

**Grand Valley State University
Campus Recreation
Intramural Sports
Arena Flag Football Rules**

NIRSA rules apply to all games, except any of the following adaptations. For questions regarding general intramural regulations, visit us online at www.gvsu.edu/rec

Eligibility: All currently enrolled Grand Valley State University students (undergraduate and graduate) and faculty/staff are eligible to participate in the intramural sports program. CURRENT STUDENTS ARE DEFINED AS TAKING AT LEAST ONE CREDIT HOUR AT THE TIME OF PARTICIPATION. GVSU men's football players and professional and/or semi-professional players are ineligible for one year following the last day of their participation with the varsity or professional program.

Student ID's: ALL participants must present a GVSU identification card to participate in an intramural event. Please consult intramural rules and regulations at www.gvsu.edu/rec for more information.

Team Roster: It is each team captain's responsibility to ensure that all team members are listed on the team's IMLeagues roster. Each team's roster will be frozen following their last regular season game. During playoffs, a participant and their correct G-number MUST be listed on that team's IMLeagues roster to be eligible to participate. Individuals not listed on the roster may not participate in playoffs, without exception..

Play On One Team/Illegal Players: A participant may play on only one men's or women's team and only one co-rec team. Women may not play on/in men's teams/leagues and vice-versa. Any participant playing on two teams in the same division will automatically be disqualified from participating in the division in which the offense occurred for the remainder of that sport season. In addition, any game(s) the participant played illegally will result in a forfeit. If a player is found to be illegal, they are ineligible to play even if there is a mutual team agreement. Players are also considered illegal if they violate eligibility procedures.

Rule Interpretations: The officials and supervisors on duty will handle questions on the court; a ruling will then be determined. The resulting decision is final.

SCHEDULE CONFLICTS: If a schedule conflict occurs, the team captain shall contact the IM office, by phone, during normal business hours. Every effort will be made to adjust the game. NO GUARANTEES. No playoff games will be rescheduled.

FORFEITS AND DEFAULTS: A forfeit will be called if at least 3 players (4 in co-rec) are not present and ready to play within the 5-minute grace period from the scheduled game time. A team that forfeits a game will be dropped from the league unless they pay a non-refundable \$10 forfeit fee to the intramural sports office by 5pm on the business day (Monday-Friday) following the forfeit. A DEFAULT is recorded if the team captain provides written notice to the intramural sports office by noon on the business day on or prior to the game to be defaulted to avoid further penalty. Consult the intramural sportsmanship policy at www.gvsu.edu/rec to view ratings that apply to forfeits and defaults.

Eligibility Protests: Must be made during the game to the official. The captain must complete the protest form and must pay \$20 protest fee on the next business day in the intramural sports office. The fee will only be returned if the protest is upheld.

BLOOD BORN PATHOGENS: If a player is found to be bleeding, they must immediately leave the game until the bleeding stops (for at least 1 down unless it is halftime or in the intermission prior to overtime). Substitutions may occur at this time. Any blood on the clothing or player must be removed before the player can re-enter the game.

CONCUSSIONS: Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

The Game:

Teams will consist of 4 players each. A minimum of 3 players is required to start or continue a game. Co-rec may never have more than 2 of the same gender on the field.

Team Captains:

Each team shall designate a team captain or captains. The captain's first choice is irrevocable. Only the captain shall speak with the official(s) during the game.

Persons Subject to Rules:

Team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainer, spectators, and other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game and shall be governed by decisions of the officials assigned to the game.

Referee's Authority:

The referee has authority to rule promptly, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

The Field:

The field is 50 yards long. A team in possession of the ball begins at the 7-yard line and shall have four consecutive downs to advance to score or turn the ball over. The line to gain shall be the goal line.

Jersey/Headwear:

Jerseys must be either long enough so they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down (no knots) or short enough so there is a minimum of 4 inches from the bottom of the jersey to the player's waistline. Players may only wear a stocking cap or a headband. Face shields molded to the face and without any protrusions are acceptable. No other headwear shall be permitted.

Player Equipment – Illegal:

A player wearing jewelry, billed hats, using sticky or foreign substance on equipment or body shall not be permitted to play. Players with leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material must have both sides and all edges covered with padding at least ½ " thick. No jewelry. **EXCEPTIONS:** medical or religious reasons and MUST be taped or covered. Tape for covering jewelry is not provided. Guards, casts, braces, and compression sleeves must be worn for medical reasons and must meet other specifications provided by the NFHS. Any item, in the staff's judgment, that constitutes a safety concern is not permitted.

