

POW5R SPORTS LEAGUE 9V9 RULE BOOK



POW5R SPORTS LEAGUE (P5SL) reserves the right to modify or change these rules at any time prior to the season. *Updated as of March 2024.*

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This rule book outlines the playing rules for P5SL 9V9 Football, a limited-contact 9-on-9 football game that incorporates soft-shell helmets and shoulder pads during game-play. For any rules not specifically addressed below, refer to the NCAA rule book.

1. TEAM SIZE AND AGE GROUPINGS

1. Each team must have 9 players on the field (9 on 9)

If a team is forced to participate with less than 9 players, the least they can have and still participate is 7, and the opposing coach can either continue to play with 9 or may choose to match the same number as the team who is short players.

2. The age groupings mentioned in this rule book are for the common 7U, 8U, 9U, 10U, 11U, 12U, & 13U age groups.
3. 9v9 Flex Football is designed for 7U and up, 5U and 6U are recommended to play 9v9 Flag Football. The 5U and 6U P5SL 9v9 Flag Football rule book is available in the league coaches resources file.

2. REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

1. Mouth Guard
2. Soft Shell Helmet
3. Jersey with Visible Front and Back Number
4. Cleats (Non-Metal)

3. BANNED EQUIPMENT

1. Metal Spikes
2. Uncovered Hard Casts
3. Unapproved Soft-Shell Equipment
4. Hard Shell Helmets, Scrum Caps, Karate Helmets, Head Bands, or any other non-approved helmet
5. Jewelry, including rings, necklaces, and watches
6. Hats of any kind
7. Beanies and skull caps/hair bands are permitted for use under helmet

Wearing any banned equipment during gameplay will result in a delay of game penalty. Players wearing banned equipment will not be allowed back onto field until banned equipment is removed

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4. FOOTBALL SIZE

1. Each team will provide their own game football for the season
2. Footballs can be genuine or composite leather
3. Footballs must be properly inflated, per the psi requirements listed on the football

Size Requirements are as follows:

5U - 6U :	K2 or Equivalent
7U - 9U :	K2 or Equivalent
10U - 11U :	TDJ or Equivalent
12U - 13U :	TDY or Equivalent (<i>WFL K2 ball size will be used</i>)

Head coaches should present teams game ball to referees during pre-game meeting for inspection. Any concerns over sizing will be addressed prior to game.

5. COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Each coach is expected to read and understand all stated rules in this rule book. Any questions should be directed to the league commissioner.
2. All football personnel and coaches will abide by the P5SL Football Coaches Code of Conduct. Any violation of these rules can result in possible expulsion from your coaching privileges and/or team removal from the league.
3. If any coach deliberately and flagrantly violates these rules, the league is empowered suspend the coach without prior notice.
4. The game officials are empowered to eject any coach or parent from a game if that coach or parent is acting unsportsmanlike, using foul language or is causing a disruption to the game. Swearing at a game official because you do not agree with a call is not acceptable and will not be permitted. The game officials are to be treated as professionals. If coaches have a concern with the conduct of any game official, notify the league director following the conclusion of the game.

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5. Any team, player, coach, or parent who engages in a physical altercation of any kind including pushing, hitting, or fighting during a P5SL Football event will risk forfeiting the remainder of their teams' season, and could be charged with Child Endangerment.
6. Coaches/Teams should have on hand at each game - a roster and proof of the players age. For example, a report card or state id showing proof of age. This is to be made available to show a Referee, League Organizer, and/or Flex Football Staff Member upon request.

6. COACHES ON THE FIELD

1. For 7U, a maximum of 1 coach per team is allowed on the field on the offensive and defensive side of the ball.
 - a) Unless helping a younger, inexperienced athlete into proper position, these coaches shall remain a minimum of 10 yards behind all participating players after approaching the line of scrimmage.
 - b) Once the team has broken the huddle, coaches on the field cannot talk except to assist players getting into correct position. On-field coaches must be silent once the quarterback begins his cadence.
 - c) This rule does not apply to coaches on the sideline
2. No coaches on the field for 8U and up.
 - Coaches are to remain on the sides-line only.

