



# NFL FLAG FOOTBALL

"Just for the fun of it!"



## Welcome to the NFL Flag Football 2022

NFL Flag is a fun and accessible non-contact program for girls and boys ages 6-15 years old. Sports have the power to transform athletes and unite communities. That's why we're bringing flag football to every corner of the U.S. to provide youth athletes with the opportunities and experience to get in the game. Backed by the NFL with an emphasis on football fundamentals and community involvement, NFL FLAG is here to empower youth athletes across the nation.

The Franklin Recreation Department is pleased to introduce you to NFL Flag Football. The league's first national flag football program for boys and girls. Here, you will find the rules of NFL Flag Football, ideas and information on practice, games, and drills for your team. NFL Flag has been created to help you become part of a well-organized national program emphasizing football education, participation, and sportsmanship. NFL Flag provides a new and exciting recreational opportunity for kids in and around Franklin. Although NFL Flag is a non-contact activity, as with any sport there is a possibility of "incidental contact," which is why each child is required to wear a mouthpiece, which we will provide at the first practice.

*Philosophy:* Athlete first, winning second. HAVE FUN!

### What to Expect

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*Each participant will receive:*

- NFL reversible football jersey
- A team-identified certificate of excellence
- Mouthpiece (please note, we supply every player with a mouthpiece. For your child's protection we ask that you impression after first practice and bring everyday. We have a limited supply of extra mouthpieces, please don't lose them.)

*Each team will receive:*

- Three NFL team-identified footballs
- 10-12 NFL Flag identified flag belts

*What Equipment do I need to play flag football?*

**Flag football flags and belt.** Players wear belts with flags that hang along their sides and opponents have to pull the flags off of the ball-carrier's belt. Every player receives an official NFL FLAG football belt and flag football flags, either from their coach or league organizer.

**NFL FLAG team jersey.** Every player also receives a team jersey upon registration.

**Mouthguard.** This is the only protective gear that players wear. We recommend having a backup one in your bag, just in case. The Rec. Dept will supply one mouthpiece to each player.

**Football cleats.** Metal cleats are not allowed in flag football. Sneakers or soccer cleats work fine on the turf.

**Football gloves** (optional). Some players prefer to use football gloves, which give extra grip to help control the ball. These aren't required, though.



# Franklin Recreation Department

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### Flag Football Schedule 2022

The schedule will fluctuate this year between Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. Each team will play 2 of the 3 nights each week. There will be changes in the schedule throughout the season due to conflicts with MIAA and Franklin High School field hockey events. Unfortunately, we will need to make adjustments throughout the schedule, but you will be notified. Our first practice will be Tuesday, September 6, 2022

### Information for Parents

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On the first night, please check in directly with your team that corresponds with the schedule so that you can receive your mouthpiece, game shirt and be introduced to your coach. Players can begin warming up with a friend while the team arrives. Players should be checking in directly with their team/coach, not with the front table.

#### How Teams are Created

We do our best to accommodate all parent requests, but due to an overload of request in previous seasons we are redesigning our request policy. Only requests meeting the following requirements will be considered.

- Players will be permitted to request to play with ONE other player. In order for his or her request to be considered, the player being requested must also request to be with said player. Example: John Doe requests to play with Joe Smith, Joe Smith must then also request to play with John Doe in order for the request to be granted. Players will no longer be able to request a particular coach. If a player is requested by a coach they DO NOT get an additional friend request.
- We value the dedication and efforts of our Volunteer Coaches. When registering to coach a team, Coaches will be granted the request of ONE additional player other than their own.

Please note THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES that special placement will be made. We will do our best to meet requests.

### Principles for Parents

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Parents, athletes and coaches must work together for the best possible youth football experience and performance. The following suggestions are meant as general guidelines for parents. As a parent, you understand the daily pressures your child faces. We believe that football should be an outlet for fun. Encourage your child and allow them to have a good time.

- Remember that your child learns more from your actions than your words. Practice good sportsmanship by being respectful to players, parents and coaches on both teams.
- There is nothing wrong with applauding a good play made by the opponents. Parents can be good role models by appreciating the efforts made by both teams.
- Most coaches are volunteers and work hard at what they do. To lessen confusion, and out of respect for their position, please allow your child's coach to be the only one coaching players on the field.
- Please refrain from loud or rude behavior.
- Offer encouragement and positive reinforcement, not criticism, to your star player.
- Encourage discipline by having your child arrive on time for practices and games.

- Belonging to a team requires commitment. Parents can help children understand this through regular attendance and preparation.
- Whenever possible, volunteer. This shows participants the value of being a team player.

Please respect the officials and their calls. It's OK to disagree, but inappropriate to disparage.

