



**GOLD CROWN**

FOUNDATION

**GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL**

**Game Rules**

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### I. Coaches

- 1) Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are always encouraged to support the coach.
- 2) Coaches must pass a background check and be Concussion certified.
- 3) Only 3 total coaches are allowed on the team sideline. Of those 3 coaches, 1 can be on the field at a time. They must always stay behind their team's play. All coaches are to wear a Gold Crown Coach Shirt during games and practices
- 4) Coaches are expected to adhere to all Gold Crown rules, policies, coaching guidelines and philosophies. This is a recreational program; all kids are to be treated equally, given equal play time and taught the fundamentals. They are to provide players a fun atmosphere in which they can learn and progress in a positive way.

### II. Eligibility/Rosters

- 1) All players' legal guardians must agree to the online waiver form at [teamsideline.com/apex](https://teamsideline.com/apex) for their specific league before participating.
- 2) Rosters will be set by Gold Crown staff. Players must be on a roster to be eligible to play. A team may borrow a player from another team, if both teams agree, and if the team in need cannot meet the minimum number of 5-players required to start a game. If a team can field the minimum number of players to start, teams are not allowed to borrow players.
- 3) Players can play up an age group, but not down.
- 4) If wearing reversible jerseys, home team will wear dark color; visiting team will wear white.
- 5) Teams must consist of at least 7-players, with a maximum of 12-players.
- 6) Teams must start a game with a minimum of 5-players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with 4-players on the field.

### III. Equipment

- 1) Ball must meet specifications of size and shape per age division. Gold Crown will provide all game balls.
- 2) UNIFORM: Player must wear the Gold Crown issued jersey, solid black shorts or pants (no print or stripes allowed), and mouth guard during games. No pockets allowed. A small emblem (ex. Nike symbol) will be allowed. Players can wear a long sleeve/hooded sweatshirt underneath their jersey on colder days.
- 3) Players jerseys must be tucked into the pants.
- 4) Mouthguards - required for all practices and games
- 5) Teams will use flags distributed by Gold Crown. All other flags are illegal. Flags must be worn as intended. Any looping, tying, cutting or flag alteration of any kind will be an unsportsmanlike penalty of 10-yards, plus loss of down.
- 6) Players must wear closed toe shoes. Football (all turf) cleats are encouraged, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
- 7) Players may tape forearms, hands and fingers. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
- 8) Hard casts will be allowed if player adheres to the following: -The cast must be fully covered in softening materials, such as, but not limited to, bubble wrap and a sock or cloth that entirely encases the cast. No hard materials may be exposed. -Player must have doctor's approval, and provide proof to the coordinator, that they can safely play while in a cast.
- 9) Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
- 10) Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped, NO POCKETS ALLOWED.
- 11) Receiver and sport gloves are ok.

#### Illegal Equipment

The use of headgear of any nature, shoulder pads, body pads, forearm pads, elbow pads, shoes with removable cleats regardless of materials, or any unyielding or dangerous equipment is prohibited. Forearm bands will be allowed if there is no exposed plastic or material that would be harmful to other players.

### IV. Start of Play

- 1) At the start of each game, team captains from both teams shall meet at the midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the coin toss.
- 2) The winner of the coin toss must choose offense or defense. The Team that loses the coin toss will pick which endzone to defend. Possession automatically switches to the other team at half.
- 3) The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 4 downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have 4 downs to score a touchdown.
- 4) If the offense fails to convert a first down or score a touchdown, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive at their own 5-yard line.
- 5) **Youth Division ONLY**, if a team is in the 5 yard no-run zone, and has more than one down, they must make their first attempt a pass while in the no-run zone. They may run on all other downs.

