



RECREATION

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INTRAMURAL FLAG FOOTBALL (INDOOR) RULES

Last Revised: Winter 2024

 = Revised Changes

Part A: WR Governing Rules

1. Warrior Recreation Intramural Leagues are guided by the Spirit of Competition (S.O.C.). Every participant, player, captain, and league staff will all have an active part in upholding the S.O.C.
2. Warrior Recreation Flag Football is governed by the policies and rules put forth by Football Canada in conjunction with the rules listed here, as well as the policies as outlined in the Spirit of Competition.
3. Officials, team captains, and players are all responsible for the good order and conduct of the game.
4. The official's judgment is final for all decisions regarding game play.
5. A more comprehensive list of rules and regulations for all intramural sports can be located in the Intramural Handbook found [here](#).

Part B: The Teams

1. The conduct of the participants must be in accordance with the Spirit of Competition. Any player violating these guidelines may be asked to leave the facility.
2. It is recommended that both teams be dressed and ready to play 10 minutes before the scheduled start of their game. All games start at the time published on the schedule.

3. Team Members: Teams consist of 5 players playing at one time. The minimum number of players required to begin the game is 4.
4. Grace Time: Any team without the required number of players within 5 minutes of the scheduled time will default that game. If any team member is in doubt about their eligibility, they should speak with their team captain, League Staff, or the Intramural Coordinator immediately.
5. If players, team officials, game timekeeper, etc. show up for a game in a condition which in the official's opinion, render them unable to take part, the official may default the game.
6. Specialized Positions: There are no designated positions.
 - a. The quarterback must identify themselves if the team is using a snapper.
7. Varsity players are not eligible to participate in an intramural sport similar to their varsity sport while in season. This means that varsity football players are not eligible to participate in the fall semester. A maximum of 2 varsity players per team and a team with any varsity players must play in the highest division.
8. Substitutes will remain on the sideline and any substitution must be done during a stoppage in play.

Part C: Team Captain

1. The team captain must be familiar with the Spirit of Competition guidelines and Eligibility rules, and inform players of all rules and conduct expectations.
2. Each team must identify their team captain at the beginning of each game to the official. If the captain is not present, the team will nominate a player to be the acting captain for that game. This person will take on all duties and responsibilities as the team captain. This person will be identified as the acting captain on the score sheet.
3. It is the team captain's duty to know his/her duties and responsibilities before the game begins.
4. Only the captain should be speaking with the officials during the game time. Players who wish to discuss any issue with an official must ask the captain to speak on their behalf.
5. It is each captain's responsibility to have the team roster ready on the score sheet by the start of game time.

6. The captains of each team are to complete the S.O.C. on the score sheet honestly by giving the opposing team a rating of 0, 1, or 2. They will also sign and validate the score upon completion of the game.
7. Any concerns that a captain may have regarding officiating, should be made aware to the League Staff in a timely and respectful manner.

Part D: Officials

1. Flag Football will have one official assigned to each game.
2. The official will require that all participants sign in. Any participant not signing in will not be able to participate.
3. Flag Football will be mainly self-officiated meaning that both teams are responsible for calling their own infractions honestly. The official may step in at any point to enforce a rule if they choose.
4. The official will keep time and score.
5. If there is a dispute, the official will make the final decision.

Part E: Equipment

1. No jewelry (unless properly taped down), non-elastic head bands, or hard support braces are allowed during game time.
 - a. Captains will be warned at the beginning of the game to have all their players remove such items.
 - b. During the game, players found with such items will be asked to leave play until the item is removed or properly secured.
2. Religious wear may be worn while participating and must not be a safety risk to the participant, participant's team, opponents, or officials.
 - a. Items that are a safety risk will be asked to be properly secured.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the player to properly secure the item safely.
 - c. If there are any questions about an item's safety risks, players should contact League Staff or the Intramural Coordinator more than 24 hours prior to their game.
3. The following equipment will be required or provided:
 - a. Belts and Flags
 - b. Pinnies
 - i. Available to be signed-out at the Equipment Desk.
 - c. Game Ball

