag belt or partially cover flags.
- d. **Uniforms**
 - i. All team players must wear the same color jerseys or will not be allowed to play.
 1. Home team to change or wear pinnies in case of color conflict. Captains should communicate before the game.
 - ii. Jerseys must have numbers on the back of them.
 - iii. Uniforms must be tucked in. Cropped jerseys are legal if the referee determines they do not hinder the defense from pulling the flag.
 - iv. Pants/shorts/skirts may not have pockets, belt loops, nor ruffles.
 - v. A towel may be worn to dry the ball. However, the towel will count as a flag and the player wearing the towel will be considered down when the towel has been pulled.
 - vi. The wearing of ball caps (backward only) and sunglasses are at the discretion of the official.



- vii. Jewelry is not allowed to be worn during games (if it is non-removable, it must be taped).
- viii. No long fingernails.
- ix. Wristbands must be worn over fitbits or other fitness trackers.
- e. **Shoes**
 - i. Any flat soled or completely molded cleat is permitted, but in no event will a player be allowed to wear metal cleats.
- f. **Protective equipment**
 - i. Soft pads are allowed for the knees, elbows and forearms for personal protection. Soft helmets (ie rugby style soft headgear) are allowed.
 - ii. Hard helmets, shoulder pads, and any unyielding hard substances are prohibited.
 - iii. Knee braces, elbow braces, face masks etc. are allowed if determined safe by the referees.
 - iv. The referee shall decide the legality of a player's equipment prior to the start of play.
 - v. Receiver gloves are allowed. Stickum is not allowed.

8. Protests

- a. Protests regarding misinterpretation or misapplication of rule(s) are accepted.
- b. Teams may not protest a referee's judgement
- c. Player Eligibility protests may be made at any time
- d. Notification of intent to protest must be communicated to referee before the next snap
- e. An official's time out will be taken at this point and the opposing team captain will be notified
- f. Referees will consult SFWFFL rulebook and make determination before the next play is allowed to proceed.
- g. All protests and outcomes should be documented by captains in game cards after the game.

9. Scoring

- a. A touchdown (TD) results in 6 points.
- b. A safety results in 2 points.
- c. After a TD, the offense is allowed one attempt at Point(s) After Touchdown (PAT)
- d. Successful PAT from the 3 yard line results in 1 point.
- e. Successful PAT from the 8 yard line results in 2 points.
- f. Offensive captain must declare, before the snap, if their team is going for 1 or 2 PAT.
- g. After the PAT, the defense gets the ball at the 20 yard line.
- h. If the ball gets intercepted on the PAT, it's live, and can be run back for 2 points. Opposing team still gets the ball back at the 20 yard line.
- i. Mercy Rule: - After one team is winning by 35 points or more, the losing team gets one more offensive series to continue regulation play. If they don't score, the game is over. Point differential maximum is 35 points for winning team.



Scoring Chart

Touchdown	6
PAT from 3 yard line	1
PAT from 8 yard line	2
Safety	2
Interception PAT return	2

10. Playoff/championship overtime

- a. Overtimes only apply to playoff and championship games. There is no OT for regular season games.
- b. Each team gets one possession from the 20 yard line.
- c. Each team has 4 downs to attempt to score + PAT.
 - i. The line-to-gain is always the goal line in overtime.
- d. If the score is still tied after each team has one possession, the format continues with each team (starting at the 20 yard line) until there is a clear winner.
- e. The same coin toss rules apply.
- f. All game rules apply except ball placement at defender's 20-yard line to begin each overtime period.
- g. The final score is determined by totaling all points scored during regulation game and overtime.
- h. No try-for-point will be made if the winner of the game has been determined.
- i. Each team is permitted one time out (30 seconds) during each extra period.
- j. If the defensive team scores a safety or pick 6 during the offensive team's possession, they win.
- k. Interception by the defensive team without a touchdown, results in a change of possession (starting at the 20 yard line).