Pants/Shorts:

Each player must wear pants or shorts without any belt(s), belt loops, pocket(s), or exposed drawstrings. The pants or shorts must be a different color than the flags.

Flag Belt:

Each player must wear a one-piece belt with three flags permanently attached. The Intramural Department will provide flag belts. A flag belt must be worn free of any knots.

Shoes:

Each player must wear shoes. Shoes consisting of any metal are illegal

Food and Drink:

FOOD IS NOT PERMITTED ON THE TRACK AND TURF AREA, INCLUDING GUM.

Football:

The referee shall decide the legality of any ball. The teams are responsible for retrieving the ball and having it ready for each play. The offensive team may keep the ball in their huddle.

DEFINITIONS

Neutral Zone:

The 2-yard expanded neutral zone is between the forward point of the ball (orange spotter) and the defensive scrimmage line (gold spotter).

Removing the Flag Belt:

When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner, the play shall end and the ball is declared dead. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one-hand tag between the shoulders and the knees constitutes capture. A player who removes the flag belt may leave his/her feet.

PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, FORFEITS

Forfeits:

If at the scheduled game time a team does not have the minimum of 3 players, they will be given 5 minutes to get the minimum number.

Coin Toss:

The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer his/her options to the second half. The options shall be:

- A. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
- B. To choose the direction they would like their team to go.
- C. The captain not having the first choice of options for a half shall exercise the remaining option and will have the above options for the second half (unless the captain winning the toss chose to defer).

Start Each Half:

Unless moved by penalty, the ball shall be snapped on the 7-yard line to start the game.

Playing Time:

Playing time shall be two 12-minute halves. The clock will run continuously for the first 23 minutes unless stopped for a time out, injury, or the official judges that a team is trying to conserve/consume time. At one minute to play in the second half, the referee will stop the clock and give a 1 minute warning. The clock will operate with regular stop/start procedures.

Extension of Periods:

If a live ball foul (not loss of down fouls) with an accepted penalty, double foul, foul that results in a safety, or inadvertent whistle occurs during the last timed down or last play of the **7-Play** period, the period will be extended by one untimed down.

Tie Game (playoffs only)

In case of a game ending in a tie score, the field captains shall be brought together. The team NOT calling the coin toss at the beginning of the game will have the option for overtime. Field captains will alternate choices, if additional overtime periods are played. The winner of the toss shall be given options of offense, defense, or direction. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line. Each team will be given two plays from the same 7-yard line (7-yards for a touchdown). The object will be to score a touchdown. If the first team which is awarded the ball scores, the second team will still have two plays to win or tie the game. If the defense intercepts, then the ball is dead and the original defense will begin their series at the 7-yard line. After the second overtime, teams will only receive one play to score. Each team is entitled to one time-out only, during the entire overtime.

Time Outs:

Each team is entitled to 1 charged time-out each game.

BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL

Ball Declared Dead:

A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound the whistle or declare it dead:

- A. When any part of the runner other than a hand or foot touches the ground.
- B. When a backward pass, fumble or muff touches the ground. A snap that hits the ground before or after reaching the intended receiver is at the spot where it hits the ground.
- C. When a runner has a flag belt removed legally by a defensive player. A flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt.
- D. When a passer is deflagged prior to releasing the ball.
- E. Anytime the ball in player possession touches the ground, the ball shall be declared dead at the spot. (unless the ball is fumbled forward).
- F. A touchdown, touchback, safety, or try is scored; or the defensive team secures possession of the ball in overtime.
- G. The QB fails to release the ball before in 5 seconds or less

SERIES OF DOWNS

Series of Downs:

A team shall have four consecutive downs to score a touchdown or turn the ball over on downs.

KICKING THE BALL

Punts: There are NO PUNTS

SNAPPING, PASSING, HANDING, AND RUNNING THE BALL

Scrimmage Play:

- A. At least 1 player must be on the offensive scrimmage line at the time of the snap. There is no minimum number of players that must be on the defensive line of scrimmage.
- B. Players may use a two, three or four point stance.
- C. A backward pass or fumble that touches the ground between the goal line belongs to the team last in possession of the ball unless lost on downs.
- D. Motion – Anyone who goes in motion must be only going parallel or backward at the snap. A player in motion is not considered to be on the line of scrimmage.
- E. Center may snap the ball between the legs or outside the legs, and must be parallel to the line of scrimmage.
- F. No direct snaps **to oneself**. The player receiving the snap must be at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage line.
- G. A runner cannot advance the ball past the line of scrimmage. There are no restrictions after a change of possession or once a legal forward pass has been touched beyond the line of scrimmage. (Co-rec included)
- H. The defensive team may not cross the line of scrimmage until a forward pass has been thrown.