#### **Cancellations:**

If we cancel, you will be emailed directly. We will also post it under the flag football website:

<https://www.franklinma.gov/recreation-department/pages/nfl-flag-football>

PLEASE DON'T CALL THE OFFICE, as we can not possibly answer 350 phone calls. We will make a decision by 4:30pm

## **Coaches Needed**

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We are looking for coaches to help in the development of our flag football program. Please email Jack Geromini: [jgeromini@comcast.net](mailto:jgeromini@comcast.net) to be added to the coaching list

A good NFL FLAG coach understands the principles of football, but also is experienced in teaching basic physical skills to young players. Participation by all players is part of NFL FLAG philosophy, so coaches must be able to make each player feel important and part of the team. Please sign up with the Recreation Department and fill out a CORI form and become part of our flag football team today.

#### **Attendance:**

Participants are encouraged to attend all practices and games. However, we know that families are busy and may miss on occasion. Schoolwork, religious events, and family obligations are more important than flag football. But, please show courtesy and explain to your coach ahead of time if you know that you will be absent. After the first night, players will meet directly with their team

#### **Equipment:**

Participants may choose to wear plastic molded cleats or sneakers. Metal baseball spikes are **NOT** permitted. Shorts, sweatpants, or nylon wind pants are acceptable. Once we start games, players must wear their NFL team jersey, which will be handed out before the games. We will provide all necessary football equipment; footballs, kicking tees, flag/belt setup, plays, pylons, cones, lights, etc. The only thing that parents need to provide is a water bottle and **make sure that players remember their mouthpieces each week. A good idea is to leave it in the glove box of your vehicle.**

#### **Coaches:**

The NFL Flag Football program requires the assistance of good coaches that will teach kids proper mechanics and skills while encouraging team concepts and sportsmanship. Please familiarize yourself with your children's coach and help make this a positive experience for everyone. If you are interested in helping out, just ask, we need your help. Parents should understand that like any activity your child takes part in, the volunteers are what make it a success. Make sure to attend the pre season meeting and bring your completed CORI form if you would like to volunteer. Please contact Jack Geromini, [jgeromini@comcast.net](mailto:jgeromini@comcast.net) if you are interested in coaching. He is our coach coordinator and will act as the liaison between the coaches and the Recreation Department.

#### **Cancellations:**

This league is designed for the enjoyment and development of the players. There is little enjoyment or development in playing in the rain, which is why we **WILL CANCEL**. Simply stated, if it rains more than a drizzle, we will cancel. If a practice or game is cancelled, we will add a day on to the end of the session to make it up. We will make a decision by 4:30 p.m. and email the entire program. Make sure your email is correct to receive the latest information.

#### **Rules:**

- Listen to your coaches-Kids will be asked to sit out if they do not listen to coaches.
- Goofing around will not be tolerated-We cannot afford injuries with over 450 players.
- Parents should get into the habit of staying to watch games. Don't leave your child unattended and expect to pick them up 15 minutes late! Please be prompt, as our coaches have families too!

- Be safe, use caution when playing. Reckless play can lead to unnecessary injuries.
- HAVE FUN

For information on our NFL Flag rules, please see document labeled NFL Flag Football Rules.

## Coaches Drills

### **Throwing:**

Teach the 3 step drop for quarterbacks. Hike, then 1...2....3 steps back...set-up, elbow up, release, follow through. Lead your receivers and throw to them on the cut. In other words, throw right as your receiver is making their cut to the inside or outside. Not after they have already turned and looked at you. If you wait too long, the defense knows where the ball is going.

### **Catching:**

Form a “W” with your hands out in front of your eyes, thumbs touching. As the ball arrives, fingers absorb the ball and bring into the body. Discourage “basket” catching the football with arms and chest. Instead, tell players “Look it in!”

### **Running:**

Proper hand off technique- Left arm up, right arm down if taking handoff to the right  
Right arm up, left arm down if taking handoff to the left

Take the hand off the right way to avoid fumbles. Switch the ball to the outside of the defender, closest to the sidelines. “Stiff arms” are not permitted in flag, nor is slapping hands away from defenders going after flag. This is called flag guarding and will be penalized! **The best way to run with the football is straight ahead up the field while keeping your hips unpredictable to the defender. Ball carriers turning hips to avoid flag grabbing is legal.**