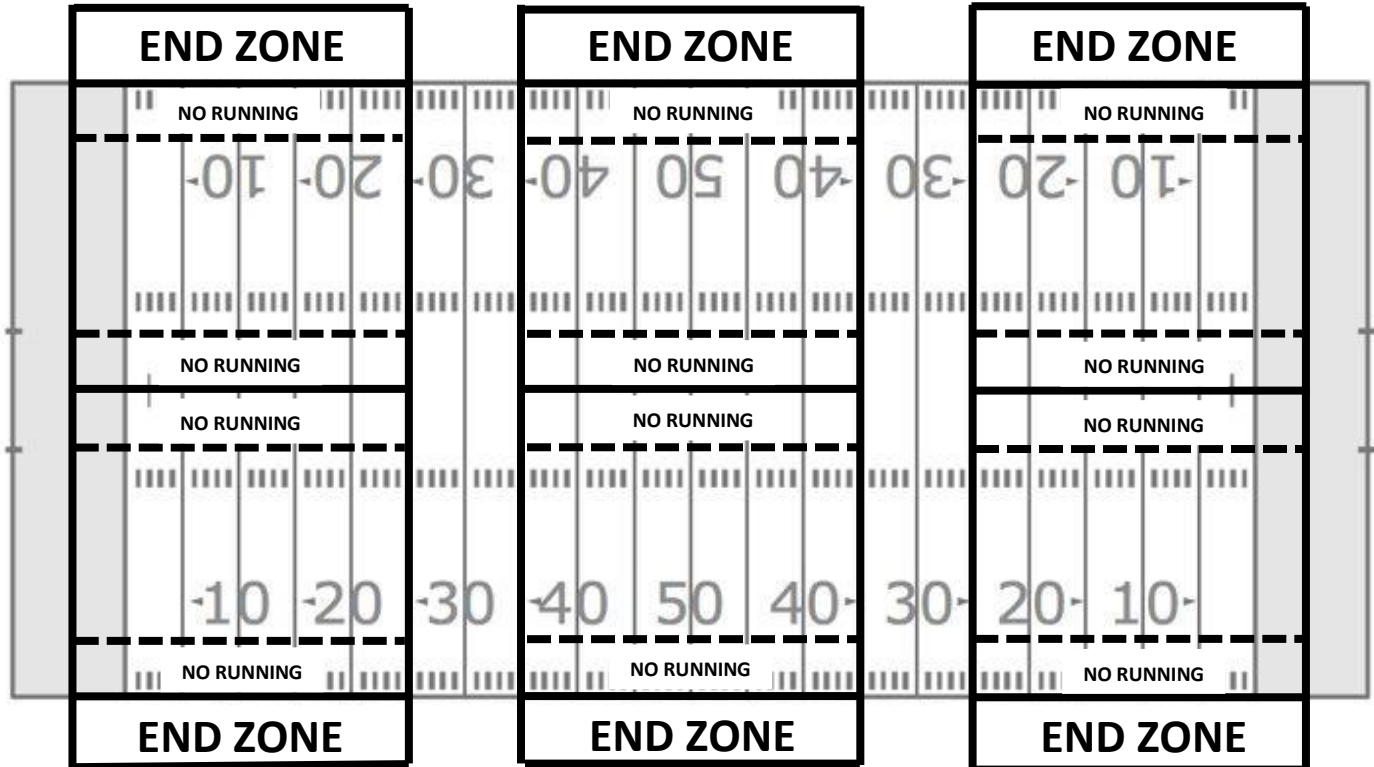
### V. Terminology

<b>Boundary Lines</b>	The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include sidelines, and back of end zone lines.
<b>Line of Scrimmage</b>	(LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football across the width of the field.
<b>Line-to-Gain</b>	The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score (mid-field)
<b>Rush Line</b>	An imaginary line running across the width of the field 7-yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.
<b>Offense</b>	The team with possession of the football.
<b>Defense</b>	The team opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the football.
<b>Passer</b>	The offensive player the throws the football and may or may not be the quarterback.
<b>Rusher</b>	The defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent them from passing the ball by pulling their flags or by blocking the pass.
<b>Downs (1-2-3-4)</b>	The offensive team has four attempts or “downs” to advance the football. They must cross the line to gain (mid-field) to get another set of downs or to score.
<b>Live Ball</b>	Refers to the period that play is in action. Generally used regarding penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
<b>Dead Ball</b>	Refers to the period immediately before or after the play.
<b>Charging</b>	The movement of the football carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, contacting the defender with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.
<b>Flag Guarding</b>	An act by the football carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the football carrier’s flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, leaving the feet or by blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand, arm or the football.
<b>Shovel Pass</b>	A legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the football underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot-put type of manner.
<b>Lateral</b>	A backwards or sideways toss of the football by the football carrier.
<b>Unsportsmanlike Conduct</b>	A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language.

