



Recreational Sports

Old Dominion University
Recreational Sports - Intramurals
Flag Football Rules

1. ELIGIBILITY

- a. Each student must sign a **RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK** form (which releases the university and university employees and officers of liability in case of bodily injury).
- b. All Full-time Students (undergraduate and graduate enrolled continuously in at least 3 credit hours), faculty and staff.
- c. Any person having been classified as a **PROFESSIONAL** athlete in a particular sport will not be eligible to participate in that sport or a related sport. They may, however, participate in other non-related activities.
- d. Current members of ODU varsity roster for intercollegiate athletic teams are not eligible to participate in that same sport or a related sport for that academic school year. Individuals who are trying out for an intercollegiate team but who are not on a permanent roster will be permitted to participate until they are placed on a permanent roster. If they are placed on a permanent roster they will then become ineligible for that sport. Red shirted athletes will not be eligible to play that same or related sport.
- e. A former varsity athlete from any institution shall be ineligible to compete in that sport for the academic school year. Such individuals are limited to one per team roster.
- f. Current sport club members listed on a sport club roster with our office, are limited to two (2) per team roster and are ineligible for individual/dual activities in his/her related sport.
- g. Once a player has played in a game for a specific team, he/she will not be permitted to play on any other teams within that division/league for the duration of that season and/or tournament. A player can only play for (1) single sex team and (1) co-rec team. **Penalty:** Any games in which the illegal player participated in will result in a **FORFEIT**.

2. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- a. All teams must submit a roster prior to the entry deadline date as indicated in the Intramural-Recreational Sports Calendar of Events.
- b. Each team/organization must have a representative in attendance at the mandatory info meeting on the date indicated in the Intramural-Recreational Sports Calendar of Events.
- c. All team members must have a valid ODU or EVMS ID card at every intramural event in order to participate. There are **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

3. CAPTAINS

- a. Each captain will be responsible for the behavior and discipline of his/her team and sideline.
- b. Team captains are eligible to file protests to the Intramural Sports office regarding player eligibility, but not on matters that concern the judgment of



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the officials. All protests must be made within 24hrs from the time of the incident.

- c. The captain will act as a spokesperson for his/her team in discussion with game officials or in matters concerning the team or individual players unless signified to the game officials that someone else will be the spokesperson. In such a case, the captain will relinquish the rights as spokesman in favor of the person appointed for this stated period.
- d. It will be the responsibility of each captain to keep the players in the designated team area. If a team receives multiple warnings for unsportslike behavior, that team will forfeit the game. Unsportsmanlike behavior between players and between coaches and players is also grounds for forfeiture.

4. TEAM

- a. Teams will be limited to 16 players for Men's & Women's Leagues or Co-Rec. Leagues
- b. Each team under penalty of forfeiture must have five players (six: Co-Rec.) on the playing field at the designated time of the game and must maintain a minimum five players (six: Co-Rec.) on the field throughout the game. A team may go under the minimum of players if it is deemed that they still have an opportunity to win the game.

5. MERCY RULE

- a. If a team is 19 or more points (Co-Rec. 25 points) ahead at the two-minute warning the game shall be over. If after the two-minute warning has been given and 19 (Co-Rec. 25) point differential is established the game shall be over.

6. PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. **Start of the Game:** Each half shall start with a snap from the **14 yard line**. Before the start of the game the referee shall toss a coin in the presence of the opposing field captains, after first designating which captain shall call the coin. The captain winning the toss shall have the options for the first half or second half. The options for each half shall be:
 - i. To choose whether his/her team will be on offense first or defense first.
 - ii. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.
 - iii. The captain, not having the first choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.
 - iv. **Possession after a score and a try:** After a team has scored a touchdown and attempted their try (extra point) the ball will be placed on the scored upon team's **14 yard line**.



