



Flag Football

7v7 Rules



Updated July 13, 2022

1. Pre-Game – Equipment, Game Time, Defaults

Play that is competitive, overly aggressive, rough and/or unsportsmanlike such as pushing, shoving, elbowing, shouldering, tripping, hacking, slashing, sliding, tackling, ball blasting, chirping, name calling, threats and intimidation, is prohibited and will not be tolerated by FCSSC. FCSSC IS FIRST-AND-FOREMOST-FOR-FUN. ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM THE GAME, THE LEAGUE, THE CLUB AND/OR ALL OF THE ABOVE. All players should go out of their way to avoid contact with other players and/or eliminate actions or behaviours that could jeopardize player safety. If accidental contact occurs it is expected that players will apologize for that contact, ensure everyone is alright and stop the game to seek appropriate help as required. **This rule supersedes all others!**

Equipment/Set-Up: FCSSC will provide all game equipment: an NFL size Football, six (6) pylons, and a set of ten (10) flag belts (with 2 flags each) for every game. In addition, FCSSC's Game Coordinator will set up the field according to the following dimensions:

- Total field length - 70 paces
- Between the end zones - 50 paces
- End zones - each 10 paces
- Total field width - 35 paces
- A pace is approximately 3 heel-to-toe steps.

FCSSC's Game Coordinator will keep score when possible (ie. Only one game running a time). If the FCSSC Game Coordinator is unable to keep score, we ask that each team select a player to assist in keeping score. Each player should bring both light and dark coloured shirts to each and every game. Please wear shorts/pants with NO pockets. This will reduce finger injuries when trying to grab the flags.

Game Time/Defaults: Please arrive 15 minutes early so that you can start your games on time. Games are 55 minutes in length, with a 5-minute break at halftime. Teams may call a one (1) minute time-out per half if needed except in the final 10 minutes of play. Teams are comprised of six (6) players with a minimum of two (2) women and two (2) men. A default will occur if any team cannot field a squad by 10 minutes after the official start time. A team can play with a minimum of 4 people, so long as gender requirements are met. Captains may agree to waive rules regarding gender requirements, but this should be decided before the game starts. **IF IT IS AGREED THAT THE GAME COUNTS, IT COUNTS!**

2. In Game – General Rules, Offense, Defense, Making Calls

General Rules

- Flags should be placed on the hips of each player at the outset of each play. The flag must be on top of all clothing and cannot be folded over such that the Velcro attachment is on the inside or hidden.
- To start the game, teams can decide who gets 'first ball' by either a coin toss or playing a game of rock, paper, scissors.
- The kicking team will kick-off from their own end zone line. All players on the team must line-up behind the kicker and can only start to run downfield once the ball has been kicked. If the ball is kicked out of bounds, the offensive team will start their drive at the spot where the ball left the playing area – there is not an option to ask for a re-kick.
- From the time the ball is placed on the line of scrimmage, the offense has 30 "steamboats" to start the next play.
- Running down the clock with an unnecessarily long huddle is not an acceptable strategy.
- If a defending team sacks the Quarterback (or any offensive player with the ball) in the offensive end zone, the ball is turned over at midfield to the defending team.
- If an interception occurs in the end-zone and the player is flagged down, a touchback will occur, and the intercepting team will gain possession on the 10-yard line.
- If the ball is kicked through the end zone on either a punt or kick-off (or kicked into the end zone and the receiving team elects not to run the ball out by letting the ball go), the offensive team will start their drive 10 paces out from their end zone, in the

centre of the field. If the receiving team elects to catch the ball in the end zone (or runs back into the end zone after catching the ball), the receiver is in play and runs the risk of being tackled in his/her own end zone.

- After a punt/kickoff, if the ball comes in contact with a player on the receiving team before touching the ground, the ball is live (considered a fumble).
- Teams may call a one (1) minute time-out per half if needed except during the last 10 minutes of play.
- **Ending the Half or Game** - With three minutes to go in the half (game), there are 5 plays left in the half (game). A kick-off after a touchdown is not considered a play.