**VI. Field**

The field dimensions are 60-yards (length) by 30-yards (width) with two 8-yard end zones, and a midfield line to gain. No-Run Zones precede each line-to-gain by 5 yards.

- 1) No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones (a 5-yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays (a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage).
- 2) Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
- 3) Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No Run Zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).



### VII. Timing & Overtime

- 1) Games are played with two fifteen-minute halves. The clock stops only for time outs. The clock will continue to run unless a timeout is called.
- 2) In the event of an injury, the clock will stop, then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
- 3) Half time is three-minutes long.
- 4) Play Clock - Each time the ball is spotted; a team has 45-seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- 5) Each team has one 60-second time out per half, no rollover to second half.
- 6) Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

#### Overtime

- 7) If the score is tied at the end of 30 minutes, there will be an overtime (OT) period.  
OT format is as follows:
  - a) Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession. The only exception is the first offensive team throws an interception and scores. In this case the game ends with the intercepting team winning.
    - i. First possession choice goes to the winner of regulation toss.
    - ii. Each team gets a minimum of one possession.
    - iii. Each possession will begin at the 20-yard line. (for all divisions)
  - b) All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect
  - c) There are no time-outs.
  - d) Overtime continues until tie is broken.

### VIII. Scoring

- 1) Touchdown: 6 points
- 2) PAT (Point After Touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line or less) or 2 points (10- yard line) Note: 1-point PAT is pass only, 2-point PAT can run or pass
  - a. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 10-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra points, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
  - b. If an interception occurs during a PAT the ball is considered dead and no points are awarded, and change of possession.
- 3) Safety: 2 points A safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls off and are touched below the waist, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.
- 4) Mercy Rule: After one team is winning by 18 points or more, the mercy rule will be in effect. After the team that scores lead by 18 or more points, the trailing team will take its possessions 6-yards from the midfield line instead of at its own 5-yard line (if they choose). That team still has 4 downs to cross midfield for a first time, and if successful, another 4 downs to then score a touchdown. The team that is behind will be allowed to play with an extra player. The team in the lead will not be permitted to run back interceptions but will take over offense at the spot of the interception. Should the trailing team close to within 18 points, then the normal rules of play will apply.

### IX. Offense

- a. The seven players on offense consist of a center (eligible), a quarterback and five eligible receivers.
- b. Two of those receivers must be on the line of scrimmage at the snap – each positioned on opposite sides of the center.
- c. Center. This player has two responsibilities. 1) Snap the ball to begin the play, a critical skill at all levels of football. 2) Eligible Receiver - Once the center has delivered the football to the quarterback – either directly or from a pistol or shotgun formation – the center is allowed to go out as an eligible receiver.
- d. Quarterback. This player receives the snap from the center and initiates the play either through a handoff or pass. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball across the line of scrimmage without first handing the ball off to a teammate and then receiving a second handoff back or receiving a pass.
- e. Receiver/Back. Any player who does not initiate the snap nor receive the snap is considered an eligible receiver/back and can either receive a handoff or catch a pass. Two receivers must be on the line of scrimmage at the snap – on opposite sides of the center – while the other three are at least one yard behind the line of scrimmage in either a slot or running back position. No player other than the quarterback may line up within three yards of the center.