7. GAME OFFICIALS

1. The NCAA rule book serves as the foundation for all rules and penalties unless specified otherwise below.
2. There will be a minimum of two (2) game officials provided per game.
3. One official will be positioned as the line judge on the home sideline, and one will be positioned as a back judge approximately 10-15 yards from the ball on the defensive side.
4. Game officials are instructed to identify to coaches the player who commits a penalty by number or position on the field.
5. Game officials have the final say on-field for all matters and will apply all rules to maintain safety and game integrity.
6. Game officials are to be treated as professionals. If coaches have a concern with the conduct of any game official, notify the league organizer following the game.
7. Game officials are expected to have the rule book in hand no later than two weeks before the start of the season and are expected to know its contents.
8. Game officials are expected to have all necessary equipment, which includes a uniform, penalty flag, bean bag, whistle, stopwatch and notepad.
9. The head game official is suggested to note each flagrant foul by a player's name or number for tracking records.

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10. The head game official is also suggested to write down and report any other pertinent information regarding a coach, player or parent of a team who has committed an infraction that infringes on the sanctity of the game.
11. Officials will be responsible for recording and submitting game scores to site operator, league organizer, and referee assignor at the conclusion of weekly games.
12. Game officials are expected to show up at least 15 minutes prior to game time, and act in a professional manner at all times. This includes interaction with players, coaches, spectators, and league organizers.

8. 1st DOWN MARKER

The following shall apply to down marker responsibilities:

1. It is the responsibility of the home team to supply down marker volunteers, though volunteers can come from either side if necessary
2. Down markers can be sticks and/or chains but must accurately mark 10 yards and the line to gain
3. At minimum, this duty must consist of one volunteer who places the first-down marker cone/object 10 yards ahead as the line-to-gain and then marks the line of scrimmage with the down box

9. GAME PLAY

1. There is no coin toss – The visiting team starts with possession in the 1st half. The home team starts with possession in the 2nd half
2. 20-minute halves. 5-minute halftime. There is a running clock that only stops for injuries/player safety and timeouts within regular game-play
3. Dead balls that stop the clock within the final two minutes of the game are: incomplete passes, any play that ends out of bounds, scoring plays, change of possession, timeouts and extra point tries. The clock will also stop for all injury timeouts and official timeouts, restarting at the head officials ready to play signal
4. Each team is entitled to 2, one-minute timeouts per half. The clock restarts on the snap following any team time out
5. A 30-second play clock is enforced with the play clock beginning following the spot of the ball and at the head game official's signal
6. If no scoreboard is present, the head game official – or a fellow official he designates during pregame – is the official timekeeper and scorekeeper

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7. If a team is losing by 20 or more points within the final two minutes, the clock does not stop for any reason other than timeouts, injury timeouts and official timeouts. If the losing team scores to create a deficit of 19 or fewer, the two-minute time rules apply
8. The ball can move from hash to hash
9. There are no kick offs, punts, or field goals
10. If a ball is intercepted: the defender needs to only return the interception to the 40-yard line to be considered a Defensive Touchdown. If the result of this play is a touchdown, the team that returned the interception will then attempt a PAT. If the result is not a touchdown, the intercepting team will begin their offensive series at the respective yard line in which they were deemed down
11. There are nine players on each side of the ball, including a center and two Guards/Tackles on offense
12. Unbalanced lines are not allowed. One Guard/Tackle must be on either side of the center
13. Five players are required on the line of scrimmage with either tight ends or split ends joining the three linemen. Two players must be on the line on each side of the center
14. All offensive line players, except for the center, must be in a 2-point stance, this does not apply for Defensive Ends
15. The quarterback may take a direct snap from under center or in the shotgun position

10.SUBSTITUTIONS AND INJURED PLAYERS

Free substitutions are in effect at all times between plays.

