



Jr. Bronco Flag Football Rules

YMCA GOAL

- The YMCA goal is to give every child a chance to play flag football. To teach football, sportsmanship, working together as a team: promote new friendships, positive family interactions and to have FUN.

YMCA FACILITY POLICES

- All YMCA facilities and game and practice locations are smoke tobacco, and alcohol free zones. All facilities and locations are pet/animal free zones for the direct safety of the kids.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- Coaches are directly responsible for team members before, during, & after games and practices.
- If the referee or supervisor witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- Any trash talking or taunting which is intended to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others under any circumstance will not be tolerated. First offense is a warning; the second offense is ejection from the game.

COACH'S CONDUCT:

- Coaches are expected to adhere to YMCA philosophies, coaching guidelines, codes of conduct, and hold themselves with utmost integrity.
- Coaches are not allowed to complain or be disrespectful toward officials or opposing teams. First instance will result in a warning followed by unsportsmanlike penalties, followed by a coaching suspension.
- **One coach is allowed to be on the field for offense and defense.**

PRACTICES

- Practice will be scheduled by the coach in conjunction with team members. Teams practice once a week for approx. 1 hour. During the first week, teams are allowed to practice 2 times before their first game. Practices must be held as they are critical for the development of the players.
- In case of bad weather, coaches will make the decision whether to cancel practices. Game cancellations/delays will be determined by Y staff.

EQUIPMENT:

- Team jerseys will be given to each player prior to the first game.
- All participants will receive a Jr. Bronco jersey. Jerseys **MUST** be tucked in at all times.
- Flags must be visible from the hips and easily accessible or without being positioned to gain an advantage.
- Each team will be provided 2 footballs, flags, and 5 cones to practice with throughout the season.
- Coaches must return all equipment after the last game of the season.
- Mouthguards are highly recommended. Rubber cleats are optional, metal spikes are not allowed.

TEAM SIZE:

- 1st-2nd Grade will be 5v5 — 8-12 players per team
- 3rd-6th Grade will be 6v6 — 8-12 players per team
- The YMCA emphasizes equal participation. Players must try different positions and play at least half of each game.

BALL SIZE:

- 1st-2nd Grade will play with a Pee Wee sized football
- 3rd-6th Grade will play with a Junior sized football

FIELD OF PLAY:

- 1st-4th Grade: 50 yards long by 20 yards wide. 1st down every 10 yards. 5 yard end zone.
- 5th-6th Grade: 70 yards long by 25 yards wide. 1st down every 15 yards. 10 yard end zones.

TIMING

- Games are two 20-minute halves (running clock) with a 5 minute halftime. Teams will switch directions at halftime.
- No overtime for any grade division.
- Referees and coaches must attempt at snapping the ball within 30 seconds to avoid long delays.
- Each team has one 60 second timeout per half, no carryover. Clock will stop for timeouts and injuries,
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

START OF GAME

- The game is started with the players/coaches meeting with the referee at midfield and going over the Sports Pledge.
- The home team will begin with the ball to start the game; the visiting team will begin the 2nd half with the ball.
- The offensive team begins the game and second half by taking possession of the ball on its 5-yard line.
- Coaches and officials may improvise rules under any circumstance, including number of players on the field, to maximize the potential for fun and participation.

GAME:

- Teams have 4 plays to gain first downs and to score a touchdown. Interceptions are allowed and are returnable. Interceptions on PAT's will be considered dead. PAT's will be taken at the 5 yard line.
- All fumbles will be a dead ball at the spot where the fumble occurs, except on a muffed snap and a **clear path to a TD**.
- **1st-4th Grade:** Every possession and change of possession will begin at the 5 yard line. There will be no punts for this division. All four downs will be used without the concern of giving up field position.
- **5th-6th Grade:** Possessions will begin where the offensive possession or interception ends. After a scoring possession, the opposing team will begin at the 5 yard line.
- No punts.
- Score will only be kept for the 5th-6th grade division by a volunteer parent. Coaches are to recruit volunteer scorekeepers.

OFFENSE

- **The Quarterback CANNOT run the ball across the line of scrimmage, he/she must hand off or pass.** The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the backfield, but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. This is in place to include others in each offensive play. Without this rule, a quarterback could dominate each play by advancing the football.
- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- A muffed snap to the quarterback will not be considered a fumble and may be picked up and play continues. If the defense recovers, the result is loss of down.
- No Center or QB sneaks allowed.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- If the ball carrier accidentally loses the flag belt or falls down, the ball is dead at that spot. However, if the ball carrier has a clear path to a TD when the flags fall off, this rule is void.
- Offensive players must try and avoid contact with the defensive player.
- Players are allowed to spin only to avoid contact with the defender.

BLOCKING

- Blocking is allowed on the line of scrimmage on the defender's upper body. **No extending of hands is allowed!**
- Downfield blocking is not allowed beyond the line of scrimmage. Players may get in defender's way but not initiate contact.
- Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players may rush.

RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive a forward pass.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

PASSING

- Quarterback has **10 seconds** to throw the ball. If a pass is not thrown within 10 seconds, it is treated as an incomplete pass (loss of down). If the QB is standing in the end-zone at the end of the 10-second clock, the ball will be returned to the line of scrimmage.

DEAD BALLS

Play is ruled dead when:

- Ball carrier's flag is pulled
- When the ball is a fumble, except when the ball is snapped
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds
- Touchdown or extra-point is scored
- Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
- Ball carrier's flags fall off or the receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
- The **10 second** pass clock expires.

RUSHING THE QB

- Rushers must be a minimum of **7-yards** from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Referee will designate a rush line **7-yards** from the line of scrimmage.
- Limit 1 pass rusher is allowed unless the ball is pitched or handed off.
- **1st-2nd grade:** In addition to the 7-yard rush line, the referee will count to 3 seconds by having arms straight up and then bringing down to signal the defense's ability to rush. This rule is to allow the offense to have a little more time.
- The rush rule is still in effect on muffed snaps.
- Once the ball is handed off to another player, the seven yard rule is no longer in effect.

PENALTIES

All penalties will be called by the referee.

- **1st-2nd grade:** There will be one referee to spot the ball and keep time. Coaches will be responsible for calling penalties.
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** (swearing, disrespecting officials, taunting, spiking, etc.)--10 yard penalty and automatic 1st down or loss of down depending on infraction; it may result in ejection.
- **Personal Foul**-(intentional flagrant actions beyond illegal contact)—Player is ejected. 10 yard penalty and loss of down or automatic 1st down if by defense.
- All penalties within 5 yards of the end zone will be half the distance to the goal line.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

Defense:

- **Offsides**—5 yards and replay down
- **Pass Interference**—5 yards and replay down
- **Illegal Contact** (holding, blocking, tackling, pushing, stripping of ball)—5 yards and replay down.
- **Illegal Rushing** (start rush inside 7-yard marker/before 3 seconds)—5 yards and replay down
- All defensive penalties incur automatic a 5 yard penalty and replay of the down.

Offense:

- **Illegal Motion** (false start, offsides, QB running ball)—loss of 5 yards and replay down
- **Illegal Forward Pass** (throwing a pass beyond line of scrimmage)—loss of 5 yards and replay down
- **Illegal Contact**-(stiff arm, holding, charging, pushing, excessive blocking) - loss of 5 yards and replay down
- **Offensive Pass Interference** (illegal pick, pushing off defender)—loss of 5 yards and replay down
- **Flag Guarding**—loss of 5 yards from the spot of penalty. If a first down is gained on the play, 1st down will remain, even if it moves back behind the first down line.
- **Delay of Game** (more than 30 seconds to begin next play)— loss of down