### X. Defense

- a. All players on defense are eligible to rush the quarterback or drop back into coverage. However, only one rusher allowed per play. Any player who rushes the quarterback must be a minimum of 7-yards behind the line of scrimmage at the snap. For fields that do not include yard lines, officials will mark this 7-yard zone before every play.
- b. Following a legal handoff, any member of the defense can cross the line of scrimmage.
- c. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback.
- d. Teams are not required to identify their rusher prior to the snap.
- e. The rusher has a direct line to the QB, if an offensive player gets in their way it's impeding the rusher.

### XI. Live Ball/Dead Ball

- 1) The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- 2) The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. Regarding the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
- 3) A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds, if the first foot comes down in the field of play.
- 4) The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play This will result in unsportsmanlike penalty.
- 5) Substitutions may be made on any dead ball/between plays.
- 6) Any official can whistle the play dead.
- 7) Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground. (Clock stops in second half under 2 minutes)
  - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds. (Clock stops in second half under 2 minutes)
  - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored. (Clock stops in second half under 2 minutes)
  - e. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
  - f. The ball carrier's flag falls out and a defender touches him/her with one hand.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - h. Inadvertent whistle. (Clock stops in second half under 2 minutes)
- Note:** There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet were at the time of the fumble.
- 8) In case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
  - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

### **XII. Blocking**

No blocking allowed at the line of scrimmage or downfield.

### **XIII. Running**

- 1) The ball is spotted where the carrier has the ball when the flag is pulled. Forward progress will be measured by where the flag is pulled.
- 2) Center Sneak Plays are NOT allowed.
- 3) Backwards pitches/laterals passes are allowed, except for when in the no-run zone.
  - a. The receiver of a backwards pitch/lateral pass does not need to wait for the defensive rusher to cross the LOS to attempt a run.
- 4) “No-Run Zones,” located 5-yards (or half the distance to line to gain) before each end zone, and on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No-Run Zones in each drive one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one 5-yards from the goal line to score a TD).

EXCEPTION: In the 3-5 Grade Youth Division, if a team is in the 5 yard no-run zone, and has more than one down, they must make their first attempt a pass. They may run on all other downs.
- 5) The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- 6) Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
- 7) Spinning is allowed, but players may not leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Jumping in the air in a forward motion to advance the ball, while attempting to avoid a flag pull is not allowed. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.
- 8) Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that she has done so to avoid collisions with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
- 9) Flag Obstruction- All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.
- 10) The QB may run only once the rusher crossed the line of scrimmage.
- 11) Handoffs behind the LOS are legal with the exception of in the no run zone. The handoff can be in front of or behind the QB, as long as they are behind the line of scrimmage. If a player receives a forward handoff behind the line of scrimmage, they cannot then throw the ball forward, however if they receive a backwards handoff behind the line of scrimmage they can throw the ball.

### **XIV. Passing**

- 1) All forward passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage.
- 2) Backwards pitches are allowed.
- 3) When in the No-Run-Zone, all divisions except 3-5 Grade Youth Division, must pass the ball. Passes must be an over-hand, forward pass that goes beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 4) If a team begins possession in the 5-yard zone, they must continue to pass (not run) the ball, until they score or get the first down. This is to avoid purposefully getting a penalty to be able to run the ball instead of pass.



### **XV. Receiving/Interceptions**

- 1) All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- 2) Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
- 3) A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception, the first foot to land must be in bounds.
- 4) In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- 5) Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.
- 6) Interceptions are returnable, but not in a mercy rule situation. Interceptions on conversions after touch downs will be awarded one or two points if ran back, according to how many the opposing team was trying for.

### **XVI. Rushing the Passer**

- 1) All defensive players may line up on the line of scrimmage, except the rusher who must be 7-yards off the line of scrimmage.
- 2) A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line 7-yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
  - a. A legal rush is:
    - i) Any rush from 7-yards from the line of scrimmage
  - b. A penalty may be called if:
    - i) Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped- Offsides (5-yards LOS, repeat down)
- 3) Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then contacting the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- 4) **The rusher has a direct line to the QB, if an offensive player gets in their way it's impeding the rusher.**
- 5) A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The spot of the ball will be determined by the position of the ball at time of de-flagging.