11. Game clock

- a. Games are 50 minutes (two 25 minute halves). Halftime shall be 5 minutes. If games are running behind, halftime can be shortened.
- b. If either or both teams are short-handed at game time, a 5 minute grace period is allowed. Thereafter, the game is considered a forfeit.
- c. Game clock starts with the snap.
- d. After the first snap and until the 2-minute warning, the clock stops only for timeouts (for either team or official's timeouts), during PAT, during enforcement of a penalty, or when there is a score or touchback.
- e. After the referee marks the ball ready-for-play, the offense has 25 seconds to put the ball in play.
- f. On field captains may request the amount of time left in the half from the referees at any time.
- g. **Timeouts**
 - i. Each team receives 1 timeout in the first half, 2 timeouts in the second half (30 seconds).
 - ii. Unused timeout does not roll over from first to second half.
 - iii. Officials may call timeouts as needed for equipment failure, decisions, and injury.



- h. **Two minute warning**
 - i. When 2 minutes remain in each half, if the ball is dead, or at the first opportunity under 2 minutes if the ball is live at the 2-minute remaining mark, the clock is stopped and both teams are notified of the exact time remaining.
 - ii. Following the 2 minute warning, the clock starts when the ball is next snapped.
 - iii. During the last 2 minutes of the second half, the clock stops for incomplete passes, when the ball carrier steps out of bounds, there's a change in ball possession, a score is achieved, PAT is attempted, and/or timeouts.
 - 1. The clock may stop if a penalty is called (at the referee's discretion only - to avoid purposeful penalties to stop the clock).

12. Rules of play

- a. Referees will make the game call for any item not specifically covered in this rule book (based on experience in other leagues and tournaments). That item may see slight change before addition to the rule book once the board and referees have fully reviewed and decided after the game. Any change written into the rule book does not change nor affect the call from the affected game.
- b. **Line to gain**
 - i. The offensive team has four plays, or downs, to advance the football to the next yard marker (20 yards) from the original placement of the football to achieve a first down.
 - ii. Failing this on the 4th down, the ball is turned over to the opponent (turnover on downs) at the spot.
- c. **Ball ready for play**
 - i. After all players have been afforded time to reach their side of the scrimmage line, the ball is marked ready and the offensive team has 25 seconds to snap it.
- d. **Line of scrimmage**
 - i. A line extending the width of the field, perpendicular to each sideline, determined by the nose of the football as placed by the referee.
 - ii. All offensive players must be behind this line at all times before the snap.
 - iii. Lining up ahead of or crossing the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped is a penalty.
- e. **Offense**
 - i. The offensive team must have at least 3 players on, and not over, the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. There are no required distances between the center and other offensive players on the line.
 - iii. The offense may not have more than one person in motion.
 - iv. The player in motion may not advance toward the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.
 - v. All offensive team players are eligible to catch a legal forward pass.
 - vi. **False start:** once the ball is set and before the snap, no false start shall be made by an offensive player (shift, feigned charge, any act or quick movement intended to cause an opponent to encroach).
 - vii. **Shift:** Two or more offensive players may shift their position at the same time prior to the snap.
 - 1. Their movement may be in any direction but they must be set for one full second before the ball is snapped or before another player may motion prior to the snap.



- viii. **Motion:** Only one player is allowed to motion and their movement must be parallel to or away from the Line of Scrimmage (L.O.S.) in a continuous motion at the snap or the whole offense must reset.
- ix. The ball must be snapped from between the center's legs, no side saddle allowed. Should the ball touch the ground it shall be declared dead at the spot.
 - 1. Direct snaps are legal; but there must be a clear and immediate exchange of the ball between the center and the passer or ball carrier.
 - 2. No center sneaks.
- f. **Defense**
 - i. Defensive players may move at any time before the snap, but must be behind the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
 - ii. May not make contact with any offensive player until the ball is snapped unless an offensive player moves first, drawing the defensive player into contact.
 - iii. The center is a defenseless player while their head is down in the snapping position and cannot be contacted until they assume a blocking position or have released for a pass or a roughing the center penalty is awarded.
 - iv. Bull rushes are not allowed. In a bull rush, no attempt is made to get around the blocker.
- g. **Neutral zone**
 - i. The space between the two scrimmage lines is one yard, established when the ball is placed.
 - ii. No defensive player may remain in the neutral zone when the ball is snapped.
 - iii. Defensive players may enter and leave the neutral zone before the ball is snapped, so long as they don't contact an offensive player.
- h. **Forward pass**
 - i. Any pass, pitch, or handoff in the direction of the end zone by an offensive player from behind the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. Any forward pass made in front of the line of scrimmage results in a penalty.
- i. **Run plays**
 - i. Quarterback may run to advance the ball at any time.
 - ii. Offense may use multiple backward hand-offs or laterals.
 - iii. No center sneaks permitted.
 - 1. Ball must completely leave the center's hands on the snap before receiving a handoff from the quarterback and advancing the ball.
- j. **Pass plays**
 - i. Teams can make an unlimited number of backward passes and then throw a forward pass provided the player throwing the ball is behind the line of scrimmage.
- k. **Pass completion**
 - i. A pass is considered complete if the receiver has at least one foot in bounds, an established catch, and control of the ball before a knee hits the ground.
 - 1. If the second foot is already out of bounds before the catch, there is no catch.
 - 2. A pass may be caught while already on knees only if the receiver unintentionally falls and is able to make it to knees in time to receive the ball. The player may not get up and run from that point.