Forward Pass:

- A. All players of either team are eligible to touch or catch a pass.
- B. During a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer's feet are behind his/her team's offensive scrimmage line when the ball leaves the passer's hand. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down.
- C. There must be a legal forward pass each down. The receiver must touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. The passer has 5 seconds to release the ball on a forward pass. If not released within 5 seconds: Play whistled dead - PENALTY: Loss of down, ball placed at previous spot.
- D. A legal catch is defined as the ball being in possession of the receiver WITH at least one foot in-bounds. There is no "force-out" provision.

Co-Rec Rule Only:

During the offensive team's possession, there may not be two consecutive forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. Also, a male OR FEMALE runner cannot initiate an advance of the ball through the line of scrimmage. PENALTY: Illegal advancement – 3-yards from previous spot, or Illegal forward pass – 3-yards and loss of down (if male receives pass from female and initiates advancement through the line of scrimmage). The term "closed" means a male player may NOT throw a legal forward pass completion to any other male player with his feet on the ground. If a male and female jointly catch a pass, it is considered a catch by the female; the next play becomes "open." The term "open" means any player can complete a legal forward pass to any other player. If a male passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver, the next completed legal forward pass must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards beyond the line of scrimmage for the play to then become open. This rule also applies to the try-for-point. Penalties do not affect the status of whether a play is open or closed. There are no restrictions concerning a male passer completing forward passes to a female receiver or female to female or female to male. PENALTY: Illegal forward pass – 3-yards and loss of down.

Forward Pass Interference:

- A. Offensive Pass Interference: After the ball has been snapped and until it has been touched by a receiver, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond team A's scrimmage line while the ball is in flight.
- B. Defensive Pass Interference: After the pass is thrown and until it is touched, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond team A's scrimmage line while the ball is in flight. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond team A's scrimmage line. Note: Intentionally hindering an opponents vision is also included in this rule.
- C. Whether a ball is catchable/uncatchable has no bearing on determining forward pass interference.
- D. PENALTY: Five yards from the previous spot. (There is no longer the result of loss of down/automatic first down)

SCORING PLAYS and TOUCHBACK

Point Values:

- A. Touchdown ----- 6 points

- Female Score (co-rec only)----- 9 points
- Female pass to male for TD----- 9 points
- B. Safety----- 2 points

Successful Try For Point

- A. Running or passing from 7-yards-----2 points

After a Try and Safety:

After a try, the ball shall be snapped by the opponents of the scoring team at the 7-yard line, unless moved by penalty.

After a Touchback:

After a touchback, the ball shall be snapped from the 7-yard line.

“17 Point Rule” (applies to both men and women):

If either team is 17 points ahead after the 12 minute running time in the second half, the game is over. Prior to application of this rule, there must be a down free of any accepted live ball fouls.

“23 Point Rule” (applies to Co-Rec): Same procedure as above.

Player Responsibility After Touchdown:

The player scoring the touchdown must raise their arms so that the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not deflagged with one pull and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed and the player is disqualified and it is a foul. PENALTY: 5-yards from the previous spot and loss of down.

CONDUCT OF PLAYERS

Blocking:

- A. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have their hands and arms at their side or behind their back. Any use of the arms, elbows or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player’s screen block is illegal.
- B. Defensive players must go around the offensive player’s screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.

Charging:

A runner shall neither charge into nor contact an opponent in his/her path nor attempt to run between two opponents or between an opponent and a sideline, unless the place is such as to provide a reasonable chance for him/her to go through without contact. If a runner in his/her progress has established a straight-line path, he/she may not be crowded out of that path, but if an opponent is able to legally establish a defensive position in that path, the runner must avoid contact by changing direction (this is the same principle as the block/charge in basketball). Diving is permissible (i.e. diving for first down, diving for flag, diving for touchdown, etc.) unless the instance of charging – as mentioned above – or hurdling an opponent takes place.

Ball Carrier (GUARDING THE FLAG BELT):

The ball carrier shall not guard their flags by blocking, with arms or hands, the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. The ball carrier shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with a stiff arm. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to:

- A. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
- B. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.
- C. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt.

Flag Belt Removal:

Offensive players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally deflagged/tagged. A flag belt that becomes detached inadvertently (not removed by grabbing and pulling) does not cause play to stop. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play (or a touchdown if deflagged by a nonplayer). In all situations where a play is in progress and a ball carrier loses the flag belt accidentally, inadvertently or on purpose, the deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the ball carrier between the shoulders and knees. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials or other such acts. PENALTY: 5-yards from the previous spot, loss of down and player disqualification.