Offense, Quarterback and Receiving

- The offensive team has four (4) downs to cover the entire field. If the offensive team fails to score on the 4th down, the ball is turned over and the new offensive team starts their drive from the position where the last play ended.
- The offensive team may punt on the 4th down, and does not need to notify the defense of their intentions to do so.
- The Quarterback may only run the football past the line of scrimmage when/if any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage at the end of the 5 "steamboats". If a defensive player does not cross the line of scrimmage, the Quarterback cannot run the ball.
- To start an offensive play, the ball must be self-snapped by the Quarterback. There is no minimal distance required by the Quarterback who can be either up close to the Center or in a shot-gun.
- Spinning - An offensive player CAN turn their bodies from side to side, but cannot spin 360 degrees. This prevents defensive players from injuring their fingers. If a player spins, the ball is dead at the point where the spin occurred.
- Offensive players may not block or otherwise obstruct any defensive players.
- Offensive players cannot protect/cover/hide/block his/her flag. If the person with the ball blocks the defenders hand from grabbing their flag, the play is dead where the block occurred.
- An offensive player can dive or jump to catch a ball, but once in possession he/she cannot leave their feet at anytime. This includes all forms of jumping and diving. If the ball carrier breaks this rule, the play is dead at the point where the player stood before the infraction.
- If a flag inadvertently falls off the ball carrier, or if a player attempts to grab a flag and there is not one on the hip of the offensive player, the play is stopped at that location.
- First point of contact: A receiver is determined to be "in" or "out" based on their first point of contact with the ground. If a player lands first with one foot in-bounds, and then the other foot touches down out-of-bounds, it IS a legal catch, but the play ends where they touched the out of bounds line. If a player catches the ball, but is straddling or lands straddling the sideline, it is NOT a catch. Only a one foot landing is needed - as long as that foot touches down in-bounds.
- Lateral passes and 'flea flicker' plays are permitted.

Defense

- The defense must loudly count five (5) "steamboats" before rushing the Quarterback.
- While counting, the defense must line up at or behind the line of scrimmage.
- Steamboats should be counted as follows: "one...steam...boat".
- Once the ball has come in contact with a 2nd offensive player (Quarterback hand-off or throw to receiver), the defending players can cross over the line of scrimmage before the end of the 5 "steamboats" and engage with the offensive players.
- A defender may not step in front of the ball carrier or block a running lane if it has the potential to create an unsafe play. Likewise an offensive player should not run with their head down, in an attempt to run through the defenders. In other words, incidental contact is inevitable, but players should not be run over. Please use your best judgment.

Dead Play

- If a player carrying the ball slips/falls and one knee touches the ground, the play is dead and the defense does not have to remove a flag for the play to stop. Please observe this rule carefully as it helps to promote safer play.
- If the football touches the ground for any reason (kick-offs, fumbles, handoffs, etc) the ball is dead and the play is over. The next play is started at the spot where the ball hit the ground.

Violations & Making Calls

- The offending player should call their own infractions, however any players involved with the infraction can also make a call.
- Players not on the field at the time of any incident cannot make a call at any time.
- Fouls (including picks) that are called by the offence or defence will lead to a re-down (the play starting over from the line of scrimmage). Once a foul is called, the play must stop and the play is started over. If the offence/defence is fouled, they can choose not to call a foul if it is an advantage to do so. Example - A receiver is fouled as they catch the ball and continues to run the ball in for a touchdown.
- All games are self-refereed. Disputes about a possible infraction are to be discussed amongst the people involved in the play. If an agreement cannot be reached, simply redo the down. Please play safely and with good spirit.

3. Post-Game – Departure & Score Reporting

Discrepancies: All games are self-refereed. Any disputes will be discussed amongst the two team captains. Please play honestly and call your own infractions (in the kitchen, net, etc). If a dispute cannot be settled the point should be re-served

Score Reporting: Captains from each team are responsible for reporting or confirming game scores within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Scores can be reported or confirmed via our website at www.forestcityssc.ca. Score reporting reminders are NOT sent via email in the new system, so captains are asked to remember to log in to their accounts to report the scores.

Departure: Each week after your game, it is important to leave the court in a timely manner. Teams could be playing after you and will need to get their game started on time. It is also possible that the facility could be closing upon the completion of your game and all staff and FCSSC members will need to depart at that time.