

NFL FLAG League

Rule Modifications



Y of Southeastern NC

These are the basic rule modifications for our League.

Issues should be addressed to the Director of the program:
Jon Newsome, jon.newsome@ymcasenc.org (910)251-9622 ext.233

We are here to have fun and is the #1 objective of our program! The only talent scouts at our fields are you. 70% of children will drop out of sports by the age of 12. The #1 reason kids stop playing sports is that becomes no longer fun for them. "Winning" is ranked around 48th in why kids enjoy playing sports.

Our league uses the NFL Flag Association age determination standard.
Players may play up one division to play with friends or teammates. They may not play down a division.
Fall 2025/Spring 2026 age determination is 08/31/2025
Fall 2026/Spring 2027 age determination is 08/01/2026

Our officials are trained to give a brief explanation of infringements and share basic rules of the game.

Coaches may agree on team size before the game if each team has the same number of players. If a team is short players, coaches should even out team rosters. The goal is getting kids playing.

Most of our officials are certified or registered referees or in the progress of earning one. Showing any dissent is a violation of the laws of the game and will be treated as such. Please do not show dissent to our officials and make sure your team understands this expectation. HINT: Your player is more likely to get a warning from the official vs. being removed if the coach is already addressing the issue.

When a team is up by 5 TD's, the opposing team may add a player to the field and is not removed until the team that was up by 5 gets to only being up by 1. If the score is 10 up the opposing team will add an additional player. (If the losing team does not have subs the winning team will remove a player instead.) Officials, in their discretion, may adjust rules to help balance games.

Under no circumstances should coaches, players and/or spectators (parents) vocally criticize any player, coach, official or other spectator. Issues should be addressed to the Director of the program. Remember, this is recreational flag football and we are here to make sure the kids have fun!

Players are not allowed to wear jewelry. Those with new ear piercings will need to tape the ear. Mouth Guards are required for game play.

Every player in our recreational league, regardless of skill level or ability, will play a minimum of half of every game. The only Exception is due to player injury, behavior or an agreed discussion with coach.

Everyone on our fields (home or away) are expected to follow the YMCA's Code of Conduct at all times.

 **7 out of 10**
players **QUIT** organized sports by the age of 13



#1 reason kids quit....
...it becomes no longer
fun for them.

YMCA Modifications from the published NFL Flag Rule Book



I. GAME

Paragraphs 3-5

- U9 have for have four downs to make a first down or score if the team has made a first down.
- U-12 and Middle School teams have three downs to make a first down or score if they have made a first down.
- U12 and Middle School teams by mutual consent may play four downs instead of three.

VI. TIMING AND OVERTIME

- Teams have two (1- Min) time-outs per half. [Replacing the text that reads three per game.] Updated 8/30
- We do not play overtime. Ties are a good day for two team.
[Disregard Section 7 having to do with overtime.]
- We provide the teams with two minutes at halftime. [Instead of the one minute.]

VII. SCORING

- We do not utilize extra points. This is so teams get more playing time.
[Disregard all verbiage having to do with PAT's.]
- We do not end a game when one team is four scores ahead.
Providing both teams want to keep playing.
- No forfeits, no score sheets. Referee do not keep score nor are the reported.
We stopped this in 2007 and our leagues and kids are staying with us longer.
We will start hosting tournaments or allow teams to travel to other as part of NFL Flag.
[Disregard all verbiage having to delete Section 7 & 8.]

XI. PASSING

- U9: A forward pass may be completed beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Direct Snap to the Non- Cadence Caller can only advance the ball through running. He or She cannot pass the ball. Updated 8-30

XII. RECEIVING

Disregard verbiage referring to interception of PAT conversion. See above, no PAT.

YMCA Sportsmanship Policy

● Be Nice, we are all here to have fun. (Simply, don't be a jerk.)

NO PLAYER, PARENT, SPECTATOR, COACH OR TEAM OFFICIAL SHALL:

- Refuse to abide by a game official's decision.
- Show dissent towards an official's decision.
- Lay a hand on, push, shove, strike, or threaten anyone.
- Throw any item.
- Be guilty of a physical attack as an aggressor upon anyone.
- Be guilty of personal verbal abuse upon anyone for any reason.
- Other than the coach or team captain, discuss with an official in any manner, the decision reached by the official.
- Be guilty of using unnecessary rough tactics against the body and person of an opposing player in the play of the game.
- Using foul language or profanity of any kind.
- Failure to following instructions/request from YMCA Staff.



LEAGUE GUIDELINES

Please remember we are here to have fun. We do not record scores and do we keep stats, we play soccer. These guidelines below come from the US Youth Soccer Association, who is working hard on the overall player experience. 7 out of 10 kids quit sports by the age of 12 and the number one reason is "It's no longer fun". The verbs from those other than the coach have been proven to do more harm to a players development than good, I know it's hard so please just try to at least use half of what you usually use.

A few parents "Don'ts" from the US Youth Soccer Association:

- Don't criticize coaches, referees, players or volunteers.
- Don't use verbs during a game.

*Example of verbs we hear from other than the coach: kick-it, attack, run, dribble, defend, fight, pressure, pass, think, talk.

- Don't complain about coaches in public.
- Don't yell at the referees. (U8 and below these are our very newest referees, be gentle.)
- Don't coach the kids (verbs), allow the coaches to communicate with the players.
- Don't concern yourself with the score.
- Don't critique your child's effort immediately after the game. (Wait at least 30 minutes.)

We are a tobacco free campus (including vapor) and pets are NOT allowed at sites used by the YMCA program.

Issues and/or Concerns:

We will address all concerns and issues, **please email them to us**. Most concerns should not be addressed on game day, email us, we will address and correct before next game weekend. Our coaches are 100% volunteer, we are a non-profit recreational soccer league. With over 1,500 kids in our programs, issues will present themselves. Our number one rule is we do not argue in front of the children. As with any competitive sport, emotions get involved. We will address all issues and concerns, there are 1,500 of you and a couple of us, give us time to address (sometimes things need to cool down before we can talk with you). Our league has enough teams that you more than likely will not play the same team twice this season, so please keep that in mind. If there is an unsafe condition, please see your coach first and they will let the correct staff know.

Age Determination:

Fall 2025/Spring 2026 age determination is 08/31/2025

Fall 2026/Spring 2027 age determination is 08/01/2026

Play with your friends:

We allow players to play up one division so that they can play with their friends. Players can play up one division, however players cannot play down a division or more than two up.

Roster Sizes:

As we are a recreational league and do not have tryouts or evaluations. We do not make exceptions to our roster maximums to ensure equal playing time and balanced games. Returning players from the previous season have until the on-time deadline for the next season to be placed on the same roster. Spots are held until this date, after the deadline spots will become open to others.

ISSUES SHOULD BE EMAILED TO:

YMCA Senior Director of Athletics: Lee.Spooner@ymcasenc.org

YMCA Director of Athletics: Jon.Newsome@ymcasenc.org