

Lakewood Flag Football

Rules/Regulations

Edited and arranged by Andrew Hartfield 2023

Rules subject for review and change during and out of season for its sport. Any changes will be communicated and updated.

D4 – Under-8; D3 – Under-10; D2 – Under-12; D1 – Under-14

Games will be played 6v6 (subject to change depending on team size).

Players are expected to play a minimum of one half of the game.

Field Size

- 70 yds long x 26.67 yds wide

Inside Dimensions

- End zone: 10 yards long on each end (designated by complete line)
- “No Run” Zone: 5 yards before End Zone and 5 yards before First Down Line (No Run Zones are designated by dashed lines) *See below for more details on the “No Run” Zone*
- First Down Line: Midfield Line (designated by complete line)

Ball Size

- D4: Pee wee (size 6)
- D3 & D2: Junior (size 7)
- D1: Youth (size 8)

Game Time

- 4, 9 minute quarters
- Clock does not stop except under the last minute of 2nd and 4th quarter for normal football plays (i.e. incomplete passes, penalties, first downs, turnovers, etc.)

Switching sides

- Teams will switch sides only at halftime.

Play clock

- There is a 30 second play clock for the offensive team once the referee places the ball and is ready. This will be managed by the offensive referee.

Officiating

- There will be at least 2 officials per game; 3 if enough are available.
- One referee will be designated as the offensive referee and be placed on the offensive side of the line of scrimmage. One referee will be designated as the defensive referee and be placed on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage. The two will be across from each other. If available, there will be a referee on the line of scrimmage designated for calls on the line of scrimmage. This referee may also be responsible for the Down Marker.

Number of Downs

- 4 downs to get a first down; 4 downs to score a touchdown. If the offensive team gains a first down (midfield line), downs reset and the team must score in the four downs allotted.
- On 4th down, teams (D3, D2, & D1) have the option to go for a first down or “punt” the ball to the other team.

Ball Placement

- First drives of the first half and second half begin on the team’s own 5 yard line.
- If a team chooses to punt (only D3, D2, & D1), the ball will change possessions and be placed on the 5 yard line of the team receiving the ball.
- After touchdowns and following point after try, the ball will be placed on the team’s own 5 yard line to begin the drive.
- If a team goes for it and loses the ball on turnover on downs, the ball is placed to the team receiving the ball on their own 20 yard line (No Run Zone).
- After a safety, the team that won the safety will begin with the ball on their own 5 yard line.
- Touchbacks on an interception in the end zone will be placed on the intercepting team’s 5 yard line.

Coaches positioning

- Depending on which age group, when a coach is allowed on the field, only one from each team is allowed at a time.
- When some age groups begin playing with no coach on the field, coaches must remain on the sideline on their designated side of the midfield line.
- For any coaches that are not on the field, they must remain on the sideline on their designated side of the midfield line.

Substitutions

- If a coach decides to make substitutions during play, there will be no time stopped on the play clock (or game clock) unless a timeout is called.
- It is expected that each player plays at least half the game and that they have the opportunity to play both defense and offense.

Scoring

- D4: not kept
- D3: kept but not used for playoffs
- D2 & D1: kept and used for playoffs
- Values: touchdown = 6 points; extra point = 1 point (5 yards out/”no run” zone) or 2 points (10 yards out); Safety = 2 points

Line of scrimmage markers

- There will be a small “dot” to signify the offensive line of scrimmage and the rush cone where a rusher must start from when the ball is snapped.

OFFENSE

Lining up

- 3 players must begin on the line of scrimmage.
 - There must be at least one yard between the center and any other player on the offensive line to avoid any “walls” that would be created to prevent the defense from rushing after the quarterback or running back after a handoff.
- All players must remain still when the ball is snapped.
 - ONE player can be put in motion before the snap and move during the snap.
- D4: ball can be sidesnapped.
- D3, D2, & D1: ball must be snapped between the legs.
- The first player to touch the ball will be designated as the Quarterback. This player (QB) must have clear possession of the ball for the play to resume. *This will be very important to know and distinguish when applying running rules that are listed below.*
- No blocking is allowed to avoid intentional contact. Offensive players cannot initiate contact. By doing so, it will result in a penalty.