### **XVII. Flag Pulling**

- 1) A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball. The spot of the ball will be determined by where the flag is pulled.
- 2) Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- 3) It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the carrier's possession at any time.
- 4) If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the defense may stop the ball with a one-hand touch below the waist on the ball carrier. The play ends. If the defensive player trips or pushes over the runner in attempt to make a diving tag, it is a penalty.
- 5) A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- 6) Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the ball or football jersey.

### **XVIII. Formations**

- 1) Teams will be 7v7, or 5v5 if numbers don't allow. The league reserves the right to communicate required formations should anything less than 5v5 be required.
- 2) In a 7v7 division: Offense must have a minimum of 4 players on the line (1 center, and 3 others). The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
- 3) In a 5v5 division: Offense must have a minimum of 3 players must be on the line of scrimmage.
- 4) Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
- 5) Defense may not line up directly on center.
- 6) Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- 7) The defense may have as many as 7 or as few as zero players on the line of scrimmage.
- 8) Player may run up the middle.
- 9) The center may snap the ball directly between the legs or toss from the side to a player in the backfield. The ball must completely leave his/her hands.
- 10) Sleeper Play: No offensive player who is "spread" shall be closer than 5-yards from the sidelines. The Sleeper Play is illegal.

### **XIX. Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Zero Tolerance Policy**

- 1) Zero Tolerance Policy: If any player, spectator or coach is ejected from the game for any reason, they will not be allowed to return for the remainder of the season. They must leave the field immediately. Refunds will not be provided.
- 2) If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. NO appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- 3) Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referred will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
- 4) Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
- 5) Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- 6) Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- 7) Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:
  - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
  - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
  - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
- 8) Fans are required to keep fields safe and kid friendly:
  - a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents behind the parent line marked 5 yards off the field.
  - b. Stay on the fan side, fans are not allowed on the team sideline.

**XX. Penalties**

**General**

- 1) The referee will call all penalties.
- 2) Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- 3) All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot Fouls)
- 4) Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.
- 5) Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
- 6) Penalties are assessed live ball, then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- 7) Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- 8) UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: +/- 10 YARDS, LOD/ AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN

**Spot Fouls**

<b>Defensive Pass Interference</b>	Automatic First Down
<b>Holding</b>	+5 yards & Automatic First Down, offense: -5 yards
<b>Stripping</b>	+10 yards & Automatic First Down
<b>Defensive Unnecessary Roughness</b>	+10 yards & Automatic First Down
<b>Charging</b>	-10 yards & Loss of Down
<b>Flag Guarding (includes leaving feet)</b>	-10 yards & Loss of Down
<b>Offensive Unnecessary Roughness</b>	-10 yards & Loss of Down

**Defensive Penalties**

<b>Offside/Neutral Zone Infraction</b>	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage, Repeat down
<b>Illegal Flag Pull (Before receiver has ball)</b>	+5 yards from the line of scrimmage, Repeat down
<b>Roughing the Passer</b>	+10 yards from the line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
<b>Taunting</b>	+10 yards from the line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
<b>Defensive Pass Interference</b>	SPOT FOUL, Automatic First Down
<b>Holding</b>	SPOT FOUL, +5 yards & Automatic First Down
<b>Stripping</b>	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & Automatic First Down
<b>Defensive Unnecessary Roughness</b>	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & Automatic First Down
<b>Impeding the Runner</b>	SPOT FOUL, -5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down

**Offensive Penalties**

<b>Offside/False Start</b>	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage
<b>Illegal Forward Pass (pass received behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)</b>	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
<b>Offensive Pass Interference</b>	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage & Loss of Down
<b>Illegal Motion (more than one person moving)</b>	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage
<b>Delay of Game</b>	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage
<b>Charging</b>	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
<b>Flag Guarding</b>	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
<b>Offensive Unnecessary Roughness</b>	SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down
<b>Running in the "No Run Zone"</b>	Loss of Down
<b>Taunting</b>	-10 yards from the line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down
<b>Impeding the Rusher</b>	-5 yards from the line of scrimmage