3. A receiver may not step out of bounds of their own accord then be the first to touch a pass or an illegal touching penalty is awarded.
 - ii. If the pass falls incomplete, the next down is played from the same line of scrimmage.
 - iii. The defensive team may intercept passes and attempt to advance the ball forward.
 - iv. This is the only way, aside from a turn over on downs that possession can change during a play.
- l. Legal lateral passes, pitches, or handoffs**
- i. May be made anywhere on the field behind or ahead of the line of scrimmage.
- m. Pass interference**
- i. While a forward pass is in the air, any player may make a fair attempt to catch the ball.
 - ii. Incidental contact between two opponents in their attempt for the ball is not a penalty.
 - iii. Examples of pass interference include: shoving, grabbing, pushing, hooking, restricting, or turning the intended receiver, arm bars, downfield blocking before the ball has been touched, cutting off the path of a receiver, or using body to run receiver off their route.
 - iv. Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on pass interference. The benefit of the doubt is given to the receiver.
 - v. Pass interference will be called if a defender uses or continuously waves their arms or hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver's view of the ball with no intent to make a play on the ball.
 - vi. If the ball is in possession of both players the offensive team retains possession. When a player interferes with their opponent's opportunity to catch the ball without intending to catch it themselves, pass interference will be called.
- n. Stripping the ball**
- i. There is no stripping nor punching of the ball allowed. Depending on the severity, this infraction may be deemed a personal foul.
- o. Roughing the passer**
- i. The responsibility of avoiding contact with the passer rests with the defensive player(s).
 - ii. Defensive player(s) must make an effort to avoid charging the passer.
 - iii. Once the ball has been thrown, the passer may not be contacted at all.
 - iv. Defensive players must go after the passer's flags. Passers may only be incidentally contacted while attempting to deflag, any other contact with the passer or the ball will be penalized
 - v. Stripping, plucking, or impeding the passer from throwing the ball is not permitted.
 - vi. The pass may be blocked after it has left the passer's hand, but any accidental or intentional contact with the passer's hand or arm results in a roughing the passer penalty. Depending on the severity, this may be called a personal foul.
 - vii. A roughing penalty will not be enforced if a passer initiates contact with a defensive player while in the throwing motion.
 1. For example, during the passer's follow through, their arm makes contact with an opponent's hand, arm, or shoulder from the action of the passer and not the defender.
 2. It may be ruled a personal foul if the passer's follow through hand or arm make contact with an opponent's head, neck or face.
 - viii. Once the passer passes the line of scrimmage, the rules of contact and deflagging change to those of a ball carrier.



p. Dead balls

- i. The ball is dead when a ball carrier is de-flagged and/or the referee calls the play dead.

q. Fumbles

- i. Dead balls that may not be advanced nor recovered.
- ii. Faulty snaps (no side saddle snap allowed) are dead where they hit the ground. This may include a loss of yardage and could be a safety.

r. Ball carrier

- i. The responsibility of avoiding contact rests with the ball carrier.
- ii. A ball carrier shall not throw a block, stiff arm (any attempt by to ward off a defender by swinging or extending arms at the opponent), nor intentionally run into a defensive player or a personal foul is awarded.
 1. Must make an effort to avoid contact with the defensive player to avoid collision/ prevent injury.
 - a. A defensive player may position themselves in front of a ball carrier or runner, forcing them to stop, step out of bounds, or get around them.
 2. May spin, jump, or dip, but should contact occur as a result of momentum, they will be penalized.
 3. Jumping is allowed to avoid contact with a player on the ground to avoid collision/ prevent injury, however jumping into or on a defensive player is illegal.
 4. May not dive or jump forward in an aggressive attempt to gain extra yards.
 5. May not deliberately or inadvertently cover nor guard flags while running with the ball. This includes, but is not limited to untucked shirts, swatting away defender's attempt to pull flag with arm, elbow, or hand, or intentionally moving flags off of hips to avoid deflagging.
 6. May not grasp a teammate nor be grasped, pulled, or pushed by a teammate or a helping the runner penalty is awarded.