- i. A game ball will be provided for game play only (not for practicing).
 - d. Field markings
 - 4. The following equipment will be optional:
 - a. If available, practice equipment may be signed out at the equipment desk.
 - 5. Proper attire must be worn to participate (no jeans or pants / shorts with zippers).
 - a. Proper athletic footwear for the sport is required (no street shoes, boots, dress shoes, bare feet, or sandals etc).
 - b. Cleats are recommended but not mandatory.
 - c. Steel toe shoes and metal cleats are not permitted for use.
 - 6. No football pads or casts allowed.
 - a. Knee braces must be padded with slow to recover foam, not just pants.

Part F: General Game Rules

- 1. Playing Time
 - a. Games consist of two, twenty minute run time halves.
 - i. Time will only stop for an injury or official's discussion.
 - ii. Two-minute warning in each half.
 - 1. Given at two minutes or immediately following the play completed during the 2 minute mark.
 - 2. Time does not stop.
 - iii. The official will indicate the final play of the half.
 - iv. No game will exceed 55 minutes after the scheduled start time.
 - b. Halftime will be 5 minutes.
 - i. Both teams may agree to start earlier.
 - c. The offensive team is allowed 30 seconds between plays.
 - i. The team is allowed 45 seconds during a kickoff.
 - ii. The official will issue a 10 second warning.
 - iii. If time is exceeded, a loss in down will be issued.
- 2. Overtime/Tie
 - a. If a game is tied and time permits, all tied games will be decided by the college method, not sudden death.
 - i. Both teams get the ball the same number of times from the opponent 20 yard line until there is a difference in score.
 - ii. If the defense intercepts and returns for a touchdown, they win the game.
 - iii. If still tied with 5 minutes remaining, each team will get one last chance. If still tied, the game will remain a tie.
 - b. If time does not permit, the game will remain a tie.

3. Time Outs: There will be no time outs.
4. Mercy Rule: If a team is leading by 42 points or greater, the game will be called complete and end immediately.
5. A game recorded as a default/forfeit will be scored 14-0.
6. Captains will sign the game once completed and determine the SOC rating for the opponent.
7. The winner will be determined as the team that has the most points at the end of the game or overtime.
8. Games will be played on Field House A, B, and C.
9. Games may be cancelled due to inclement weather. An email will be sent out to notify all teams if cancelled prior to the start time. If the official cancels the game, the following will happen:
 - a. The official will call the game and notify league staff immediately.
 - b. If the game is cancelled during the first half, the game will be rescheduled.
 - c. If the game is cancelled during half-time or later, the score will be final.

Part G: Specific Game Rules

1. Fields are the size of 1/3 of a soccer field, with fixed first downs at each 10, 20, and 30 (center) yard lines.
2. Offense
 - a. A touchdown is worth seven points.
 - i. Received by catching a ball in the end zone (legal catch) or having a player run the ball passed the line on the end zone (breaking the barrier) even if both feet are not in the end zone.
 - b. There are no points awarded for free kicks.
 - c. The offensive team has 3 downs to make it to the next FIXED 10 yard line to avoid turning the ball over.
 - i. On your last down (3rd) your team may decide to go for it or declare you will punt the ball.
 - d. A safety occurs when the offensive team is de-flagged in its own end zone.
 - i. A safety is worth 2 points and results in a change of possession to the team awarded the 2 points.
 - e. The ball-carrier may never:
 - i. Flag shield (using the hand or ball)
 - ii. Lower the shoulder (charge)
 - iii. Crawl
 - iv. Dive OR slide to advance the ball

