

2024-2025 Hampshire Dome Flag Football “House Rules”

U8 Only

- Players may snap from the side
- “No run” zones will still apply
- No blitzing unless there is a legal handoff that occurs in the backfield
 - This will allow for QB development at this level
- Coaches will be allowed on the field to help adjust and align players
- If the snap is “muffed,” the ball will be placed at the previous spot and a down will be lost.

All Ages

- Baseball style hats may be worn, but must be turned backwards
- Mouth guards are not required for league play
- Custom flags may be used as long as they are of equal length and size of NFL flags
- Score will be kept for all ages and OT format will apply to break ties
- Games will be played with 24-minute halves
- Each team will have three 30 second timeouts per game
- ALL players MUST tuck in their shirts into their shorts or pants
- Flags cannot be the same color as the shorts or pants; if the player does not change to contrasting colors from the shorts or pants they will be deemed illegally equipped and down at the time of possession
- A team may start the game with 4 players. They cannot go down to 3 players. An injury would result in a forfeit.
- A forfeited game will be recorded as 35-0
- If there is an issue with a potential “non-roster” player; the coach must identify with the referee that there is a player on the opposing team that he believes to be illegally participating in the game before the end of regulation. The clock will be stopped, if needed, to notify both head coaches that after the game no participants are to leave the field of play and that the game will proceed as normal, but the results of the game will be under protest until administration can verify the rosters after the game.

- Only one coach may be on the field to direct players and call plays. Once the ball is live; the coach cannot coach and should be off the field during the play
- **First offense:** warning
Second offense: -5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
(Defense): +5 yards from line of scrimmage and 1st down
Third offense and any subsequent offenses: -10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down **(Unsportsmanlike conduct)**
(Defense): +10 yards from line of scrimmage and 1st down
(Unsportsmanlike conduct)
- The clock shall be stopped to enforce rule IX.9
- The clock shall be stopped for an injury timeout
- The clock can be stopped anytime at the referee's discretion
- The clock can be stopped at the referee's discretion for the purposes of explaining a rule or penalty; Under NO circumstances shall the clock be stopped for the "enforcement" portion of the penalty
- If a coach is correct, under rule IX.9; the clock shall remain stopped until the penalty is corrected and will be started on the "ready for play" signal. No time will be added to the clock.

Spotting the Ball

- The ball is to be spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
- Spot determination of a first down or score; the BALL must break the plain of the line to gain or the goal line to be awarded a first down or score.
- If a player's flag falls out, starts the play with one or no flags, or is not legally equipped at the snap, they will be down once that player gains possession
- It is legal for a player to run to the line of scrimmage without flags to conserve clock and run a play. That player will be down once that player gains possession
- There are no fumbles or pitches allowed beyond the LOS. The ball will be spotted where the ball was at the time of possession before the ball became loose

- A fumble that occurs behind the LOS because of a backwards pass, pitch or lateral is a live ball until the makes contact with the ground. It will be spotted where it hits the ground. If occurs in the endzone, the result is a safety.

Blitzing

- Up to two players may identify as a rusher by raising their hand at the rush line. After the rush line has been set and the referee has acknowledged the rushers, they can lower their arms. The rusher(s) do not need to keep their arm up for the entire play clock
- They are awarded a straight continuous path from where they lined up (Point A) to where the QB was at the start of the play (Point B). If there is any obstruction to this path by an offensive player, it will be ruled as impeding the rusher. Only if the offensive player does not move after the snap, does the blitzer need to avoid the offense.
- On a backwards pass, lateral, or pitch, any non-blitzer must wait until the intended offensive player gains possession of the ball before they may cross the LOS

Mercy Rule

- When one team gains a 35-point advantage the other team will have one possession to bring the score back under the threshold; if the trailing team fails to score on their possession, the score is frozen, and the score is final.
- The game will continue as a scrimmage, but the coaches may determine how they wish the remainder of the scrimmage to proceed. The game may only be ended before time expires, if it is to interfere with the start time of the scheduled game to follow.

Overtime Procedure

- 1st OT - Home team will have the choice of offense or defense first
- Each team will get one play to go for one or two points
- 2nd OT – Away team will have the choice of offense or defense first
- Each team must go for two points
- 3rd OT - Home team will have the choice of offense or defense first
- Each team will get one play from the five-yard line going out from the end zone. The team with the most yards will be the winner.
- INT's are returnable for 2 points in OT
- If the first possession results in interception that is returned the game will be final, no second possession will be necessary

Penalties / Rule Clarifications

- All defensive penalties result in a first down
- All offensive penalties result in a loss of down
- A team may accept any penalty and decline the yardage, to stay out of a “no run zone” or to keep a team in a “no run zone,” or to gain a first down without crossing the line to gain. This is for all offensive and defensive, as well as non-player penalties.
- **Jumping:** Is not a foul, the play will be blown dead, and the ball will be spotted where the ball was at the time the jump occurred.
Defined as a player who leaves both feet to gain an advantage and avoid having a flag pulled. A horizontal side step, jump cut, or juke is not a jump. Jumping to avoid contact with another player or a player on the ground will be ignored and the play is to continue.
****Note – Players may jump to avoid contact, to make a catch, or to make a throw**
- **“Center sneak” play is not allowed.** The center may not be the first player to receive a handoff from the QB. Additionally, if a player is on the line of scrimmage, and does not move after the ball is snapped; he/she is awarded protection from the rusher(s). To receive a hand-off, he/she must first give up protection by moving from the spot to receive the handoff.
- **Intentional Grounding:** There is no intentional grounding. The QB may throw the ball away to avoid a sack, but the pass must go beyond the line

of scrimmage. Failure to do so will result in an illegal forward pass. All passes that do not cross the LOS, whether complete or incomplete, are Illegal Forward Passes. **(Exception U14 & up)**

- **Illegal Forward Pass:** -5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
- **Defensive Holding (ball carrier):** +5 yards from the end of the run, automatic 1st down

If holding occurs and the player is downed behind the line of scrimmage:
the enforcement spot will be the previous LOS, +5 yards & automatic 1st down

- **Defensive Holding:** +5 yards from the previous LOS & automatic 1st down
- **Illegal Rush:** +5 yards from the previous LOS & automatic 1st down
- **Offensive Screening, Blocking, or running with the ball carrier:**
Spot foul, -5 yards and a loss of down
- **Roughing the Passer:** +10 yards from the line of scrimmage, automatic 1st down
- **Taunting:**
(Offense) -5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
(Defense) +5 yards from the line of scrimmage and an automatic 1st down
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:**
(Offense) -10 yards from the line of scrimmage and a loss of down
(Defense) +10 yards from the line of scrimmage and an automatic 1st down
- **Two unsportsmanlike penalties on the same coach or player will result as an automatic ejection**