



Bloomsburg University Intramural Sports Program

IM Sports - 7 on 7 FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

The current National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Flag and Touch Football Rules will be in effect with the following interpretations and exceptions.

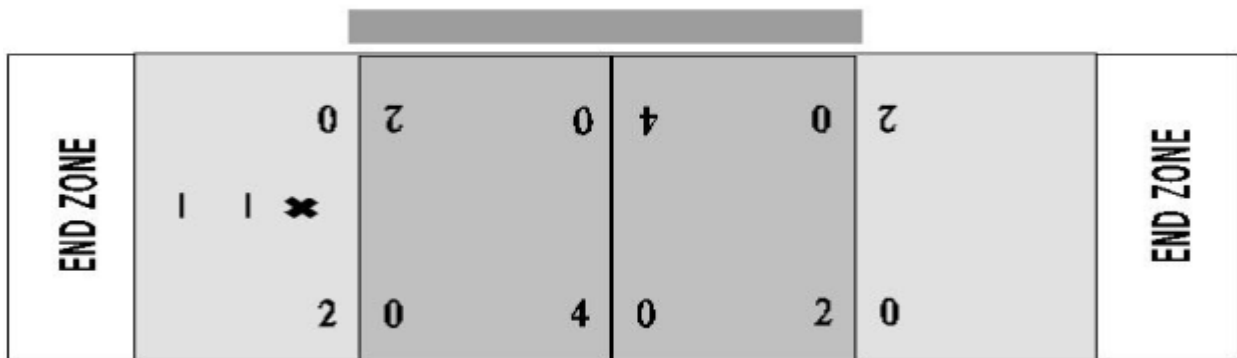
TEAM CAPTAINS: Team captains are responsible for their team's actions. They are also the only players allowed to talk with officials during the game. It is each team captain's responsibility to ensure that all team members are listed on the team roster. Team captains are not only in charge of their team's actions, but also the fans that are present.

1. **Players, Substitutes, and Roster Size**

- A. Eligibility: MUST SHOW BU ID for every competition. Currently enrolled BU undergraduate students, graduate students, and BU Faculty/Staff personnel are eligible for intramural competition.
 - i. A player is ineligible for any further activity as of the date he or she withdraws from school.
 - ii. Players listed on the current year's varsity sport roster are ineligible to participate in the same/comparable intramural sport.
- B. There will be four weeks of regular season play and one week of playoffs.
- C. Roster
 - i. Each team shall have a minimum of 7 players on the roster.
 - ii. A team must have at least 5 players to start the game or it is a forfeit.
 - iii. New players may be added to a roster at any time during the "Regular Season". **Players must be added by 12 noon on game day AND be on the printed roster.** If a player's name is NOT on the roster they can NOT play.
 - 1. Players may only play for ONE TEAM within its division (men's, women's, coed). I.e. A participant may play on one men's team, and one coed team in the same sport, but not two men's teams, or two coed teams.
 - iv. Playing in ONE game "declares player's team" for the remainder of that league.
 - 1. Players cannot switch teams after they have played in a game.
 - 2. Violation will result in suspension of the player and team captain along with forfeiture of the game/s in question.
 - v. All current Varsity Football players are ineligible to participate. *See Intramural General Rules*
 - vi. Former Varsity Football Members will be limited to two (2) players per roster. *See Intramural General Rules*

2. **Playing Area and Conditions**

- A. All games will be played in Redman Stadium or on the IM/Rec Fields.
- B. The field measures 80 yards in length, goal line to goal line, and approximately 35-40 yards in width, and divided into four 20 yard zones.



3. **Equipment and Uniform**

- A. **SHORTS/PANTS:** Players must wear shorts or pants without belt loops or pockets. Shorts with pockets may not be turned inside out or taped.
 - i. Players playing with pockets, will NOT wear a flag belt and will be 1 hand touch.
- B. Each player's flag belt must be worn with a flag on each side and one in the center of the back. Flag belts should contrast with color of pants/shorts.
- C. The only headgear that is acceptable will be **headbands and soft-knotted bandanas**.
- D. **JERSEYS:** A team's players must have the same color t-shirts or jerseys, and they must remain tucked in at all

times or shirts can be cut off. The flag belt must be visible. *Any team not dressed in like-colored shirts must wear the colored intramural jerseys.*

- E. Each offensive unit will choose which ball they wish to use, including their own, their opponent's or the IM ball (balls must be regulation size).
- F. A player who has any visible amount of blood on their uniform shall be considered an injured player and must leave the game immediately for appropriate treatment and/or changing of clothes.
- G. No hooded sweatshirts.
- H. No dangerous or inappropriate equipment may be worn. No hard casts allowed. All metal on joint braces must be safely covered to officials' satisfaction.
- I. Mouth guards are strongly recommended, and players wearing glasses should have shatter proof lenses and straps.
- J. Absolutely no jewelry shall be worn. A warning will be issued to a team for an infraction of this policy. If a 2nd infraction arises in a given contest by the team in question, will be assessed a 5yd. Dead Ball penalty .