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- b. **Game Timing:** All games will consist of two (2) twenty minute (20) halves, with a five-minute halftime period. The clock will run continuously unless a team requests a time out for the first 18 minutes of each half. A team may have two time-outs per half--one minute in length. During the last two minutes of the half, the clock will stop when the ball is dead. (Teams may intentionally ground the ball to stop the clock in the last two minutes of the game, but not to avoid a loss of yardage.)
- c. **Forfeit Time:** Once the Intramural Staff states that the game is ready to begin and the stated game time is the current time or that time has passed, both teams must be prepared to participate in the scheduled game. If they are not able there will be a grace period of 10 minutes. During that time the clock will run and each minute/part of the minute a team is late, the opposing team will be awarded a touchdown (six points). If after ten minutes the team is still unable to field a team they may either default or forfeit that game. If the team is able to play before the ten minute period has run out they will begin the game with the time that is remaining on the clock with the score being whatever accumulation of points being the official score. A team CAN NOT Default once a game has begun.

7. TIE GAME

- a. **Tie Breaker:** The tiebreaker will begin with an explanation of the rules and a coin toss. The winning team will choose either to go on offense first or to defend the goal. Unless moved by penalty, each team will start 1st and goal from the ten-yard line. The object will be to score a touchdown. A tiebreaker period consists of one series of downs by each team. If the first team that is awarded the ball scores, the opponent will have a chance to match the score. Unless moved by penalty, they will start 1st and goal from the ten-yard line. Try-for-points will be attempted and scored as indicated in the rules. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return the interception for touchdown, the ball will be placed at the ten-yard line to begin their series of 4 downs. If the game is tied after the first overtime, another overtime will ensue. Each team will have one time out for the entirety of the overtime.

8. TIME OUTS & CONFERENCES

- a. **Charged Time-Outs:** Each team is entitled to two charged time-outs during each half without penalty. Successive charged time-outs may be granted each time during a dead ball period. If the ball is dead and a team has not exhausted its charged time-outs, the referee shall allow a time-out and charge that team. Each time-out is one minute.
- b. **Captain-Referee Conference:** When a team requests a charged time-out for a rule interpretation, the referee will confer with the team captain. If the referee changes his/her ruling, it is an official's time-out. If the ruling is not changed,



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it is a charged time-out. If the team has used its two time-outs, delay of game penalty will be assessed.

- c. **Sideline Conference:** During a time-out charged to a team, only one coach may confer with their team on the field.
- d. **Injured Player and Blood Rule:** An injured or apparently injured player, who is discovered by an official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped, shall be replaced for at least one down unless the time-out or intermission has occurred. A player with an excessive amount of blood (determined by the officials) shall be considered an injured player and must sit out until they have secured a clean uniform and stopped bleeding. A player that suffers a head, spinal or neck injury, or loses consciousness must have a doctors approval (in writing) before they are permitted to participate in another game.

9. UNIFORMS, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

- a. All players must be dressed in the same or similar uniform. All uniforms must have a visible number displayed on the front or on the back of the uniform shirt. If the entire team does not have the same or similar (Officials Judgement) uniform shirt the entire team **MUST** wear scrimmage vests supplied by the Intramural staff.
- b. **Players:** Seven players constitute a team. On Offense, four players must be on the line of scrimmage. A team may not start or continue a game with less than five players (Unless it is deemed that they still have an opportunity to win the game). Co-Rec. teams need five players on the offensive line of scrimmage and they may have no less than six players to play a game. No more than four of those players can be the same sex.
- c. **Equipment:** A valid ODU Monarchs ID card must be used to check out equipment. Each player must wear the flag belts provided by the IM-Rec. All Flag belts must have three flags that are to be positioned one to each hip and one in the back. Shirts must be tucked in so that the flag can be easily seen and grabbed. If a sweatshirt is worn, it must be tucked in a manner in which it will not cover the flag belts. All hooded sweatshirts must be tucked in and remain tucked in.
- d. **No belt loops or pockets on any form of pants will be allowed. Players can not tape pockets, belt loops, numbers on shirts etc.**
- e. **Metal cleats are illegal.** Players may not participate in sandals, boots, dress shoes, or in barefeet. Players wearing illegal shoes will be disqualified.

****ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY WILL BE ALLOWED****

- f. **Braces & Casts:** No cast or metal braces will be allowed unless covered by a soft material.