Running the Football

- The Quarterback (first player to touch and possess the ball) cannot run the ball across the line of scrimmage.
- Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage is allowed.
- Once the ball crosses the line of scrimmage, handoffs are not allowed and will be called dead on the spot (treated as a fumble). If the toss or handoff is made in a forward motion (going closer to the end zone than its starting point), this will be considered an illegal forward pass and be penalized.
- For D3, D2, & D1, 5 yards before the goal line and first down line are considered “No Run” Zones and the offensive team must throw the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- After a handoff or backwards pass/toss, the ball can be run past the line of scrimmage.
- The ball carrier cannot dive. This will result in a penalty.
- The ball carrier cannot jump or hurdle other players. This will result in a penalty as above.
- The ball carrier’s feet determine the spot of the football when the flag is pulled.
- Any form of a fumble will result in a dead ball and the offensive team will retain possession from the spot of the fumble.
 - If the carrier appears to be attempting a legal or illegal pass and is caught by the opposing team, it is considered an interception and a turnover.

Receiving the Football

- All six players are eligible to catch the football.
 - The first quarterback is eligible if a handoff or pitch has taken place.

- A completion consists of a receiver gaining control of the football in bounds while having at least one foot touch in bounds before stepping out of bounds.
- If the player catches a pass with any part of his/her body other than their feet or hands on the ground, the play is dead and the ball is spotted at the point of completion.
- Simultaneous possession by an offensive and defensive player is awarded to the offensive player.

Passing the Football

- A forward pass can be completed behind or beyond the line of scrimmage. Only one forward pass can be completed per play.
- While in the “No Run” Zone, the forward pass must be caught beyond the line of scrimmage. (No shovel passes on a jet sweep for example)
- Once the ball leaves the quarterback’s hand, the defender can make a play on the ball. The defensive player must avoid contact with the receiver.
- The quarterback has 7 seconds to pass the ball. If the pass is not attempted by 7 seconds, it is considered an incomplete pass. The offensive referee is responsible for keeping time on this scenario.
 - This 7 second rule will be used for any play when the ball does not pass the line of scrimmage. So even in a handoff, the new ball carrier must pass or run beyond the line of scrimmage within 7 seconds of having the ball.

Dead balls

- Play is ruled dead when one of the following occurs:
 - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled or falls off.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Ball carrier’s knee, butt, elbow, etc touches the ground (feet and hands do not count).
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - Pass falls incomplete.
 - When the ball is fumbled. Ball will be placed at the spot of the fumble.
 - When the snap is fumbled by the quarterback and hits the ground.

DEFENSE

Lining up

- Teams can run man-to-man or zone defenses. Various schemes are allowed.
- No more than three defensive players can line up on the line of scrimmage. Some space must be given between the defender and center around the ball.
- Any amount of players can line up behind the rush cone, but the number of players that can rush are dependent on the Division's rule for players rushing.

Defending the Pass

- Defenders cannot make contact with the receivers before the ball is thrown or while the ball is in the air. When the ball is in the air on a pass, the defender does have the right to make an attempt on the ball.
- Interceptions can be returned and when they step out of bounds or the flag is pulled is when the play is dead. If the defender catches the ball in the end zone and either steps out of bounds, takes a knee, or has their flag pulled, the play is dead.

Defending the Run/Reception

- When a ball carrier is running with the ball, the defenders must go after the player's flags on his/her belt. When they pull the flag, the play will be dead at the spot of the pull.

Rush Cone

- Each age group will have a "Rush Cone" in place for the defending team. This will be placed 10 yards from the offensive line of scrimmage.
- However many players that are allowed to rush for that specific division, can begin rushing the quarterback when the ball is snapped (NOT when the quarterback says "hike" or claps). This will be monitored by the defensive referee in conjunction with the line of scrimmage referee.
- Once the ball leaves the quarterback's hands, the 10-yard rush rule is no longer in effect.

Crossing the Line of Scrimmage

- Once the ball leaves the quarterback's hands, all players are allowed to cross the line of scrimmage; regardless of their starting position.