1. If the offense subs in, the defense must have a chance to sub before the snap is allowed.
If the official delays the snap to allow the defense time to match the substitution, the delay of game penalty shall not be called on the offense.
If, however, the official determines the offense is substituting late to run additional time off the clock, a delay of game penalty can be assessed.
2. If an injured player remains down on the field, struggles to leave the field or needs assistance, the official will signal for the clock to stop. The play clock and game clock both restart upon the player leaving the field the ball being set and both sides being ready to play, with the officials signal given.

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11. PROCEDURE FOR INJURED PLAYERS

1. If any game official stops play for an injured player or players to be checked/assisted, the injured player must leave the field for at least one play. A team may “buy” a player back into the game through use of a time out.
2. Head injuries. Any player who receives a head injury – whether a concussion, contusion, cut or other – during practice, pregame warm-ups or in-game is not allowed to return to play until cleared by a qualified medical professional.

PASSING

1. A forward pass that falls incomplete returns to the line of scrimmage.
2. A lateral pass that is thrown behind or in front of the line of scrimmage and touches the ground is blown dead and returned to the spot where the ball touched the ground.
3. A pass is determined to be forward or lateral based on the direction it travels, not by how it is delivered (i.e. overhand, underhand, side arm, etc.).
4. The quarterback may spike the ball to stop the clock within the final two minutes of the game, providing all offensive players are set. The two-minute clock rules still apply. If players are not set, an illegal procedure penalty is enforced and the clock restarts when the ball is set, and the referee blows the ready-for-play whistle.

13. RECEIVING

1. Only eligible receivers can be the initial receiver on a forward pass.
2. Players must get one foot down in bounds for a completed pass.
3. If an offensive and defensive player catch a ball simultaneously and forward progress is stopped, the ball is declared dead at that spot and awarded to the offense.
4. The three players lined up at center and Guard/Tackle may not catch a forward pass unless it is first touched by an eligible receiver or defensive player. If an ineligible receiver does take possession of a forward pass or hand off – this is illegal – the play is blown dead at that spot.

BLOCKING

1. When engaging a block, the blocker must come to balance, and all initial contact must be made with the hands.
2. Landing on, piling, or “pancaking” any player on the ground results in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

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5. Blocking by initiating or leading with head, elbows, forearms, knees or shoulders – anything but the hands will result in a charging penalty.
6. Blocking below the waist, cut blocks, clipping and any blindside crack back blocks – by the offense or defense – are assessed appropriate penalties and result in an automatic ejection as determined by the game officials. A player who is blocked into a low block may continue to play in the game if the officials see extenuating circumstances.

15. QB RUN – SCRAMBLE RULES

1. The QB is not allowed to run for a pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Immediate QB sneaks in the A gap are not allowed.
3. The QB is not free to scramble for positive yardage at any time.
4. The QB may step up into the pocket. He may not step up and cross the line of scrimmage.

16. DOWNING THE BALL CARRIER

1. The ball carrier is downed after being touched with two hands by one player on any part of the body – excluding the head and neck area.
2. Tagging off is not a SHOVE – this can be interpreted as unnecessary roughness depending on severity, and will be strictly enforced by referees.

17. OFFENSIVE PRE-SNAP ALIGNMENT

1. The offensive team must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage at the point of the snap – three linemen and one eligible receiver on each side of the field aligned on the ball.
2. Both Tackles must line up within both players outstretched arms' reach of the center.
3. Eligible receivers can be tight or split at the coach's decision.
4. Unbalanced offensive LINE (interior linemen) formations are NOT allowed
5. All motion and shift rules apply as outlined in the NCAA rule books.

DEFENSIVE PRE-SNAP ALIGNMENT

1. The two defensive linemen must be aligned reasonably within the outstretched arms (to the side) of the furthest offensive lineman/tight end. For example, a defensive lineman can line up from the outside shoulder of the blocker but cannot unreasonably line up extremely wide. If the DE were to stand with arms outstretched like a "T" he should be able to touch the OL's shoulder if on the same horizontal plane.
2. The defensive team must have two players on the line of scrimmage (the DE's)
3. One DE must be on each side of the center.