- v. Toss the ball in the air to avoid a flag pull while in possession of the ball (toss to self)
 - vi. Stiff-arm
- f. A ball-carrier that falls or a receiver that dives OR slides to make a catch will result in a dead ball.
 - i. If the receiver is in a kneeling position before catching the ball, they are able to try to make a run.
 - ii. Jumping over a fallen defender is legal.
- g. Every player on the line of scrimmage is eligible to receive a pass.
- h. Blocking is not permitted.
 - i. If an offensive player is ahead of the ball carrier, they must stand still or make an effort to get out of the way of the play.
 - ii. If a defensive player deems they were blocked or interfered with, a penalty can be called.
- i. Offenses have the choice to use a snapper or to allow the quarterback to self-snap.
 - i. The snapper is still eligible to receive a pass, but may not protect (block) for the quarterback.
 - ii. If the offense chooses to have the quarterback self-snap, the quarterback must snap the ball within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage.
- j. An offensive player without the ball that steps out of bounds on his own is ineligible to re-enter during that play.
- k. A legal catch is defined the same as in the NFL. For a legal catch, the player must control the ball throughout the act of touching both feet and any other part of the body, except the hands, to the ground in bounds.
 - i. If pushed out of bounds by a defender during the act of catching the ball, an official may rule that the player would've been in bounds without the contact and award a catch.
- l. There are no fumble recoveries.
 - i. The ball is always dead where and when it hits the ground. An incomplete lateral is a fumble.
 - ii. Fumbles and laterals may be caught in the air by either team and advanced.
 - iii. A player may not dive to break-up a lateral.
- m. Snaps that hit the ground are considered fumbles.
- n. To be eligible to participate in a given offensive play, a player must have been in the previous huddle (no sleeper plays) and no player changes can occur during a "hurry-up" offense.
- o. If the team chooses to use a center the ball must be snapped through the center's legs.
 - i. At that time, possession of the ball must be transferred from the center to another player (quarterback) and cannot remain with or come back to the center.
 - ii. The quarterback may then transfer possession of the ball to an eligible receiver.
 - 1. Note that this effectively makes illegal a center sneak and associated plays.
- p. All players on the field must start with their flag belt done up.

- i. If the belt comes off during the play, for whatever reason, that player is still eligible to receive a pass and run with the ball, but it becomes 1 hand touch.
- q. The quarterback has the option to run the ball ONLY AFTER the 5 second steam boat count at which point the defender counting "steam-boats" may choose to rush them.

3. Defense

- a. After 5 Steam-boats, the defender calling out steam-boats has the choice to bring optional pressure.
 - i. One person on the defensive team MUST ALWAYS be counting steam-boats.
 - ii. If the quarterback fakes a hand-off, it is not considered a play and steamboats should still continue.
 - iii. Quarterbacks faking a throw, is not considered a play and steam-boats should continue.
 - iv. The ONLY time a quarterback can run or a rusher can rush is AFTER 5 steamboats.
- b. One blitz allowed per offensive series.
 - i. Defined as the crossing of the line of scrimmage before the count of 5 steamboats.
 - ii. "Blitz used" is at the discretion of the official.
 - iii. Any member of the team may blitz, not just the "steam-boater," so long as only a single person blitzes.
- c. Bumping or jamming defenders is not permitted.
- d. The defender cannot use contact to break up a pass play.
 - i. It's pass interference to shield the receiver's eyes.
 - ii. The defender cannot de-flag the receiver prior to the reception.
 - iii. A pass may still not be broken-up with contact.
 - iv. A receiver that becomes de-flagged by no act of the defense will be deemed ineligible.
 - v. It is the responsibility of each player to be cognizant of their equipment.
- e. Both teams are responsible for retrieving the ball, whoever is closer, and bringing it back to the line of scrimmage after each play as fast as possible.
- f. The defense is not allowed to simulate offensive calls by trying to sound like the quarterback.
 - i. This includes, but is not limited to, saying such things as "hut-hut" or "go-go".
 - ii. This is called "Imitating the Offensive Calls".