s. Flag pulling (flagging, deflagging, "tackling")

- i. It is not a foul if the runner is forced out of bounds by the defense's valid attempt to de-flag.
 1. If a defender intentionally pushes, shoves, or otherwise invalidly attempts to move a runner or ball carrier out of bounds, a personal foul is awarded.
 2. If repeated by the same player, that player is ejected from the game. This can be the same game or a future game.
- ii. No player may hold, hook, encircle, nor extend arms to slow down another player.
 1. If a flag is missed and a shirt, flag belt, or anything else that can be grabbed is not let go by the defender, a holding penalty is awarded.
- iii. It is a sack if the passer's flag is pulled when the ball is still in their hand (regardless of forward motion of the arm).

t. Unnecessary roughness

- i. At no time shall any player use more force than is necessary, or use force intended to push another player to the ground or injure them.



1. Players are reminded that SFWFFL is a recreational league. If competing against a significantly smaller, less-skilled, or less-experienced player; it may be necessary to reduce the amount of force used to avoid injuring another player.
 2. Examples of unnecessary roughness may include: body blocking, stripping, tackling, forcing a player out of bounds without attempting to go for their flag, contact to the neck or face, roughing the passer, illegal picks on defenseless players, chop blocks, running into defenders, fighting, etc.
- ii. At no time shall a player use force, legal, or illegal contact against a player outside of a play.
- u. End of down**
- i. The down ends when the runner is deflagged, goes out of bounds, or is touched with one hand while not wearing flags, if one flag fell off of its own accord, or if flags have spun and are no longer located at runner's hip.
 1. If the flag belt spins as a ball carrier is running and flags are no longer located on hips, the ball carrier will be considered deflagged with one hand touch.
 - ii. Once the ball carrier is down they may not get back up to advance the ball even if they are not de-flagged or touched.
 1. A ball carrier that falls to the ground inadvertently or touches a knee to the ground, is considered down.
 2. A ball carrier whose hand touches the ground is not considered down and may stead themselves and advance the ball.
- v. Blocking**
- i. Legal blocking is contact initiated with open hands anywhere from opposing player's hips to chest with elbows positioned lower than hands.
 1. Elbows out and level with or above positioned hands are not permitted as they may result in injury to another player positioned behind the player throwing a block when their elbows are pulled or get pushed back.
 2. Interlocking of fingers, hands, or arms is not permitted while blocking nor while deflecting a block.
 3. A blocker is permitted to work for and maintain position on an opponent as long as they don't push from behind/clip.
 - ii. Illegal blocking includes but is not limited to: Interlocking of fingers or hands, swinging arms and elbows, elbows positioned level with or above hands, tripping, engaging an opponent who does not see the blocker approaching, a player on the ground attempting to block by rolling, moving, or turning over, chop blocking (intentionally going for legs of another player), rip blocking (when players are hip to hip, ripping inside arm up and underneath the other player's arm), and body blocking (intentionally or recklessly unintentionally using shoulders, hips, legs, or any other body part besides arms with open hands to initiate contact with another player).
 1. If ruled intentional: an unsportswoxnlike conduct penalty is awarded instead of an illegal block, illegal contact, or clipping penalty.
 - iii. Blockers must be on their feet before and during contact with opponents.
 - iv. If a player turns to expose their back, it is not an illegal block as long as their opponent maintains contact with the player from the initial block.



- v. Two-on-one blocking is allowed on the line of scrimmage, but is never allowed downfield.
 - 1. **Line of scrimmage**
 - a. Defensive players may use open hands to move or get around a player on the offensive line as many times as needed until the ball is released or run past the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Swim moves are allowed to get past an opponent (maneuver similar to a freestyle swimming stroke). However, if the swim move results in any contact to an opponent above the chest (neck, head, or face) it is illegal.
 - c. Contacting receivers within the initial five yards from the line of scrimmage is allowed, as long as the ball is not in the air.
 - i. Second contact or a block beyond five yards from the line of scrimmage results in an illegal contact penalty.
 - d. Offensive line players may legally block as many times as needed to protect the pocket, the passer, or a ball carrier.
 - e. Two-on-one blocking is permitted on the line of scrimmage.
 - 2. **Downfield**
 - a. Offensive players may engage in open-handed, one-on-one downfield blocking to create a lane for the ball carrier.
 - i. Two-on-one blocking is not permitted downfield.
 - ii. Downfield blocking while the pass is still in the air results in a pass interference penalty.
 - iii. Downfield offensive players may not block once the ball carrier is in front of them, or a penalty is awarded for illegal contact.
 - b. Ball carriers may not block, stiff arm, nor intentionally run into defensive players or a personal foul is awarded.
- w. **Clipping**
 - i. Purposely running into another player from behind is not permitted.
 - ii. Offensive players may not block defensive players from behind unless they maintained continuous legal contact with a defensive player and the defensive player turns around.
- x. **Punting the ball**
 - i. There is no option to fake.
 - ii. Punter must kick the ball without it touching the ground.
 - iii. Punter takes a snap from between the center's legs before punting.
 - 1. This may be a direct handoff from between the center's legs into the punter's hands.
 - 2. If the center snaps and it goes over the punter's head or the punter drops the ball, it's ruled dead at the spot and the receiving team takes over.
 - iv. No other players on the punting team may move until the ball is punted.
 - 1. All players must be on the line for the punting team.
 - v. Team receiving the punt must have three players on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball (two if they have only six or seven players).
 - 1. They may raise their arms above their heads to distract, but may not cross the line of scrimmage, move laterally, nor back or forth until the ball is kicked.



2. Once the ball is punted, they may jump to try to block the punt, downfield block for the ball carrier, and/or cross the line of scrimmage.
 - vi. Defense may block if the ball carrier is behind or next to them to create a lane for the runner.
 - vii. If the ball hits the ground or bounces, untouched, it may be picked up or caught by a ball carrier and advanced forward.
 1. If a receiver touches the ball, but does not catch it before it hits the ground, it's ruled a fumble, but remains in possession of the receiving team.
 - viii. If the ball is punted out of bounds, the play resumes at the point where the ball crossed the sideline boundary.
 - ix. If the ball is punted into the receiving team's endzone, the play resumes at the 20 yard line.
- y. Fair catch**
- i. If a receiving player wishes to catch cleanly, with no desire to advance the ball, they may signal a fair catch to the opposing team and officials.
 - ii. Receiver must show their arms outstretched and waving while the ball is still in flight.
 - iii. If a receiver gives a valid fair catch signal and catches the punt beyond the punter's line and between the goal lines, it is a fair catch.
 - iv. If a receiver gives an invalid or illegal fair catch signal, a penalty is awarded.
 - v. If the receiver fumbles the ball during their attempt to catch a punt it is a dead ball, but remains in possession of the receiving team.
- z. Safety**
- i. A safety occurs when an offensive player moves the ball into or across their own goal line and is flagged behind their own goal line and results in 2 points scored by the defensive team.
 - ii. The play is declared dead at the spot, but still in the offensive team's possession.
 - iii. A safety may also occur if an offensive player commits a foul and the penalty is accepted from a spot in their own end zone.
 - iv. A safety may also occur if a defensive player intercepts a forward pass or recovers a loose ball in their own end zone, advances the ball outside the end zone, but re-enter it.
 1. Play is declared dead, but the ball remains in the defensive team's possession.
 2. If a defensive player intercepts a forward pass in front of the end zone, but natural momentum of catching lands them in their own end zone, the play is declared dead, but the ball remains in the defensive team's possession at the spot of interception.
- aa. Touchback**
- i. A touchback occurs when a defensive player intercepts a forward pass in their end zone, but is deflagged before leaving their own end zone.
 - ii. A touchback may also occur if an offensive player loses possession of the ball while in their own end zone and/or the ball goes out of bounds in the end zone.
 - iii. After a touchback, the opposing team takes possession of the ball at the kick off starting position, no points are awarded for a touchback.
- bb. Inadvertent whistles**
- i. Should a referee accidentally whistle a play dead (i.e. a ball carrier's flag falls off), the team in possession of the ball is given a choice of accepting the play as it was whistled dead at the spot or replaying the down.



- ii. Should the referee's opinion be that the defense had no chance of pulling the flag of the ball carrier; the down will stand as it was completed.

