

South Sanpete Flag  
7 on 7 Football Rules  
2023

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its **5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) downs to score a touchdown.**
  - If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 3 downs, and elect to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross field, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
  - Offensive Teams **MUST** declare 4th down intent; "Play or Punt", when asked by the referee and prior to the 'Ready for Play'.
  - Teams may use a timeout only to change the declaration of "Play" at any time prior to the expiration of the play clock.
  - If the declaration is "Punt" the ball changes possession and will be placed at the opposing Team's 5-yard line, 1st down, with **NO** option to change the declaration.
  - If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield the ball changes possession and the new offensive Team starts at its 5-yard line
4. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
5. **The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.**

**Field**

1. The field dimensions. 25 yards wide by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones midfield line to gain a 1st down. No Run zones are located five yards prior to the endzone in the offense's direction.
  2. 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 the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
  3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
  4. Each offensive team approaches only one no-run zone in each drive
- a. **For 2nd and 3rd Grade League**
- i. **'No Run' zones are eliminated.** Teams may run anywhere on the field.
  - ii. Defenders may **NOT** rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.

## Timing and Overtime

1. Games are played on a **40-minute continuous clock with two 20-minute halves**. The clock stops for halftime, injuries and the Officials' discretion.
2. **Halftime is five minutes**.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, **a team has 45 seconds to snap the ball**.
4. Each team has one 60-second timeout per half. They do not carry over.
5. If the score is tied at the end of regulation play, an overtime period will be used to determine a winner. ***Overtime format*** is as follows:
  - a. Home team calls the toss to determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
    - I. If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
    - II. The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
  - b. Each team will take turns getting **one (1) play** from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two points is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that begins on offense converts the team that started on defense gets a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one- or two-point play of their own.
  - c. Starting with the 2nd overtime, both teams must "go for two" from the 10-yard line
    - Starting with the 3rd overtime, each team will get 1 play from the 5 yard line going out from the endzone. The team with the most yards will be the winner. The team with the most yards will be awarded 1 point added to their final score.
  - g. There are no timeouts.
  - h. Interceptions are returnable in OT, and worth 2 points

## Scoring

1. ***Touchdown***: 6 points
2. ***PAT*** (point after touchdown) ***1 point*** (5-yard line) or ***2 points*** (10-yard line)
  - a. Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
3. Interceptions returned for scores during regular game play are worth six points, conversions or overtime are worth two points
4. ***Safety***: 2 points

## Coaches

1. Coaches are expected to adhere to South Sanpete Flag Football philosophies, coaching guidelines and code of conduct.
2. Coaches are permitted to Coach on the Field on both sides of the ball. When teams line up, the coach needs to stand 5 yards back from the closest player. No touching players or pushing players to where the play is going.
  - a. All team photographers, managers, position coaches, team moms, fans, etc. are required and must remain a minimum of 10 yards off the field in a designated viewing area.
  - b. Coaches, this is your responsibility to keep your fans and any other team associated members in the designated areas.

## Live and 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.
  - a. 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.
3. 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.
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 an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - The ball hits the ground.
    - i. 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 out.
  - The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - 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.)

8. If Inadvertent Whistle Occurs The Offense Has Two Options:

A) take the ball where the whistle blew and the down is consumed B) 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.

9. 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.
10. Officials should all agree in order to change a call on the field that is in dispute

## Running

1. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled. **Not Where the Ball is**
2. **The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball.** The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
3. 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 no longer allowed. The QB can hand it off to the center after the center snaps the ball stands up and turns around.***

- *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, the seven-second passing clock is eliminated and all defensive players are eligible to rush.*
4. **Pitches and Laterals are allowed behind the line of scrimmage**
  5. **Runners may dive, leap or jump to avoid a flag pull**
  6. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.
  7. Offensive players in close proximity to the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
  8. 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.
  9. Any player who receives a handoff or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
  10. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

### **Passing**

1. All passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage and ball out of hand prior to breaching the line of scrimmage.
  - a. There is no intentional grounding, The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack.
2. Shovel passes are allowed.
3. 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 the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
  - a. 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 (LOS).
  - b. If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

### **Receiving**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or lateralled 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 toward the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first with possession.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions are returnable. If returned for a score during regular game play, the score will be worth six points, two points if returned during conversions and/or overtime.

### **Rushing the Passer**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of **Twelve (12)** 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 on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the **Twelve-yard** rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

3. 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. A legal rush is: Any rush from a point **12-yards** from the defensive line of scrimmage. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the Quarterback.
  - b. 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).
  - c. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from line of scrimmage and first down).
  - d. 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).
  - e. If the offense draws the rusher(s) to jump the twelve-yard marker prior to the snap of the ball, that rusher(s) CANNOT rush during that play. However, any other defender that is Twelve 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.
  - f. Special circumstances:
    - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
    - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
4. 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.
5. 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 or 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.
6. 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. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

### **Flag Pulling**

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
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 ball-carrier’s possession at any time.
4. 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 lands.
5. If a player who has one, two or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
6. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
7. 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, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

## **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 calls.
5. Games or halves 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. Spot fouls in end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down)/Offensive (Safety)

### **Defensive spot fouls**

Defensive Pass Interference	Automatic 1st Down
Holding	+5 yards & Automatic 1st Down
Stripping the ball	+10 yards & Automatic 1st Down

### **Offensive spot fouls**

Screening, Blocking or QB running ball	-10 yards and loss of down
Charging	-10 Yards and loss of down
Flag Guarding	-10 Yards and loss of down

### **Defensive Penalties**

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and Automatic 1st Down
Defensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	+10 yards and Automatic 1st Down
Offside	+5 yards and Automatic 1st down
Illegal Rush	+5 yards and Automatic 1st down
Illegal Flag Pull	+5 yards and Automatic 1st down
Roughing Passer	+5 yards and Automatic 1st down
Taunting	+5 yards and Automatic 1st down

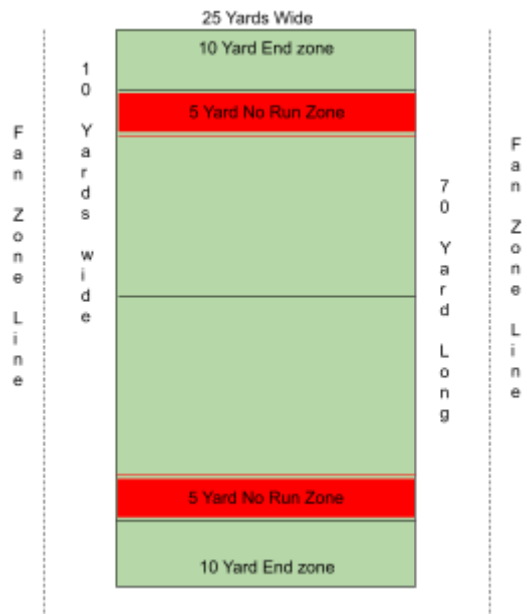
### **Offensive Penalties**

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards & loss of down
Offensive Unsportsmanlike Conduct	-10 yards & loss of down
Offside/False Start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down

Illegal Forward Pass Any pass thrown after crossing the line on Scrimmage	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Illegal Motion	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Delay of Game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Impeding the Rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Taunting	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down

Fields for Play:

4th and 5th Grade



2nd and 3rd Grade