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4. Defensive ends may NOT line up in the A-gap, they can align head-up on the attached lineman (not the center), and slant inside.
5. The protected A gap zone: extending laterally from the Center to the Inside half of the Tackles and extending 4 yards directly in front of the center, no defensive player may align in this protected A gap zone.
6. Linebackers or safeties MUST align a minimum of 4 yards from the line of scrimmage (they can't align on the LOS) **unless the following occurs:**

Pressing an eligible receiver/TE/W close to or attached to the LOS.

If the ball is on or within 4 yards of the goal line, the LB's can be on the goal line and technically closer than 4 yards to the LOS.

19. FIRST DOWNS

1. The offense has (4) plays to reach a 10-yard first down by run, pass or penalty.
2. On a series beginning from or inside the defensive 10-yard line (“down” and Goal”), the offense can only achieve a first down through penalty.
3. Any penalty that results in a first down starts a new set of downs with a new line to gain.

20. TURNOVER ON DOWNS

1. Any 4th down that is not converted to a 1st down by reaching the line to gain, or by penalty will result in a turnover on downs. The defensive team will move to offense and begin their new drive at the 40-yard line going towards the goal line.
2. Any interception that is not returned for a touchdown will result in a turnover on downs and the intercepting team will begin their new offensive series from the respective yard line in which they were deemed down.

21. TOUCHDOWNS AND POINT AFTER ATTEMPTS

1. Touchdown = 6 points
2. Extra point tries are attempted following all touchdowns, or interceptions returned back to the 40-yard line for a touchdown with one
 - For 7U - 8U (1) point from the 3-yard line and two (2)points from the 5-yard line.
 - For 9U and up (1) point from the 5-yard line and two (2)points from the 10-yard line.
3. The clock continues to run during extra points unless the touchdown comes in the final two minutes of the game with teams within a 19-point margin.
4. If a touchdown is scored as time runs out in the first or second half, the conversion will still take place as an un-timed down.
5. In the event of a penalty on an extra point, the offense cannot change its decision to go for 1 or 2 points.
6. In the event of an interception or a fumble caught on the fly during a point-after try, the ball is blown dead. There is no return for 2 points.

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22. SAFETIES

1. There are no safeties in the ½ field style of play, any play that begins at the 40-yard line and loses yardage will be spotted at the 40-yard line for the next play, no additional yardage will be added unless a penalty has been called.

Exception #1: Ball snapped over the QB's head and blown dead will be re-spotted at the 40 and moved to the next down.

Exception #2. QB sack resulting in a loss of 5 yards. The ball is spotted once again at the 40-yard line, with the line to gain remaining the 30-yard line, and the next down is played.

23. OVERTIME, & TIE'S

1. Coaches have the choice to go for 1 point from the 5 yd. line, or 2 points from the 10 yd. line.
2. Overtimes are one (1) down to per team.
3. The visiting team will begin overtime on offense, with the home team on defense.

4. The format is serpentine (AB – BA, BA - AB), meaning in round 1 of OT, the visiting team begins on offense and the home team begins on defense. The visiting team has a chance to score (*one down*) Down, then the home team has a chance to score to tie or end the game. If neither team has scored, we will begin round 2 with the home team on offense and the visiting team on defense. Again, both teams have the opportunity to score and if the game is still tied after 4 complete rounds, the game ends in a tie.

5. **SUDDEN DEATH FORMAT. IN TOURNAMENT or PLAYOFF GAMES**, after 2 rounds of overtime, a "SuddenDeath" Overtime period will take place. Coaches will do a coin flip with the winner possessing the ball first. The first team to score wins, and all plays begin from the 5-yard line.

6. There are no time outs in overtime

7. Any interception or fumble recovered in the air is a dead ball and cannot be returned, the result is the same as an incomplete pass.

8. Penalties enforced on the defense will result in ½ the distance to the goal and a replayed down for the offense, unless the offense had scored on the play. Offensive penalties that occur during the play will result in a loss of down. Pre-snap penalties will be enforced, marked off, and the play will resume.