13. Unsportswoxnlike conduct and/or violations of the [code of conduct](#)

- a. Please refer to the code of conduct signed by all registered and substitute players for a list of offenses and associated consequences for that player.
- b. Penalty will also be awarded to the associated team.
- c. Examples of unsportswoxnlike conduct include, but are not limited to: taunting another player, kicking or spiking the ball after the play is over, attempting to intimidate another player or team, excessive celebration, excessive force beyond acceptable contact, striking above the shoulders, kicking, pulling hair, fighting, intentionally swinging elbows.

14. Penalty and violation charts

- a. Game penalties take place during the down, a flag is thrown by a referee, and penalty is assessed after the play has ended.
 - i. The referee may ask the captain of the non-penalized team to choose between letting the down stand as completed or accepting the penalty against the opponent.
 - ii. Simultaneous offensive and defensive team penalties on the same down cancel one another out and the down is replayed.
 - iii. Any of the three officials may send a player off the field for unsportswoxnlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, and/or abusive language as they see fit. This will result in a personal foul and possible suspension from subsequent games pending referee review.

General Penalties	Yardage	Location	Loss of Down	Personal Foul
Cool down period (as determined by ref)	0	Player sent off field for 5 plays	No	Ref call
Delay of game	5	Previous spot	No	No
Equipment/flag belt violation	10	Previous spot	No	Ref call
Flag guarding	5	Spot of foul	No	No
Flag tampering	15	From spot of foul or ball	No	No
Illegal substitution or illegal participation	5	Previous spot	No	No



Defensive Penalties	Yardage	Location	Repeat Down	Personal Foul
Bull rushing or rip move	5	Previous spot	Yes	Yes
Encroachment	5	Previous spot	No	No
Failure to comply with a referee	15	Previous spot	Automatic first down	No
Holding	10	Spot of foul	Automatic first down	Ref call
Illegal block, contact, or clipping	10	Spot of foul	Yes	Ref call
Invalid or illegal fair catch signal	5	Spot of foul	No	No
Pass interference	10	Previous spot	Yes	Ref call
Roughing the passer, center, or punter	10	Previous spot	Automatic first down	Yes
Stripping the ball	10	Spot of foul	No	Ref call
Unsportswoxnlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, or abusive language used	15	Previous spot	Automatic first down	Yes

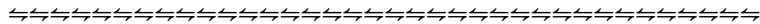
Offense	Yardage	Location	Loss of Down	Personal Foul
Failure to comply with a referee	15	Previous spot	Yes	No
False start or illegal snap	5	Previous spot	No	No
Forward pass	5	Previous spot	No	No
Helping the runner	5	Spot of foul	Yes	No
Holding	10	From spot of foul	Yes	Ref call
Illegal block, contact, or clipping	10	Spot of foul	Yes	Ref call
Illegal motion, shift, or formation	5	Previous Spot	No	No
Illegal touching	5	Previous Spot	Yes	Ref call
Pass interference	10	Previous spot	Yes	Ref call
Stiff arming or intentionally running into a defender	10	Spot of foul	Yes	Yes



Unsportswoxnlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, or abusive language used	15	Previous spot	Yes	Yes
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15. Playoff Structure and Seeding

- a. Top 4 teams make playoffs.
- b. Total Points (W-L-T record) shall determine team standing and seeding for playoffs.
- c. W-L-T Points shall be calculated: 3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss, -1 for a forfeit
- d. Playoff format shall be structured:
 - i. Semi Final 1: (2 v 3)
 - ii. Semi Final 2: (1 v 4)
 - iii. Championship Game: Winners of Semi Finals 1 and 2
- e. Consolation games may be offered for remaining teams.
- f. **Tie Breakers**
 - i. Two Teams tied for one place:
 - 1. Head-to-head competition
 - 2. Point differential (total points scored vs. total points allowed)
 - 3. Coin toss.
 - ii. Three or more teams tied for one place:
 - 1. Head-to-head, amongst the three teams
 - 2. Point differential (total points scored vs. total points allowed)
 - 3. Coin toss if two teams are still tied. Drawing if three teams are still tied.



For any questions, comments, or concerns regarding this rule book:

- Email communications.sfwffl@gmail.com
- Please include associated rule number and letter reference (i.e. tie breakers for 3 or more teams = section 15.f.ii)