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- g. **Footballs:** Teams may provide their own football and it must be a regular size ball. They have the option of using the opponent's ball if they wish. If they wish to use their own ball, they are to bring it in when they take over on offense. The offensive team is always responsible for retrieving the football during play.
- ✓ **Field Dimensions:** All games will be played on a 100-yard long x 40 yards wide field, with two, ten-yard end zones.
 - ✓ **Blocking:** All offensive screen blocking shall take place minimal contact. It is similar to a screen in basketball. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind the back. Any use of arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A player must not leave his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. No charging into offensive blockers, the defense must make an effort to get around the offensive blocker. If the defense does charge into or bull rush into offensive blocker it will be a 10-yard penalty and may lead to a player ejection.
 - ✓ **Punting:** When punting the ball, a kicking team must announce its intentions to the officials before the ball is declared ready to play. After such an announcement, the kicking team can only change the decision by a time out (Either team) or by accepting any penalty. No one may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. The center must snap the ball to the kicker who must be at least two yards behind the line of scrimmage. There shall be no quick kicks.
 - ✓ A punted ball that hits the ground may be advanced, but it must be fielded cleanly. The ball will be declared dead if the punting team downs the ball or if the receiver doesn't field the ball cleanly (fumbles or muffs the punt).
 - ✓ **Fumbles:** Any fumble, lateral or forward pass, that is intercepted or caught in the air may be advanced. Any time the ball touches the ground during a play from scrimmage, (excluding incomplete passes) the ball is automatically downed there. Balls may be fumbled backwards for a safety, or a loss but not forward for a touchdown or a gain.
 - ✓ **Delay of Game:** The ball must be put in play with a legal backward snap within 25 seconds of when the referee blows the ready for play whistle after the ball has been spotted. No direct hand-off snaps are allowed. The ball must be snapped with a quick, continuous motion. If the ball is snapped before the Referee whistles the ball ready for play is considered a delay of the game. Penalty = 5 yards
 - ✓ **First Downs:** Each team will have a series of four downs to advance the ball from one zone to another. Failure to do so in four downs results in loss of the ball to the



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opponent. The line to gain in any series shall be the line in advance of the ball, unless the distance has been lost due to penalty or loss of yardage. The placement of the ball will be determined by the location of the ball when the person is deflagged. Any part of the ball touching the line is considered over the line.

- ✓ **Motion:** When the ball is snapped, only one offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the line of scrimmage. A player in motion on the line of scrimmage will not be one of the four scrimmage line players.
- ✓ **False Start:** Offensive players (except the player in motion) must be stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head, or arms for at least one full second before the snap. Penalty is five yards.
- ✓ **Stripping, hitting, or stealing the Ball:** An opponent may not snatch, strip, or steal the ball from the ball carrier's hand. There will be a ten-yard penalty awarded against a team that strips or attempts to strip a ball.
- ✓ **Neutral Zone:** There will be a one yard separation between the offensive line of scrimmage (point of the ball) and the defensive line of scrimmage. There will be cones that designate both the offensive and defensive lines of scrimmage.
- ✓ **Encroachment (Off sides):** An Offensive or defensive team may not penetrate neutral zone (line of scrimmage) or it is encroachment and a five-yard penalty. Even if the defense gets back before the snap of the ball, it is still a penalty. It is an immediate dead ball.
- ✓ **Intentional Grounding:** In the judgement of the official, it is intentional grounding when a forward pass is intentionally thrown to the ground or out of bounds to save loss of yardage. Exception: To stop clock within last two minutes of half or game.
- ✓ **Pass Interference:** Penalty for offensive/defensive pass interference is ten yards from line of scrimmage and an automatic first down if defensive, and loss of down if offensive. It is not at the point of the foul. **Face guarding is considered pass interference.**
- ✓ **Passing/Receiving:** All players are eligible to receive a pass. Only one forward pass is allowed per play. Lateral/backward passes may be thrown at any time. Receivers must have one foot in bounds while in possession of the ball. A receiver who steps out of bounds and returns back to the playing field is ineligible to participate in that play until the ball is touched by another player (10 {TEN} yard penalty) Illegal Participation.