24. DEFENSIVE ENDS, RUSHING RULES

1. Bull rushing is allowed. The rusher may also rush the inside or outside part of a blocker's body.
2. Rusher cannot throw or purposefully push blocker into the ball- carrier or Quarterback.
3. The defensive act of "rushing" should be initiated by the hands and arms, use of the shoulders, chest, or head are strictly prohibited.

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25. CENTERS, AND LEGAL SNAPS

1. The center must snap the ball between his/her legs to be a legal snap
2. The center can double-team block along side another player but must initiate block with hands, and all blocking rules apply.

26. JUMPING, HURDLING, AND DIVING

1. Players may not jump or hurdle to avoid being downed.
2. Players may not dive for the end zone or to gain additional yardage.
3. Players may not attempt short yardage "over the pile" jumps. This is unnecessary roughness.
4. Any player who jumps illegally and lands on another player will be flagged for unnecessary roughness.
5. A player may dive in an attempt to catch a pass, but is down upon reception
6. Quarterbacks may jump when throwing the ball

27. TURNOVERS, FUMBLES, DEAD BALLS, AND INTERCEPTIONS

1. All fumbles are considered dead balls as soon as the ball hits the ground
2. Except for the following: "QB Scoop rule" – The QB has a chance to scoop the ball after a poor snap(rolled or hiked overhead) AS LONG AS there is no defensive player in the immediate vicinity as the QB is fielding the ball while staying up. This is a judgment call by the referee to maintain SAFETY and keep players from diving on a DEAD ball.
 - a) No diving on the ball
 - b) ONLY the QB can pick up the muffed snap QB run limitations remain in effect
 - c) If the play is blown dead in order to maintain safety - the ball will move back to the LOS with a loss of down.
3. A fumbled ball may be recovered in the air and advanced by either team.
4. A player may not strip anyone of the ball. Anyone making intentional contact with the ball while it is being carried causing the ball to be fumbled will be called for stripping, a 5-yard penalty.
5. An interception can be advanced by the intercepting team in an attempt to score.
6. After an interception for a score, the scoring team gets to try an extra point on the fields standard end zone. After the extra point try, the original team who threw the interception then gets the ball at the 40 yard line with a new set of downs – remember, the team who was playing defense for the extra point try will be the new offense (this is just like standard football where normally a kick off would ensue after the scoring teams extra point.)

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28. BALL SPOTTING

1. Spotting the ball is at the game officials' judgment. It is up to the game officials to try and be near the spot whenever possible.
2. Ball will be spotted where the ball is held when a player is downed.
3. The ball can be spotted anywhere within the hashes, if hashes are not present the official will use the goal posts as reference, if goal posts are not present the ball will be spotted as close to the middle of the field for each play.
4. Once the ball is spotted by game officials the ball is in play (*exceptions see rule 10*)

29. A – GAP RULES

1. The A-gap is the area between the center and the Tackles.
2. Defenders on the line of scrimmage cannot line up directly over the center and may not immediately engage the center.
3. The defense cannot blitz the A gap from the line of scrimmage.
4. Linebackers and defensive backs cannot blitz any gap at any time.
5. Defensive ends may NOT line up in the A-gap, they can align head-up on the attached lineman (not the center), and slant inside.
6. There is a protected A gap zone: extending laterally from the Center to the Inside half of the Tackles and extending 4 yards directly in front of the center, no defensive player may align in this protected A gap zone.
7. Attempts at a center sneak by the offense is penalized as an A gap violation. See A gap violation under penalties section.