4. Specials

- a. Teams kickoff from their own goal line.
 - i. The restraining line is the center line (20 yards).
- b. The ball must travel past the restraining line on a fly or its dead at the spot.
 - i. All muffs are dead at the point where they hit the ground.
 - ii. Any ball kicked that goes straight out of bounds before the end zone comes into play at the point of exit closest to the kicking team's 10 yard line.
 - iii. Any ball kicked passed the end zone starts at the automatic 10 yard line.

- iv. The ball must be kicked off the ground or a regulation kicking tee or punting motion.
- v. The ball may not be kicked off a kicking block or another player's toe or foot.
- vi. Fair catch is legal if the hands are waived above the head.
- c. There will be NO inside kicks.
 - i. The kicking team must give 5 yards around the ball until the receiving team touches it.
- d. After a safety, the kicking team may elect to kickoff or punt from their own goal line.
 - i. The kick or punt is treated the same as a kickoff.
- e. Punting
 - i. Punts are declared (no fakes).
 - 1. Teams may not punt once they have passed their own 10 yard line.
 - 2. The snap must travel a minimum two yards from center.
 - 3. As usual, bad snaps are dead where and when they hit the ground.
 - 4. The punter may take as many steps forward (no lateral steps) as he likes.
 - 5. The receiver is allowed a 3 yard neutral zone to make the catch (fare catch).
 - ii. No blocking of a punt is allowed.
 - 1. All muffs are dead at the point where they hit the ground.
 - 2. If a muff does not hit the ground, the team catching the ball has possession, in which case the receiving team may advance the ball but the punting team may not.

Part H: Penalties, Fouls, and Misconducts

1. If there is a penalty against the defensive team, the offense will maintain any gained yards and an automatic first down, or a first down on the 1 yard line if the infraction happens in the last 10 yards before the end zone.
2. If there is a penalty against the offensive team then the offensive team will lose all gained yards on that play, plus they will lose that down.
 - a. For example: if a receiver catches the ball on 1st down, runs 12 yards and stiff arms a defender, a penalty can be called and it will be 2nd on the original line of scrimmage.
3. Possible penalties:
 - a. offensive/defensive pass interference
 - b. jamming
 - c. blocking
 - d. stiff-arms
 - e. charging
 - f. Offside on the offense will result in a loss of down
 - g. Offside on the defense will result in a 5 yard penalty.
 - i. Offside will be called immediately.

- h. Unnecessary Roughness: Any infraction in flag football that is deemed potentially hazardous by an official can be elevated to Unnecessary Roughness.
 - i. This can lead to an ejection.

Part I: Playoff Specific Rules

1. Each team will get one time out per game.
2. Tiebreaking Procedure
 - a. Captains will play Rock, Paper, Scissors to determine who has first ball.
 - i. The winning team may choose to receive or defend.
 - b. Teams will play using college football overtime rules.
 - i. The team with first ball will start at the opponent's 20-yard marker and have one set of downs to score.
 - ii. The opposing team will also start at the opponent's 20-yard marker and have one set of downs to score.
 - iii. Both teams will have an equal amount of opportunities to score.
 1. If after both teams have had an equal amount of opportunities the game is still tied, another round will be played.
 2. If after both teams have had an equal amount of opportunities and the game is not tied, the team with the most points will be the winner.

Part J: Tie-Breaking Procedures

1. If teams have the same number of points at the end of the regular season, the following will be used in order to determine the team that is ranked higher in the order they are listed:
 - a. The team having the higher S.O.C. will be ranked higher.
 - b. The team with the fewest defaults and forfeits will be ranked higher.
 - c. The team with the fewest defaults will be ranked higher.
 - d. The team having won the head-to-head match will be ranked higher.
 - e. The team having the best ratio of points for/against will be ranked higher.
 - f. The team having the better point differential will be ranked higher.
 - g. A coin flip will determine the team to be ranked higher
2. If multiple teams are tied, the above criteria will be used until one team is ranked higher OR lower.
 - a. The process will then reset and continue until all teams have been ranked.

If there are any questions about the above rules, please email League Staff at leagues@uwaterloo.ca and they will be more than happy to explain and clarify any questions.