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- ✓ **Scoring:**
 - Touchdown: 6 points**
 - Safety: 2 points**
 - Point after TD:**
 - 1 point (from 3 yards)**
 - 2 points (from 10 yards)**
 - 3 points (from 20 yards)**
 - Intercepted try run back for a score: 3 points**

- ✓ A team is given one choice (one, two or three points) for their "try" attempt. The declared point value will remain the same even if penalties move the ball closer or farther from the goal. A team's "try" attempt choice can only be changed by taking a time out before the try is attempted. An interception or fumble on a try for an extra point can be returned for 3 points.

- ✓ **Securing the Flag belt:** The defensive player must not tackle, block, trip or hold the ball carrier while attempting to deflag the ball carrier. If a player trips, holds, or uses any other illegal acts, a penalty of ten yards will be called. If flagrant, unnecessary roughness occurs, ejection may also result. Flag belt must be "clearly taken" from the ball carrier by a defensive player. If it falls off for any other reason, the play continues. It will become a one-hand touch on the offensive player without the flag. Always play until you hear the whistle. However, if a player from the opposing team causes the clip on the flag belt to break, the player is down. If a player is found wearing a belt that is tied, it will be an automatic ejection from a game. The player will also be ineligible for the next contest and you **MUST** speak with the Intramural Director. After a score is made, the official must pull off the player's flag. If the flag does not come off the score does not count (additional 10-yard penalty) and player is ejected.

- ✓ **Flag Guarding:** Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, body or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. The ball carrier may not hurdle, jump or attempt to jump over another player. The player with the ball may intentionally dive, but may not initiate any contact with an opposing player with his or her dive. The penalty would be a ten-yard illegal contact.

- ✓ **Layer being down:** A runner or receiver is also down if any part of his/her body touches the ground other than hands, feet or hand with possession of the ball.

- ✓ **Roughing the passer:** When rushing the passer you must play the flag and not the ball. If attempting to block a pass, you may not contact the passer in any manner,



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even if the ball is touched or blocked while still in the passer's hand. This will result in a ten-yard penalty and an Automatic First Down.

- ✓ **Returns from End Zone:** Passes, interceptions, and kicks may be returned from end zones, but not from behind the out of bounds lines. An interception in the end zone can be advanced or become a touchback (ball placed on the 14 yard line) if downed or deflagged in the end zone.)
- ✓ **Inadvertent Whistle:** A live ball becomes dead when an official sounds the whistle, even if inadvertently.
- ✓ *A possessed ball (a player is holding the ball) ball blown dead, inadvertently can be replayed totally or taken from the spot of the whistle
- ✓ *A non-possessed ball (the ball in the air) will be brought back to the previous spot and replayed.
- ✓ **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties are 10 yards. Extreme cases can lead to ejection.

Summary of Penalties

Loss of Five (5) Yards

- Equipment Violation
- Delay of Game
- Encroachment
- Free kick (Kickoff) out of bounds
- False Start
- Illegal Snap
- Infraction of Scrimmage Formation
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift
- Intentionally throwing a backward pass or fumble out of bounds (Loss of Down)
- Aiding the Runner
- Intentional Grounding
- Player receiving the snap within 2 yards of the line of scrimmage
- Player out of bounds when ball is snapped
- Offensive player not within 15 yards of ball
- Advancement across the line of scrimmage by a MALE runner (CO-REC ONLY)
- Illegal Forward Pass - 2 consecutive MALE to MALE forward passes (CO-REC ONLY)



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Loss of Ten (10) Yards

- Kick/Catch Interference
- 2 or more consecutive encroachments during the same interval between scrimmage downs
- Offensive Pass Interference (Loss of Down)
- Defensive Pass Interference (Automatic First Down)
- Illegally secured flag belt on touchdown (Loss of Down & Ejection)
- Unsportsmanlike conduct
- Attempting to steal, strip or strike the ball
- Unfair tactics
- Hurdling a Player
- Illegal Contact
- Tackling the runner = Automatic Ejection
- Roughing the passer (Automatic First Down)
- Flag guarding
- Illegal participation
- Stiff arming
- Illegal Screen Blocking
- Spiking, kicking, or throwing the ball out of anger or frustration
- Contact
- Holding a Runner