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30. PENALTY BASICS

1. Any offensive pre or post snap penalty that occurs when the ball is spotted AT THE 40-yard line, the line to gain/first down marker will be moved up to reflect the additional yardage.
2. Because of the shorter field – all enforceable penalties of 15 yards will be enforced as 10 yards, and all 10 yard penalties are enforced as 5 yards for the purpose of the game. (exceptions listed later)
3. The team not committing the foul gets to choose between the result of the play or the enforcement of the penalty.
4. If both teams commit fouls on the same play, they offset, and the down is replayed.
5. If there are multiple fouls on both teams, any additional penalties that do not offset will be enforced, and play will resume with the enforcement replaying the previous down.
6. A live-ball foul on the offense is marked off from the spot of the penalty.
7. A live-ball foul on the defense is marked off from the spot of the penalty, the original line of scrimmage or the end of the play, whichever benefits the offense the most.
8. No penalty may move the ball past the 40-yard line, in this event the line to gain will be moved up to reflect the penalty yardage added
9. A half cannot end on a penalty that is accepted. If the penalty is accepted, it is marked off and a single untimed down is played. If the penalty is declined, the half is over.
10. A first down will be determined after the ball is spotted at the end of a play and any applicable penalty yardage is assessed. Net yardage (forward progress plus/minus penalty yardage) must be sufficient to be awarded a first down.
11. EOP – End of Play
12. LOS – Line of Scrimmage
13. POI – Point of Infraction
14. Any penalties not covered below are to follow NCAA rules.

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31. FLAGRANT FOULS

Offense, 10 yard penalty, loss of down

Defense, 10 yard penalty, automatic 1st down

1. A player committing a flagrant foul – including an unsportsmanlike conduct, intentional tackling or unnecessary roughness penalty with malice – will receive a penalty and a warning from the head game official on their first offence. A second unnecessary roughness penalty will result in player ejection from the contest. If the first act is determined to be severe, the head game official has the option to eject the player without the warning.
2. All flagrant fouls that do not result in an ejection will be accompanied by a substitution from the field for at least one play to allow the coaches to address the situation and calm down involved player(s). If additional support is needed, a game official or league director may take an official timeout to explain and diffuse the situation.
3. It is recommended that the league track players who commit flagrant fouls on a per game basis. The head game official will mark down on paper the guilty player (by name, number and/or team) and will turn in the information to the league director, commissioner or appropriate staff member.
4. The head game official's decision on flagrant fouls are final.
5. The safety of all players is the primary concern of the league. Game officials shall call unnecessary roughness when any player uses excessive force or violence during a play – even if the play is technically within the rules.

NOTE: All flagrant fouls carry with them automatic first downs or loss of downs in addition to the penalty yardage.

32. EJECTIONS

Any two (2) flagrant foul infractions by an individual player in one game or multiple single infractions across several games may result in further action, including suspension from future games or ejection from the league, subject to the league's discretion.

1. The ejection process will also apply to coaches and any parents/spectators on the field or in the stands who encourage players to act in an unsportsmanlike manner.
2. Any player who strikes another player or is involved in a fight will be immediately ejected from the game and be suspended indefinitely pending a ruling from the league president.
3. Before a player can be ejected from a game, all game officials must confer and unanimously agree. NOTE: Only the head coach or coach on the field may speak to the game officials. If a player or coach contests a call or says anything to a game official that the head game official feels is inappropriate, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be called. The game officials are empowered to eject any coach if the foul is deemed excessive.
4. If a coach is ejected, the individual cannot enter the field of play for the rest of the game. The individual

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may be required to leave the premises if he or she becomes disruptive.

5. Depending on the situation, the on-field staff has full discretion to take up the chain of command and may request for the LD/commissioner/president or higher-level staff member to be involved.

33. INTENTIONAL TACKLING (FLAGRANT FOUL) DEFENSE

Defense, 10 Yards from previous spot, automatic 1st down

1. If deemed excessive or with intent to hurt an opposing player, referees may eject the offending player.
2. Intentional tackling defined: Intentionally wrapping up to stop forward progress while taking the ball-carrier to the ground; shoulder checking/hit with the intent of knocking the ball-carrier to the ground. It is the game officials' discretion on any other attempt to use excessive force by a player to initiate a tackle.

An automatic touchdown will be given to the team if a player is running and judged to be free with no defenders between him/her and the end zone and is deliberately tackled, tripped or restrained by clothing grab by a pursuing player or by an individual associated with the defensive team who comes onto the field.

34. UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS - FLAGRANT FOUL

Offense 10 yards from previous spot, loss of down

Defense – 10 yards from previous spot, automatic first down.

1. The safety of all players is the primary concern. Game officials will call unnecessary roughness when any player uses excessive force or violence during a play, even if the play is technically within the rules.
2. All players are expected to play “in control” at all times. Players are in violation of the unnecessary roughness rule when they risk injury to themselves or to other players because of unsafe or out-of-control conduct on the field.
3. Examples include but are not limited to: head butting, head slapping, throwing elbows or forearms and intentionally hitting, kicking, or tripping other players. It is the game officials' discretion on whether these fouls elevate to flagrant fouls. Repeated or flagrant violations may result in the player being ejected from the game.
4. A player may never lead with his or her head or initiate contact to the head.
5. Unnecessary and overly violent contact that includes charging, bull rushing, and purposefully shoving a player to the ground will be considered unnecessary roughness.

“Hammer fist” and/or any overly physical contact in knocking down a blockers hands is subject to be interpreted as Unnecessary roughness. While a player can “swipe” and knock down a blockers hands – the referee can make a judgment call to uphold player safety.

35. CHARGING (OFFENSE) – UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS – FLAGRANT FOUL

Offense, 10 yards from previous spot, loss of down

1. When a ball-carrier intentionally runs into a defender, lowers his/her shoulder or makes unnecessary contact with defender in an attempt to cause bodily harm.
2. When an offensive player intentionally runs through or over a defensive player with a running start.

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When an offensive player intentionally engages a block with his shoulder with no attempt to come to balance and initiate the block first with open hands.

36. ILLEGAL BLOCKING (OFFENSE) – UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS – FLAGRANT FOUL

Offense – 10 yards & loss of down

1. Landing or piling on a defender/player on the ground, chip blocking, elbowing and knee blocking.
2. Blocking by initiating or leading with elbows, forearms or shoulders - severity may result in a charging penalty or flagrant foul/unnecessary roughness.
3. A crack back or any block on a defenseless defender falls under unnecessary roughness and can result in ejection if determined as intentional.
4. Chop Blocks of any kind are strictly prohibited and will result in unnecessary roughness and flagrant foul.

37. ROUGHING THE PASSER – UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS – FLAGRANT FOUL

Defense – 10 yards, automatic 1st down

Defenders may raise arms while rushing the passer, so long as no contact is made with the passer – the only contact that is allowed would be an attempt to down the ball carrier (the QB) by a 2 hand touch below the neck but NOT to the QB's throwing arm. Excessive contact with passer before, during or after throwing the ball including but not limited to:

1. Running into the QB
2. Making contact with the passer's head and/or shoulders/throwing arm
3. Pushing the passer to the ground

38. ILLEGAL QB RUN/SCRAMBLE

Offense – ball returns to original spot, Loss of down

1. The QB is not allowed to run for a pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Immediate QB sneaks in the A gap are not allowed.
3. The QB can not run beyond the line of scrimmage within or outside of the tackle box

QB may step up in the pocket, but he must take an outside angle when scrambling or running. A scramble in which the Quarterback crosses the line of scrimmage is not allowed

4. During the course of a backwards scramble, the QB cannot cross the 50 yard line – the play will be blown dead.

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39. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Offense / Defense - 10 yards

All players, head, and assistant coaches are expected to follow the codes of conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Verbal abuse, profanity, taunting.
2. Constant or repeated audible criticism of the game officials. Game officials can eject any player, coach or spectator who violates this rule repeatedly or egregiously.

40. DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE

Defense, 10 yards from previous spot, automatic 1st down for offense

1. Defined as any illegal use of the hands, or body to keep an eligible player from having the ability to make a play to attempt to catch the football.
2. Legal Contact by the defense is allowed for the first 5-yards after the ball is snapped, once the ball is in the air, defensive players must make an attempt to play the ball. Face guarding an offensive player or running in to an offensive player without looking for the ball are both pass interference.
3. Once a ball is tipped by a defensive player, pass interference is no longer applicable.
4. Pass interference is only eligible on forward passes. Lateral passes or passes behind the line of scrimmage are not eligible for pass interference rules.

41. OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE

Offense, 10 yards from previous spot, replay down

1. Defined, as any illegal contact by an offensive player past 5 yards or once the ball is in the air.
2. Pushing or using the hand, arm, or elbow to create separation from a defender is not allowed.
3. A pick by an offensive player against a defender is classified as pass interference and is not allowed.
4. Blocking by an eligible receiver against a defender is not allowed during a forward pass while the ball is in the air. If the ball is thrown laterally, behind the line of scrimmage an eligible offensive player can continue to block throughout the entirety of the play.

42. HOLDING

Offense, 5 yards from previous spot, replay down

Defense, 5 yards from previous spot, replay down

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1. Offensive Holding is defined as any illegal use of the hands, or arms to inhibit a defender from running towards a ball carrier.
2. Use of the hands to grab the shoulder pads inside of the armpits within the frame of the body is allowed.
3. Once the grab of the jersey/shoulder pad gets outside the frame of the body, or defensive player has disengaged, an offensive holding infraction will apply.
4. Defensive Holding is defined as any grabbing of body parts, or clothing to slow down or inhibit a receiver from running down field.
5. Defensive players may engage offensive players at the line of scrimmage with hand placement inside the frame of the body and grasping the shoulder pads just under the armpit area. Once the ball carrier has committed, they must disengage and work to down the player.

43. DELAY OF GAME

Offense / Defense, 5 yards, replay down

1. In addition to the offense not snapping the ball within the 30 second play clock, this can include:
2. Too many players on the field, not wearing required equipment during a play.
3. Defense delays or hinders the offense from making the next snap.

44. ILLEGAL FORMATION

Offense / Defense, 5 yards, replay down

1. Fewer than five players on the line of scrimmage for offense. These five players must be contiguous with the center. There must be one player on each side of the center (within both players arm's length of the center) and one eligible receiver on each side of the center.
2. Fewer than two players on the line of scrimmage for the defense.
3. Showing blitz directly over the center or aligning any defensive player directly over the center on the LOS.
4. Unbalanced LINES are not allowed – a Tackle/Guard must be on each side of the center.
5. A Tight End can align next to a Tackle as long as there is no eligible receiver “covering” him up.
6. Unbalanced receiver formations are allowed (3x2, 3x1).

45. OFFSIDE (NEUTRAL ZONE INFRACTION) / FALSE START

Offense / Defense, 5 yards, replay down

1. If a defensive player enters the neutral zone before an offensive player commits a false start, the penalty is on the defense, even if no contact is made.
2. This rule encompasses encroachment, false start, neutral zone infraction, and offsides.

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46. DIVING

Offense – 5 yards from spot of foul

1. Diving forward in an attempt to gain yardage or advance the ball.
2. Diving into the end zone or for a first down.
3. Note: A player is allowed to dive to catch the ball or down a ball carrier with a 2-hand touch, as long as the touch is not overly physical in nature.

47. A-GAP VIOLATION

Defense / Offense – Live ball foul only. 5 yards, replay down

1. Any non-defensive linemen who lines up in or makes LOS penetration immediately in the A-gap.
2. Any defensive player who lines up in the protected A gap zone: extending laterally from the Center to the Inside half of the Tackles and extending 4 yards directly in front of the center, no defensive player may align in this protected A gap zone.
3. Any QB sneak in the A-gap from under center.

48. TAUNTING

Defense / Offense, 10 yards from spot of foul

If occurring on touchdown, a 10-yard penalty will be assessed on the extra point try. If occurring in the field a play, a 10-yard penalty will be enforced.

1. Any negative acts, profanity, or remarks directed towards an opponent or opposing team that derides, mocks, or baits an opponent are considered taunting.
2. Celebration with teammates after a touchdown or after a great play are allowed. As long as they are not directed at an opponent or opposing team.

Any rule questions, clarifications, or game day issues can be directed to:

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