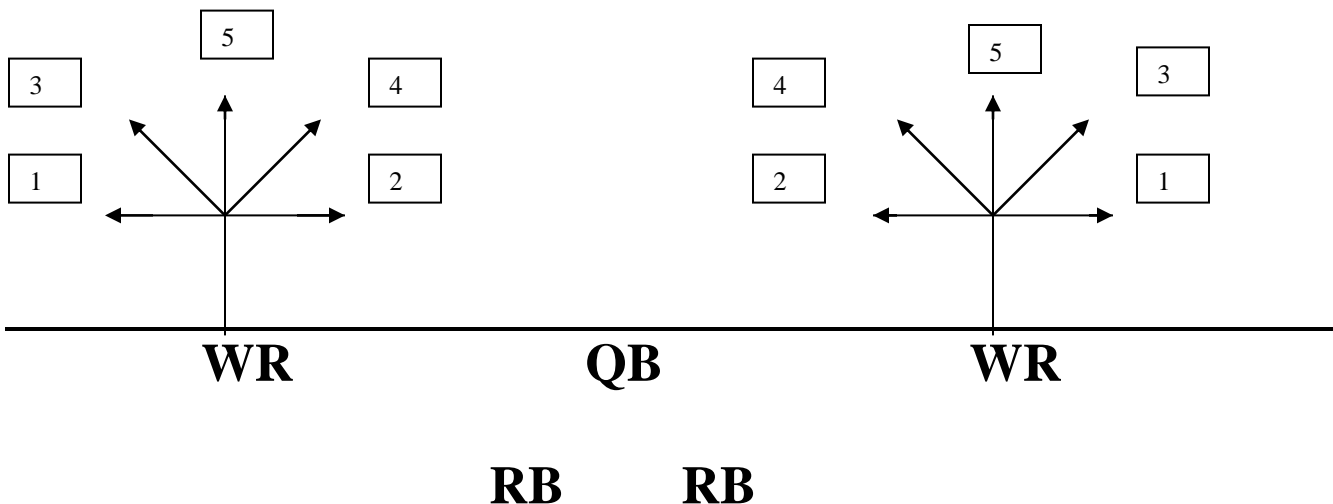
Drill: Hand off chain: Line up two lines facing each other and start by walking. QB breaks down and puts the ball into the running backs open pocket. RB takes the hand off and curls over the ball as to protect it from defenders view.

### **Defense:**

- 1) Three step drop for defensive backs. Chest forward over your feet, elbow pumps
- 2) Read the QB
- 3) Stay on the receivers hip (or) React to the run

BINGO!!!!!!!!!!!!!! After an interception, yell BINGO and your teammates will know to turn and help you get in the end zone.

**Passing Tree:** All players will learn the basic passing tree, which is an easy way to teach kids the pass patterns. The QB will quickly tell the players what number they will run in the huddle. ODD NUMBERS are out routes, EVEN NUMBERS are in routes. This way the receiver knows that a #1 is a down and out It's quick, easy and gets the kids out of the huddle and into the game faster. Avoid confusing play calling that will delay the action and bore the defense.



# NFL Flag Football Rules



## The Basics

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has **four** plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has **four** plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- Teams change sides after the first 25 minute half. Possession changes to loser of coin toss and the clock does not stop.

*Players/Game Schedules:* Teams must field a minimum of five players at all times.

Teams consist of 9-11 players – usually five on the field, with five substitutes.

*Timing/Overtime:* Games are played to 50 minutes running time. If the score is tied at the end of 50 minutes, teams move directly into overtime. The first team to score wins.

Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time-out per half.

Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

### Scoring Touchdown:

6 points

Extra point:

1 point (played from 5-yard line) or

2 points (played from 12-yard line)

Safety:

2 points

*Running:* The quarterback can not run with the ball.

Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.

"No-running zones" located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.

The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).

The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed.

*Receiving:* All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).

As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

*Passing:* Shovel passes are allowed.

The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.

Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

*Dead Balls:* The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled "dead" when:

— Ball carrier's flag is pulled

— Ball carrier steps out of bounds

— Touchdown or safety is scored

— At the point of an interception (**interception returns are not allowed**)

— Ball carrier's knee hits the ground

— Ball carrier's flag falls out

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

*Rushing the Quarterback:* All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 15 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball is handed off, the 15 yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate 15 yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

*Sportsmanship/Roughing:* If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE

TOLERATED.

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Penalties: All penalties will be called by the referee.

**Defense:**

Offsides

Five yards and automatic first down

Interference

10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal contact

(holding, blocking, etc.)

10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal FLAG pull

(before receiver has ball)

10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal rushing

(starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

10 yards and automatic first down

**Offense:**

Illegal motion

(more than one person moving, false start, etc.)

Five yards and loss of down

Illegal forward pass

(pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage)

Five yards and loss of down

Offensive pass interference

(illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)

10 yards and loss of down

FLAG guarding

10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down

Delay of game

Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

*Attire:* Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

Official NFL FLAG jerseys must be worn during play.

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.