“No Run” Zone

“No Run” Zones and how they work

- “No Run” Zones are applied for D3, D2, & D1 5 yards from the First Down Line and the Goal Line of the endzone.
- “No Run” Zones are not applied for D4.
- Once a first down is gained, the only “No Run” Zone that can be applied will be the one in front of the Goal Line.
 - After getting a first down, if the offensive team takes a penalty or a negative play that results in the ball being placed behind the midfield line, the “No Run” Zone is NOT applied since the first down has already been gained.
 - After getting a first down, if the offensive team takes a penalty or a negative play that results in the ball being placed behind the midfield line, a first down cannot be regained. The offensive team must score or “punt” on 4th down.
- An offensive team cannot take a penalty or negative play to get out of the “No Run” Zone. The only way out is by getting a first down or touchdown. So in the event of an offensive penalty, sack, etc. the offensive team is still in the “No Run” Zone.
- Taking a knee to run out the clock while in the “No Run” Zone will not count as a penalty against the offensive team.

Onside “Kicks”

Onside “Kick”

- Onside “kicks” will only be for D2 & D1 games.
- Onside “kicks” can only be applied in the 4th quarter by the losing team.
- An onside “kick” will take place from the team’s own 10 yard line and they have one play to get past the midfield line.
- If they fail to reach the midfield line, the opposing team will take over on their own 10 yard line.
- If the team attempting the onside “kick” gets past the midfield line on their one play, it will be considered a first down and will proceed as normal with 4 downs to score.

Penalties

Pre-snap/dead ball penalties (play will be called dead on the spot and the down will not count)

- Encroachment (Defense)
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- False Start (Offense)
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Delay of Game (Offense)
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down

Offensive Penalties:

- False Start
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Delay of Game
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Illegal Formation
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Illegal Motion
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Illegal Run
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Offside
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Intentional Grounding
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; loss of down
- Illegal Pass
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; loss of down
- Flag Guarding
 - 5 yard penalty from the spot of the foul; loss of down
- Shielding
 - 5 yard penalty from the spot of the foul; loss of down
- Diving
 - 10 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; loss of down
- Offensive Pass Interference
 - 10 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; loss of down
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
 - 10 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; loss of down
- Illegal Use of Hands/Contact
 - 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul; loss of down

Defensive Penalties

- Encroachment
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Illegal Rush
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Neutral Zone Infraction
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Offside
 - 5 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; replay the down
- Illegal Contact
 - 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul; automatic first down
- Illegal Flag Pull
 - 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul; automatic first down
- Defensive Pass Interference
 - 10 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; automatic first down
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
 - 10 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage; automatic first down

Division (age group)	D4 (Under-8)	D3 (Under-10)	D2 (2nd-3rd)	D1 (4th-6th)
Players on field (subject to change depending on team size)	6v6	6v6	6v6	6v6
Ball Size	Peewee	Junior	Junior	Youth
Game time	4, 9 minute quarters	4, 9 minute quarters	4, 9 minute quarters	4, 9 minute quarters
Clock	Doesn't stop*	Doesn't stop*	Doesn't stop*	Doesn't stop*
Starting off with ball	Away team 1st half, Home team 2nd half	Away team 1st half, Home team 2nd half	Away team 1st half, Home team 2nd half	Away team 1st half, Home team 2nd half
Timeouts	1 30 second timeout per half	1 30 second timeout per half	1 30 second timeout per half	1 30 second timeout per half
Score keeping	No	Yes**	Yes, used to determine playoffs	Yes, used to determine playoffs
"No Run" Zone	Not applied	Applied	Applied	Applied
Option to Punt	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coaches allowed on the field	All Season	Only games 1-4	Only games 1-2	Only games 1-2
Offensive Players required on the line	3	3	3	3
Defenders allowed at Line of Scrimmage	3	3	All	All
Number of Rushers Allowed	1	1	Any	Any
Sidesnaps allowed	Yes	No	No	No
Fumbles Allowed	No	No	No	No
Interceptions Allowed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Notes	*Under 1 minute remaining in the 2nd and 4th quarter, ball will stop on normal football plays (i.e. incomplete passes, turnovers, first downs, etc)			
	**Score displayed	but not used for	playoffs	