** Exception - medical ID tags which must be taped to the body. Check with the IM Office prior to your team's game day.

4. Time Regulations and Length of Game

A. Game-time:

- i. Two **20**-minute halves; 3 minutes between halves.
- ii. **Time outs**: Each team is entitled to 3 timeouts per game. Only players in the game call timeouts - not coaches or substitutes on the sidelines.
- iii. The clock stops during the final **two (2) minute of the 2nd half** for:
 - 1. Incomplete pass - clock starts on snap. (On a backward pass that is dropped, clock continues to run)
 - 2. Out-of-bounds - clock starts on snap
 - 3. First down - dependent on the play. Ex: If a player gets first down and his/her flag is pulled off in bounds, the clock is stopped until the ready for play whistle - then the clock starts again. If player ran out of bounds, clock starts at snap.
 - 4. Penalty and administration - the clock stops on the penalty and is re-started dependent on the previous play, like part "c" above.
 - 5. Touchdowns - No time runs during extra point attempts. Clock starts on snap when opponents take possession.
 - 6. Change of possession - clock starts on the snap
 - 7. Team time-out - clock starts on snap
 - 8. Injury - clock starts on snap
 - 9. Referee's time-out - clock starts on his/her discretion
 - 10. Inadvertent whistle - starts on ready for play whistle
- iv. **Mercy Rule**: If a team is winning by **30 or** more points with 10 minutes or less or 19 points under 2 minutes in the 2nd half, the game shall be over.
- v. A team has 25 seconds to snap the ball after the referee marks it ready for play.

B. **Over Time**: Only occurs during the playoffs. A coin flip will determine the options. All overtime periods shall be played toward the same goal line.

- i. An overtime period consists of one possession by each team.
- ii. Unless moved by penalty, each team will start first and goal from the 10-yard line. Each team will have a series of downs to score a touchdown.
- iii. If the score is still tied after one overtime period, as many period as necessary will be played to determine a winner.
- iv. Try for points will be attempted and scored during overtime.
- v. Each team is entitled to one timeout for the entire overtime session, and time outs do not carry over from regulation.
- vi. If the defensive team intercepts a pass or fumble and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the series is over, the ball will be places at the 10 yard line and the defense will now receive their series of downs.

5. Forfeits and Starting Games

A. **GAME TIME is FORFEIT TIME!!!** If a team does not have the minimum number of players (4) at the scheduled game time, the game will be called and either a default or forfeit will be recorded.

- i. **Forfeits**: Teams that have **FEWER THAN HALF THE MINIMUM PLAYER REQUIREMENT**(less than 3 players) present on the field/court at game time will lose the game by forfeit. A deposit of up to \$20.00 will be assessed to the team captain prior to participation.

1. **1st Violation**= Teams/individuals will lose forfeit deposit.
 2. **2nd Violation**= Teams that forfeit for the second time, without notification to the Intramural Sports Office, maybe dropped from the tournament.
 - ii. **Defaults:** Teams that have three (3) players, but not enough players to compete at game time will lose the game by default. Teams may also inform the Intramurals Office (389-5288) by 4:00 pm (after 4:00pm will be a forfeit) on game day to receive a loss by default.
 1. **1st Violation**= Grace, teams/individuals are not penalized.
 2. **2nd Violation**= 1 Forfeit. Team/individual will lose their Forfeit Fee and team captain must speak with the Intramural Director to discuss further league play.
 3. **3rd Violation**= 2 Forfeits. Team/individual will be dropped from the tournament.
 - iii. **Grace Period:** A team will forfeit a game when it is not ready by game time. The team ready to play will have the choice to grant their opponent a Grace Period, at which they will have 10 minutes to field the minimum number of players to play. Game clock will start. The following penalties will be enforced during the 10 minute grace period.
 1. 3 minutes: Team ready for play will be awarded a 6pt. touchdown.
 2. 6 minutes: Team ready for play will be awarded a second 6pt. touchdown making the score 12-0.
 3. 9 minutes: Team ready for play will be awarded a third 6pt. touchdown making the score 18-0.
 4. 10 minutes: Team ready for play will be awarded 1 extra point and the game will be declared a forfeit with a final score of 19-0. Teams must be ready to play at their scheduled game time. Once team minimum is met, late arrivals can still play once they check in.
- B. A toss of a coin will determine possession or direction (**no deferring**) at start of the game or in the tie game situations. Possession and direction are switched for the second half.

6. Playing Rules and Scoring - This is a non-contact game!

* Official NIRSA rules will prevail in all cases not otherwise covered, as long as they fall within the spirit of Intramurals

A. Plays from scrimmage:

1. The ball shall be placed at your own **14** yard line to begin each half of a game and following a Try, touchback or safety, unless moved by penalty. Note: ***There are no kicks of any kind.***
2. After gaining possession of the ball, a team has **four (4)** downs in which to reach the next zone line to gain a first down. If this does not happen, the ball will be turned over to the opposing team at the same spot.
3. The offensive team must be behind the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.
4. The defensive team must line up behind the one yard restraining line, which will be designated with a cone by the official before each play.
5. **NEW RULE!!**The snapper is the only offensive player required to be on their scrimmage line at the snap.
6. All receivers on offense must be at least 3 yards from either sideline prior to the snap.
7. The quarterback must receive the snap at least 2 yards behind the center. No direct snaps.
8. At the snap, one offensive player may be in motion, but not toward the opponent's goal
9. Rushing - There is no limit on the number of defenders who can rush once the ball is snapped, and they do not have to line up at the line of scrimmage.
10. Offensive team's blockers can only screen block. Players may not interlock legs during an offensive set. Arms must be behind their backs while they obstruct an opponent, without initiating contact.
11. Defensive rushers must go around the offensive player's screen block without using their hands as a wedge.
12. Screen blocking is also allowed for a ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage.
13. After each play, the team on offense is responsible for returning the ball to the line of scrimmage. The referee will mark the ball set for play after a reasonable period of time for retrieval of the ball. Intentional delays will result in delay of game penalties.

B. Legal catches, possession, de-flagging a ball carrier:

1. All players are eligible for a pass.
2. If a player has possession and control of the ball, and if one foot first lands in bounds, it is a catch or interception, even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out-of-bounds. Just like high school rule.
3. Any time the knee touches the ground and the ball is in the player's possession, the play is dead. However, a catch by a kneeling or prone in-bounds player is a completion or interception.
4. No player may go out-of-bounds and return during the current down unless blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent.
5. De-flagging: A player is downed and his/her forward progress ceases when he/she is de-flagged (belt clip has come undone) as a result of the defense, while the ball is in his/her possession. The official will determine where the de-flagging occurred, **not where the belt actually fell off.**
6. To legally down a player, it is necessary to pull flag belt from the ball carrier.

7. If belt falls off inadvertently, the ball carrier will be downed by one hand touch between the shoulder and knee (includes ball carrier's arms and hands).
8. **Flag Guarding:** Ball carrier cannot guard/cover their flag by using their hands, arms, the ball, or their jersey in such a manner as to prevent an attempted de-flagging from being successful.
9. A fumbled ball becomes dead when it touches the ground. If the ball is fumbled forward, the ball is placed at the spot where the fumble occurred (when possession was lost). If the ball is fumbled backward, it is placed where it hit the ground. If the offense fumbles the ball in its own end zone, a safety is awarded to the defense. If the offense fumbles the ball into the opponent's end zone, the ball is awarded to the defense and placed on the **10-yard** line. (touch back)

C. **Officials decisions:**

1. If play is affected by an errant football or players from the other field, the whistle will be blown and the team in possession will be given the inadvertent whistle options. If an errant football or players enter the field but do NOT affect the action, the play will continue. This is an official's judgment call.
2. No protests will be reviewed which are concerned with the judgment calls by the officials. Only rule interpretations may be questioned by the team captain. Every effort will be made to secure and train the best available officials.

D. **Punts:** Prior to putting the ball in play on fourth down, the offensive team must declare whether it chooses to go for a first down or punt. If the offensive team chooses to kick, **the ball must be kicked.**

1. The offensive team may put the ball in play with a punt on any play, but it must notify the defensive team. There are no quick kicks.
2. The snap must be received at least two yards back and the kick must be executed behind the scrimmage line within a reasonable time. There are no fake punts.
3. After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick the ball immediately and in a continuous motion.
4. All members of the kicking team must be on the offensive line except the punter himself. No player may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked.
5. Kick out of bounds - If the kicked ball goes out of bounds between the goal lines or comes to rest in bounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot.
6. A punt that touches anything while the ball is on or behind the receiving team's goal line can be downed by the receiving team and is a touchback.
7. Opportunity to catch a kick - A player of the receiving team who is within the boundary lines and who is so located that he/she could have caught a kick which is beyond the scrimmage line while such a kick is in flight must be given an unmolested opportunity to catch the kick. **Penalty:** Kick Catch Interference, 10 yards.
8. The defensive team may attempt to block a punt as long as team members do not cross the plane of the defensive restraining line. A blocked punt that is caught behind the line of scrimmage (on the offender's side) may be advanced by the offense.
 - i. When a punt, which has crossed the line of scrimmage, touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team. If it hits a player on the receiving team and then is caught in the air, it can be advanced by the receiving team. If it is caught by the kicking team (after the ball contacts a receiving team player), the ball is dead, belongs to the kicking team, and a new series begins for the kicking team.

E. **Scoring:**

1. A touchdown counts 6 points.
2. After a player scores a touchdown, they must raise their arms and remain in the end zone until an official checks their belt.
3. If belt doesn't come off, the touchdown or point after will be called back, the player may be disqualified, and a **five** yard penalty will be assessed, with loss of down.
4. The scoring team can opt to go for a 1 point attempt from the 3-yard line, a 2 point attempt from the 10-yard line, or a 3 point attempt from the 20-yard line. This option must be chosen at the request of an official. To change the try decision, a time-out must be taken.
5. If scoring team spikes the ball or taunts the defensive team after a touchdown, defensive team has the option of enforcing the penalty on the extra point (at 13-yard line for 1 pt. conversion, 20-yard line for 2 pt. Conversion or far 10 yard line for 3 pt. conversion).
6. If the defense commits a penalty on a play where the offense scores a successful touchdown or try, the penalty can be accepted and will be enforced from the succeeding spot (next play).
7. If penalty occurs on the offense on an extra point try and the team scores, the extra point will be replayed after assessing the penalty.
8. If there is a defensive penalty on the extra point, the penalty will be 1/2 the distance to the goal line, down replayed.
9. A team is permitted the extra point if a touchdown is scored as time expires, if it will affect the

- game's outcome.
- 10. Safety results in 2 points.

7. Fouls, Violations and Penalties

5 Yard Penalties

- Delay of Game (Dead Ball)
- Encroachment (Dead Ball)
- False Start (Dead Ball)
- Assisting the Runner to Gain Forward Progress
- Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of down)
- Illegal Shift
- Infraction of Scrimmage Formation
- Infraction of the Punt Formation – Kickers
- Infraction of the Punt Formation – Line Players
- Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)
- Offensive Player Illegally in Motion
- Offensive Player Not Within 15 yards of Ball (Intentional Grounding)
- Player Out of Bounds When Ball is Snapped
- Receiving Snap Within 2 Yards of Scrimmage Line
- Substitution Rules Infraction
- Offensive blocking, illegal use of hands (Loss of Down)

10 Yard Penalties

- Contact Before or After Ball is Dead
- Contact With Opponent on Ground
- Defensive Use of Hands
- Dive or Run into a Player
- Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking
- Illegal Participation
- Illegal Player Equipment
- Illegal Substitution/Replaced Player
- Illegally Secured Flag Belt on Touchdown (Loss of Down by Offense) (Automatic First Down if by Defense)
- Kick Catch Interference
- Interlocking of Linemen to Create Wall
- Obstructing or Holding the Runner
- Pretended, Unfair Substitution
- Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
- Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing Ball During Dead Ball
- Flag Guarding
- Strip or Attempt to Strip the Ball
- Tackle Runner
- Illegal use of hands by defensive rusher/bull rush
- Throw Runner to the Ground
- Unnecessary Contact of any Nature
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Coaches, Substitutes, Fans
- Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct

Disqualification Associated with some 10 Yard penalties

- Flagrant Personal Foul
- Flagrant Spiking, Kicking or Throwing Ball
- Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players, Coaches, Substitutes or Others Subjected to the Rules
- Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct
- Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt Defense (Auto 1st Down)
- Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt Offense (Loss of Down)
- Intentionally Contacting an Official
- Intentionally Kicking at or Swinging an Arm, Hand, or Fist at any Opposing Player (maybe ejected)
- Tackle the Runner (maybe ejected)

8. Participant Conduct and Fair Play – “SPORTSMANSHIP”

- A. All players, captains, and spectators will be held to a reasonable standard of conduct and fair play. Violators of this standard will be subject to sport-specific penalties, and/or possible removal from the building and future Intramural sports.
- B. **SPORTSMANSHIP RATING:** Behavior before, during, and after an intramural contest is included in each rating.
 - i. Teams must maintain a 3.0 average in order to qualify for playoff play. Teams must also maintain a 3.0 average during playoffs in order to advance.
- C. **EJECTIONS:** All ejections will result in at least a one game suspension and scheduled meeting with the Director of Intramurals and that sports coordinator.
 - i. The player that is ejected will be given 2 minutes to leave the playing area and facility. If the player does not leave within 2 minutes their team will be penalized a bench technical foul. If the player has still not left the playing area and facility the game will be called a loss to the team the player was a member of.
- D. See Intramural General Rules for Rating Scale and Consequences.

9. Playoffs

- A. **Playoff Eligibility: Team must be in good standing with no unsportsmanlike conduct issues.**
 - i. **Players must be on official team roster**
 - ii. **Players must have played in at least 2 regular season games.**
 - B. The number of teams who qualify, length, and playing rules for playoff games may be altered as time, weather, facility, and equipment conditions require. A variety of options will be considered before altering the preferred playoff format.
 - C. Teams must be able to play any day during playoffs. Championship games maybe be scheduled on Fridays or Sundays. Make sure you have enough players on your roster so you do not have to forfeit during playoffs.
 - D. The IM Office does not personally notify teams regarding playoff schedules.
 - E. Teams need to familiarize themselves with the Team Sportsmanship Rating System located in the Intramural General Rules Handbook as this will affect their eligibility for playoffs at the end of league play.
- 10. Officials and Manager Duties**
- A. The Intramural official or supervisor at each field will be responsible for scoring the game and checking ID's and rosters.
 - B. Teams should verify the score at the end of each half, and after the game. Captains must sign the score sheet to verify the game winner.
 - C. Coordinators/Officials have the power to enforce all Intramural rules as they apply to players, coaches and spectators.

CO-REC MODIFICATIONS FOR FLAG FOOTBALL

All of the regular rules apply with these modifications:

1. **Number of Players** – The CoRec games shall be played between two teams of eight players, four men and four women. A team must have at least 6 players present to start and continue a game. The six players must contain at least three female members.
2. **Minimum line players** – Offense must have 5 players on their scrimmage line at the snap.
3. **Game Ball** – CoRec games will use the regular, intermediate, junior, or youth size football.
4. **Scoring** – All touchdowns scored by females and touchdowns following a legal forward pass completion with a female passer count 9 points.
5. **Illegal Forward Pass**
 - a. The term “closed,” means a male player may not throw a forward pass completion to any other male player. The term “open” means any player can complete a forward pass to any other player.
 - b. During the offensive team’s possession there may not be two consecutive forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule also applies for all try (point after touchdown) attempts. If the previous scoring play was male to male, the try will be closed.
 - c. If a male passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver, the next forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or female receiver for positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be beyond the offensive team’s scrimmage line (marked by the orange disc). There is no foul for a female receiver being deflagged behind the offensive scrimmage line. The next forward pass completion remains “closed.”
 - d. If a female passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the scrimmage line who then runs beyond this scrimmage line, it is an illegal forward pass.
 - e. The penalty for an illegal forward pass is five yards from the spot where the pass is released, and a loss of down. One example of an illegal forward pass is the second consecutive male-to-male completed forward pass.
 - f. Any foul, whether accepted or declined, will have no effect on whether the next forward pass completion is “open” or “closed.”
6. **Running the Ball**- An offensive male runner (this includes a pass receiver) cannot penetrate through the offensive line of scrimmage with the ball. **Penalty:** Illegal procedure - 5 yards.
 - a. A male runner may advance the ball through the offensive line of scrimmage after the ball has been previously advanced legally beyond the line.
 - b. Females have no limitations on their advancement behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.

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.