Unfair acts:

No player or nonplayers shall use verbiage or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit of fair play for the purposes of confusing the opponent. PENALTY: Unfair act, 5 yards
NOTE: Voice inflection by the quarterback is LEGAL.

Unsportsmanlike Fouls:

A second unsportsmanlike foul by the same player or non-player results in disqualification.

Sportsmanship:

1. The intent of GVSU Intramural Sports is to provide a sportsmanlike, safe, and fun environment.
2. The sportsmanship rating system is designed to rate team and not individual conduct, yet hold the team accountable for an individual's actions.
3. Being a good sport is a team captains, players and spectators responsibility. They will be held accountable for acts including abusive language, threatening remarks or abusive behavior before, during and after any intramural contest and throughout the intramural season.
4. Team captains are expected to be the team leader and exhibit full control over their team, thus setting an example by communicating and educating their team to be good sports. Further, the captain may address an official in a respectful manner concerning a rule interpretation, not questions of officials' judgment.
5. A player ejected during the game results in a one game suspension (if severe, additional restrictions may be imposed). If necessary, the captain and ejected player must meet with the Assistant Director of Intramurals before being eligible to participate again.
6. Team Sportsmanship Ratings apply to behavior before, during and after a contest. Teams are expected to receive a rating higher than a three (3) to be eligible for playoffs. Those teams that receive a rating of two (2) will be suspended for their next game. Any team receiving a season ending rating (1) will be dropped from the sport and may be subjected to additional disciplinary action.

SUMMARY OF FOULS AND PENALTIES

Loss of 3 Yards	Loss of 5 yards
1 Delay of Game (Dead Ball)	1 Batting a Free Ball
2 Encroachment (Dead Ball)	2 Contact Before or After Ball is Dead
If consecutive in the same down – 5 yards	3 Contact With Opponent on Ground
3 False Start (Dead Ball)	4 Defensive Use of Hands
4 Helping the Runner	5 Dive or Run into a Player
5 Illegal Forward Pass- 2 Consecutive Male to Male, Forward Pass Completions (Loss of Down) Corec Only	6 Forward Pass Interference – Defensive
6 Illegal Forward Pass-Loss of Down if by Team A	7 Forward Pass Interference – Offensive
7 Illegal Formation	8 Guarding the Flag Belt
Illegal advancement by male runner (co-rec only)	9 Hurdle any Player
8 Illegal Shift	10 Illegal Flag Belt Removal
9 Illegal Snap (Dead Ball)	11 Illegal Kicking
10 Illegally Conserving or Consuming Time	12 Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking or defensive bull-rush
11 Infraction of Scrimmage Formation	13 Illegal Participation
12 Infraction of the Punt Formation – Kickers	14 Illegal Player Equipment
13 Infraction of the Punt Formation – Line Players	15 Illegal Substitution/Replaced Player
14 Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)	Illegally Secured Flag Belt on Touchdown
15 Intentionally Throwing Backward Pass or Fumble, Out-of-Bounds (Loss of Down if by Team A)	16 (Loss of Down by Offense) (Automatic First Down if by Defense)
16 Offensive Player Illegally in Motion	17 Interlocked Interference
17 Offensive Player Not Within 15 yards of Ball	18 Unfair Acts
18 Player Out-of-Bounds When Ball is Snapped	19 Obstructing or Holding the Runner
19 Receiving Snap Within 2 Yards of Scrimmage Line	20 Position Upon Shoulders or Body
20 Required Equipment Worn Illegally	21 Pretended, Unfair Substitution
21 Illegal Substitution (Dead Ball)	22 Quick Kick
Disqualification Associated With Some 5 Yard penalties	23 Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
1 Flagrant Personal Foul	24 Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing Ball During Dead Ball
2 Flagrant Spiking, Kicking or Throwing Ball	25 Stiff Arm
3 Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players, Coaches, Substitutes or Others Subjected to the Rules	26 Strip or Attempt to Strip the Ball
4 Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct	27 Tackle Runner
5 Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt-Defense (Auto 1st Down)	28 Throw Runner to the Ground
6 Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt-Offense (Loss of Down)	Two or More Consecutive Encroachments, During Same Interval Between Scrimmage Downs
7 Intentionally Contacting an Official	30 Unnecessary Contact of any Nature
8 Intentionally Kicking at or Swinging an Arm, Hand, or Fist at any Opposing Player	31 Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Coaches, Substitutes, Fans
9 Tackle the Runner	32 Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct