

GRACE CHURCH FLAG FOOTBALL



RULEBOOK

GRACE MISSION STATEMENT

We exist to help others find and follow Jesus.

GRACE FLAG FOOTBALL IS AN OUTREACH MINISTRY

We wish to attract members of our community to actively participate in church life at Grace through the ministries of the social and athletic activity of Flag Football. It is our desire and call to lead players and parents toward spiritual growth in a healthy and growing relationship with Jesus Christ through relationships with the people of Grace.

COACHES' EXPECTATIONS

- Teach Biblical truths and lessons in character.
- Teach basic skills and fundamentals of flag football.
 - Demonstrate Christ's example to all participants.
- Support by word and deed the ministry of Grace Church.
- Enlist the support of others to achieve the above goals.
 - Have fun.

Questions, Concerns, or Comments:

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Goals for the Season

By the end of each season make it a goal that each player knows the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as well as all of the rules of the game, has knowledge of basic football skills, has learned all positional roles, maintains a good attitude, and plays well with his teammates

Basic Football Skills:

1. Throwing or passing the ball
 - Hold the ball on the threads
 - Raise the ball up with both hands holding it up to the ear
 - Always throw from the back foot, stepping forward with the opposite foot toward the receiver.
 - Point the opposite hand at the receiver and pull it down to their side at release.
 - Rotate the shoulders to face the receiver and release from the ear
 - Drop back pass: Side step backward and plant of the back foot - 2 to 3 steps
 - Roll out: Run with the ball held up at the ear and square the shoulders toward the receiver before throwing the ball
 - Lead the receiver
2. Snapping or hiking the ball
 - From between the legs only
 - Use two hands with one hand on the threads
 - Hike to the quarterback
3. Receiving the Ball
 - Can start from a 3 point stance or standing up.
 - Always catch the ball with the hands (do not let it hit the body if possible)
 - For balls thrown above the waist: Thumbs are together
 - For balls thrown below the waist: Pinkie fingers are together
 - Run pass patterns sharp and clean. Plant the outside foot to cut
 - Once the cut is made immediately turn the head to find the ball
 - Do not stop running during the pass pattern unless the pattern requires stopping
 - If the QB is in trouble move to an open spot
4. Running with the ball
 - Hold the ball under the arm by the point of the ball
 - No blocking
5. Teach how to grab the flags
6. Concept of Defense/Offense
 - Offense: The 4 down rule and the goal of obtaining a first down
 - The goal of scoring a touchdown
 - Extra points
 - Defense: Pulling the flag
 - Covering the receiver, intercepting the ball
7. Rules and strategy of the Game (For coaches)
 - Remember, this may be the first time that most of our players will have played football.
 - Even if they say they know how to play, go over all of the terminology, rules and the basics of the game
 - Give each player a play book and explain the strategy of the game for all positions

Grace Church Flag Football Rules

I. General Rules

The league format is 6-on-6, offense verses defense - "passing league" style. Teams must field at least five (5) players at all times. In the event of an injury, one team having missing players, or special circumstance, games can be played 5-on-6 or 5-on-5 at the Referee's and coach's discretion. If a team only has four players, that team will forfeit (see forfeit rule details), but both coaches are encouraged to mix up the kids in order to still play a practice game for fun.

No more than one (1) certified coach is allowed in the huddle and on the field during play (For Girls and 3rd – 5th grade boys division only; Div 2 boys will not have a coach on the field) The coaches should not interfere with the course of play in any way. Offensive coaches cannot act as a screen, and defensive coaches cannot stand in the middle of the field in order to disrupt offensive plays. Every attempt should be made by the on field coach to not disrupt play, even if it means staying on the sidelines during play. No coach behind any end zone.

There is absolutely no blocking or tackling allowed. As in any sport, there may be incidental contact throughout the course of the game. The Referee will do his best to control the game and make the necessary judgment calls. Moving screens are not allowed, and players are encouraged to drop off or keep their feet stationary around the ball carrier as oppose to running alongside the ball carrier, screening defenders from making a tackle or pulling the flag.

The home team will be the team listed first on the schedule and take the south side of the field. There is no real advantage to being home or away, and some teams may act as the home team more than the away team or vice versa in many instances based on the schedule. This is not a scheduling error - just coincidence.

***The home team is responsible for finding an adult to run the scoreboard and work with the Referee regarding time and score keeping. A video to how to operate the scoreboard can be found here. bit.ly/GraceFootballScoreBoard The away team is responsible for finding an adult to hold the down marker. The Referee has final discretion in all time and score keeping decisions.**

****Every player must play approximately at least half of the total minutes of each game, but they do not have to be consecutive minutes. Any time this does not happen, the team may risk a forfeit.**

In the event that a game must be called for any reason, including poor weather, the game will count as an official game if at least the 1st half was completed. The current score at the moment that the game is called will be the final score of the game. We will attempt to make-up and reschedule games that are called prior to halftime as well as games that are canceled before they begin at the discretion of the league based on venue availability and scheduling opportunity. If determined this is not possible, games will not be continued or made-up and will not be played.

II. FLOW OF THE GAME

A coin toss determines first possession. The team who defends starting the first half will be offense to start the second half.

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 15-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield and obtain a first down. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from their own 15-yard line. Once a team crosses midfield, its offense has four (4) more plays to reach the opposing team's 15-yard for another first down or score a touchdown (there are two (2) first downs maximum per drive). If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from their own 15-yard line.

All possession changes, except following interceptions, start on the offense's own 15-yard line. Interceptions may be returned by the defense. The ball will be marked where the interceptor is stopped.

Teams will play two (2) 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime if needed. Teams will change sides to start the second half, but not possession. The team who defends starting the first half will be offense to start the second half.

All games will have a running clock, except during the final two (2) minutes of each half in which a "Pro Clock" will be used. The clock will be stopped after incomplete passes, plays that end out of bounds, a timeout is called, possession changes, and extra points.

Officials can also stop the clock during play at any time at their discretion (i.e. injury or equipment timeout).

Each team will have two (2) 30-second timeouts per half.

Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Referees may choose to give one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

III. SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra Point: 1 point (played from the 5 yard line, no running allowed) or 2 points (played from the 12 yard line, running allowed.). A conversion that gets intercepted is a dead ball.
- Safety: 2 points

FORFEITURE: The team that forfeits will register a loss while the other team will register a win. The average points against for the forfeited game for each team will be calculated by using the average points against for the first three complete games each has played.

IV. RUNNING

The quarterback cannot run with the ball or "quarterback sneak". The quarterback is defined as the recipient of the snapped ball from the center.

Direct handoffs or pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offensive teams may use multiple handoffs.

"No running zones," located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations.

A team may run into a no-run zone, but not out of one (this prevents power rushing attempts to gain a 1st down or touchdown).

The player taking the handoff can pass from behind the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

Spinning is allowed, but players carrying the ball cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving or jumping over other players is allowed.)

The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled or falls out, not where the ball is. This includes at the 1st down or goal line.

A fallen flag belt set necessitates a "tag" (one-hand only) by the defender.

V. RECEIVING

All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.)

As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

VI. PASSING

The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock" from the time the ball is snapped. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead (treat as an incomplete pass.) Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.

All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage. Shovel passes are allowed as long as they are forward passes received beyond the line of scrimmage.

Interceptions can be returned by the defense except if the intercepted pass was a conversion attempt by the offense. An intercepted pass in an end zone may result in a safety if the referee feels that the defender tried to advance out of the end zone but was stopped by an offensive player before he was able to get out of the end zone.

VII. DEAD BALLS

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled "dead" when the ball carrier's flag is pulled or falls off and then the player is tagged, ball carrier steps out of bounds, a touchdown or safety is scored, or the ball carrier's knee hits the ground. The ball is spotted where the player's feet are when the flag is pulled.

There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. If a player loses possession of a controlled ball, whether it is intentional or incidental, it is a dead ball.

VIII. RUSHING ("BLITZING") THE QUARTERBACK

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards (Girls and Div I boys) and 10 yards (Div 2 boys) from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. The Referee spots a marker at the line of scrimmage and also seven yards back for where the defender(s) is/are required to begin from before rushing the quarterback.

Any player(s) can rush the quarterback as long as they start at the correct yardage.

Players not rushing the quarterback may defend at the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

IX. PENALTIES

All defensive penalties will be 5-yards and an automatic first down:

- Off-sides
- Defensive Passing Interference
- Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, bump & run guarding, etc.)
- Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has the ball)
- Illegal Rushing (starting rush inside the seven-yard marker)

All offensive penalties will be 5-yards and a loss of down:

- Illegal Motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
- Illegal Pass (ball must be thrown by passer behind the line of scrimmage.)
- Offensive Passing Interference (illegal pick, pushing off defender, etc.)
- Flag Guarding (using hands to "swat" defender's hands away)
- Delay Of Game (clock stops if inside 2-minutes of each half/OT)

If the penalized team is less than 5-yards from the end zone, the penalty will be half the distance to the goal.

Referee will determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

The Referee will call all penalties. Please respect their decision. Only the Head Coach may ask the Referee (if he permits) questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players and parents cannot question judgment calls.

Halves cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

X. OVERTIME RULES

One overtime period where each team gets a 4 down possession from their 20 yard line. If still a tie, then the game will end as such. Coin toss determines who get the ball first.

XI. POST-SEASON RULES

Regular season standings/playoff seeding at the end of the season will be determined by:

1. Winning percentage
2. Head-to-head (if applicable) - teams in question against each other
3. Records vs. 1ST place team, then record vs. 2nd place team (if applicable)
4. Points against (No 'points for' factor to discourage running up the score)

XII. SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

If the Referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped and the players could be warned or ejected from the game. Foul play will not be tolerated.

Trash talking and/or cursing is illegal. Officials have the right to determine language that may be considered offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators. If trash talking occurs, the Referee may give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Only the Head Coach may speak to the Referee, and each should do so in a respectful manner no matter what the circumstances are. Parents should never, under any circumstances, question a Referee or speak to them in a negative or condescending way regardless of what happened. Parents, coaches, and players should also refrain from speaking to opposing parents, coaches, and players unless it is done in a respectful and encouraging manner. Remember, we are here to honor God and make it fun for the kids!

XIII. ATTIRE

Rubber cleats are allowed, absolutely no metal spikes.

A protective mouthpiece is required while playing on the field during games and at all practices.

Black athletic shorts no pockets and no vertical stripes, no jewelry, or glasses or hats (unless prescription).

Uniform jerseys must be worn and tucked in during play at all times.

Game flags must be worn properly and not "tied off" to prevent the defense from pulling them off.