

5v5 FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

CHICO STATE INTRAMURAL SPORTS

In cases where a rule is not directly outlined in the following rules, the Intramural Sports Staff, Competitive Sports Coordinator, and/or the Assistant Director reserve the right to use common sense, fairness and the “Spirit of the Game” in providing interpretations on the rules, policies and procedures.

INCLUSION

Intramural Sports values diversity and seeks to create a safe and fun environment that is accessible to the Chico State Community. Intramural Sports is committed to maintaining an environment without discrimination as to race, religion, national origin, gender identity/expression or sexual orientation.

CONDUCT

The Chico State Intramural Sports program promotes good sportsmanship by staff, participants, and spectators. We request everyone’s cooperation by supporting the participants and staff in a positive manner. Profanity, racial or ethnic comments, anti-LGBTQ comments or other intimidating actions directed at staff, participants, or other spectators will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from the site of competition and further disciplinary action.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The State of California and Chico State cannot accept liability for injuries. Participants are encouraged to provide their own accident insurance. Participants are not insured by Chico State or the State of California. Insurance is available at the University Health Center.

BLOOD RULE

A player with a bloody injury or blood on his/her uniform must leave the game. The player may not return to the game until the wound is no longer bleeding, the wound is covered and/or the uniform is changed.

RESOURCES

To learn more about the game, and how to play please visit the following resources:

<https://nflflag.com/flag-football-plays>

<https://nflflag.com/flag-football-plays/5-on-5-flag-football-playbook>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLErMi4jOrg9S2Wwgf-ugi4iKI4beTSiMT>

FORFEITS

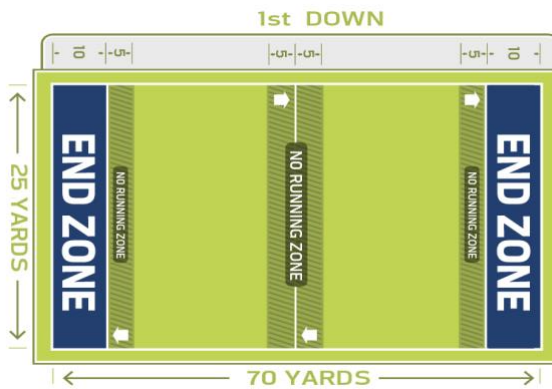
- Game time is forfeit time.
- No Show = No team members show up to a schedule game and the Intramurals Office was not contacted. A No Show can result in elimination from end of the season playoff participation.
- Forfeit = A team does not have the minimum amount of players to begin a contest. A team notifies the Rec. Sports Office of their forfeit by 3pm on gameday. One notification of a forfeit to Intramural Sports made by 3pm on gameday will not result in removal from league or postseason.
- Multiple forfeits may result in elimination from the end of the season playoff participation

PLAYERS

- Five players per side are on the field at one time. It takes a minimum of four players to start the game. Rosters size is limited to 10, please note that only double the amount of players on the field will be awarded Intramural Champion t-shirts. Persons not on the roster are ineligible to participate.
- Intramural Sports **DOES NOT** recognize coaches. Team captains are solely responsible for all team matters.

THE FIELD

No-run zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no-run zones (a 5-yard area in front of the midfield and end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.



EQUIPMENT

- Team members must all wear the same-colored jerseys and it is recommended that teams bring a second dark or light jersey.
- No bare feet, metal or spiked cleats.
- No jewelry.
- No arm or hand pads unless they are used to protect injury. Subject to referee's inspection.
- Any regulation football may be used as long as it is available to both teams.

PREGAME

Game time is forfeit time. Forfeits may result in expulsion from league. Coin flip decides possession. Team "B" chooses direction. Second half team "B" has possession and direction is reversed. Play begins from own 20-yard line. No kick off.

TIMING AND OVERTIME

- Forty-minute game consisting of two twenty-minute halves. During the last two minutes of play the clock will be stopped in order to place the ball on a first down. Once the ball is placed the clock will begin. The clock will also stop on incomplete passes, defensive penalties, change of possessions and out of bounds.
- If defense commits a penalty on the last play of the half or game, offense gets another play.
- Halftime shall be five minutes. Each team has three 30-second time-outs per game.
- Clock can be stopped or started at official's discretion.
- When play is stopped due to injury, injured player must sit out at least one play.

SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
- PAT: 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line)
 - Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass
 - Once a team scores they must declare if they are going for 1-point or 2-points. Any change in decision requires a charged timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
- Safety: 2 points
- Extra point turnovers that are returned equals 2 points

GAME PLAY

The offense begins on its own 5-yard line and has four downs to cross midfield for a first down.

If the offense fails to advance after three tries, they have two options:

- They can “punt,” possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line. Offensive teams MUST declare 4th down intent or snap the ball prior to the expiration of the 25 second Play Clock.
- Once a team declares to either “Punt” or “Play” they can only change their option by using a timeout.
- If the offense goes for it on 4th down “Play” and does not cross midfield, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
- If the offensive team crosses midfield, they have four downs to score a touchdown.

LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL

- The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- 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. In regard to 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.
- A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds as long as the first foot or other body part contacts the ground in the field of play.
- 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 an unsportsmanlike penalty.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - The ball hits the ground
 - If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
 - The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
 - The ball-carrier steps out of bounds
 - A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - The ball-carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - The ball-carrier's flag falls off.
 - The receiver catches the ball without their flag belt.
 - The 7 second pass clock expires
 - Inadvertent whistle
 - Ball-carrier leaves their feet other than jump cuts, spinning or to avoid a downed player on the field of play.

Note: *There are no fumbles. The ball becomes a dead ball. (If the ball is fumbled forwards then it will be spotted where the ball carrier lost possession.)*

- If inadvertent whistle occurs the offense has two options:
 - Take the ball where the whistle blew and the down is consumed
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
 - If it occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.
- A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not

be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

RUNNING

- The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
- The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
- Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
 - “Center sneak” play is not allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
- Absolutely NO pitches or laterals of any kind.
- No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards 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 team 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).
- Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding penalty enforced.
- No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.
- Offensive players in close proximity of the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
- 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.

PASSING

- All passes must be thrown with one hand from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and ball out of hand prior to breaching the line of scrimmage.
 - All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender.
 - The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed and ball is returned and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
 - If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

RECEIVING

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

- A player must have at least one-foot other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first.
- In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- Interceptions are returnable on conversions after touchdowns (2 points).

RUSHING THE PASSER

- All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the seven-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 a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - A legal rush is:
 - Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage
 - A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - A penalty may be called if:
 - The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - If the offense draws the rusher(s) to jump the seven-yard marker prior to the snap of the ball, that rusher(s) CANNOT rush during that play. However, any other defender that is seven yards back may rush instead. Jumping the rush is not a penalty until the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage prior to the handoff or passed ball.
 - Special circumstances:
 - Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
 - Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
- Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the “path of line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. **If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.**
- A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is once the flag is pulled.
- A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

FLAG REMOVAL

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball

- Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
- It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
- If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag is pulled.
- If a player who has no flags takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at the spot on the field.
- A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball
- 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 a jersey.

FORMATIONS

- Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - Teams may shift formations prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least 1 second before the ball is snapped.
 - One player at a time may go in motion at least 1 yard behind the line of scrimmage.
- 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.
- The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

If an Intramurall Staff member witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the offending player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion.

TIE GAMES

Home team will call the toss to determine which team starts on offense or defense. If needed teams will switch order in each round of overtime.

- Each team will take turns getting one play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Each team will determine which point to start from.
- 1 and 2 point PAT attempts will be in effect.
- Starting with the 2nd overtime, both team's must "go for two" from the 10-yard line for both conversion attempts and PAT attempts.
- There are no timeouts.
- Interceptions are returnable in OT, and worth 2 points.

MERCY RULE

If a team is ahead by 17 points, or more, with two minutes remaining and the game is deemed dangerous or lackadaisical by the officials it may be called. In any event of a 23+ point differential under two minutes the clock will continue to run.