

Lynn Haven 6 vs 6 - Flag Football Rules

Updated: December 18, 2020



PLAYERS

1. Team rosters must be turned in with team registration forms and payment.
2. To be eligible for a roster, players must be no more than the maximum age for an age group by March 6th, 2021.
20-21 Age Groups: Mighty Mites (5-6), Tiny Mites (7-8), Pee Wees (9-11), Midgets (12-15)
3. Recreation staff are the only people to add players to a roster.
4. There will be 6 players at a time on the field per team. Teams may start a game with 5 players. Below 5 players will result in a forfeit.
5. Players are only eligible to play for one team, per age grouping, per season. No special consideration will be given (scheduling or otherwise) for players playing on multiple teams across multiple age divisions.
6. Free substitution is allowed after the ball is whistled dead before each snap.

EQUIPMENT

1. Teams must wear the same color shirt or jersey.
2. Shirts must always be tucked in.
3. Plastic cleats, sneakers, and artificial turf shoes are permitted. (No metal spikes, or bare feet).
4. **Shorts/pants WITH POCKETS ARE NOT ALLOWED**, even if the pockets are taped. This is a safety issue and there will be no exceptions.
5. No jewelry (rings, necklaces, watches, or earrings) to be worn.
6. Gloves and sweatbands are allowed. Hats are not allowed.

7. All players must wear a flag belt provided by Lynn Haven Recreation Center during all games. If a player loses his flag belt and has possession of the ball, the defense must touch them with one hand between the shoulders and knees to make the legal "touch."

8. Mouthpieces are not required, but are heavily encouraged.

TIME & OVERTIME

1. Teams will play two 20-minute running clock halves. Mighty Mites (5-6) will play 15-minute running clock halves. Halftime will last 5 minutes.

2. Each team has 2 timeouts per half. All timeouts will stop the clock for 30 seconds and can be called consecutively.

GAMEPLAY

1. The official shall toss a coin after designating which captain will call heads/tails BEFORE the toss. The winner of the toss has a choice of options for the first half. The options are: choose to play offense (receive) or play defense (kick) or which end of the field they wish to defend. Whatever the choice, the toss winner's team will do the opposite (kick/receive) in the second half. The loser of the toss will choose from the remaining selections available. Teams will also swap ends to be defended at the half.

2. There will be no kickoffs to start the game, after halftime, or after a score.

3. At the start of each half, and after a score, the offense will begin at their start line (their own 5-yard line).

4. First downs can be made every 15 yards (depending on the size of the field). There will be clearly visible lines to mark the first down lines on the playing field. *The very first down will be at 10 yards

5. Teams will have 4 downs to make a first down.

6. ONLY Mighty Mites and Tiny Mites are allowed to have one coach on the field during games.

7. ONLY Mighty Mites and Tiny Mites are allowed for their QB's to take direct snaps and run with the ball.

8. Center is eligible to go out for a pass after snapping the ball.

Field Lengths are 60 yards long and 20 yards wide (End Zones are 10 yards long)

OFFENSE

1. There must be at least 3 players on the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Players can shift before the snap.
2. The quarterback must be at least 3 yards behind the center. No snaps taken directly under center.
3. The ball may be snapped between the center's legs or to the side. The ball may be snapped to any player behind the line of scrimmage.
4. Only 1 player is allowed to be in motion at a time. This motion must be side or backward, not forward.
5. Only 1 forward pass is allowed per down. Any number of side and backward laterals is permitted. Handoffs are also permitted.
6. There are no fumbles. Any ball that hits the ground is dead. If the ball carrier's elbows or knees touch the ground, the ball is dead. The ball carrier may place his off hand on the ground to maintain balance.
7. Bobble Rule: Once the receiver makes contact with the ball, the defender can pull the receiver's flag regardless if the receiver has control of the ball. The play will be blown dead where the flag is pulled. If the defender pulls the flag BEFORE the receiver makes contact, the receiver may continue to run after the catch and be "touched" by a defender's hand between the knees and shoulders.
8. Receivers (and defenders) may jump or dive to make a catch. However, any player in possession of the ball may not jump over another player to avoid a touch or dive to advance the ball. Normal evasive action of a ball carrier to avoid defenders is legal and "jumping" will be at the discretion of the official.
9. A catch is legal when the receiver has possession and at least one foot is on the ground in bounds. Calls will be a judgement call by the referees.

10. Flag guarding is not allowed. The ball carrier may spin or juke to avoid a flag pull, but may not use his hands, arms, feet, legs, head, or the ball to purposely deflect a defender.

11. Ball carriers may not run "out of control" by dropping down, trying to run into or over the defenders. (10-yard penalty)

12. There is no foul for intentional grounding. Quarterbacks may ground the ball or throw it out of bounds without penalty, and it will be placed back at the original line of scrimmage for the next down.

13. In the event of a deflected ball that is caught by the quarterback, he may only run with the ball, even though it may be caught behind the line of scrimmage. The QB cannot throw the ball again.

14. All blocking/shielding must be made with the blocker in an upright position, with both hands clasped in front of them, behind their backs, or directly at their sides. (10-yard penalty)

15. No body blocks, roll blocks, or shoulder blocks are allowed at any time. Players may NOT keep their elbows out when blocking/shielding, they must be against the body. (10-yard penalty)

16. Blockers are allowed to move their legs and feet while blocking/shielding, as long as their legs and feet do not come in contact with the defender.

17. The referee will ask the offensive team on all fourth downs if they intend to punt or "go for it." There are no physical kicks or punts. Opposing team will "receive the punt" from their start line (own 5-yard line).

18. The QB has 7 seconds to release the ball or it will result in a sack with the official whistling the ball "dead".

19. The Offense **MUST** do a passing play when within 5 yards of a TD.

PAT: 5 yards= 1 point, 10 yards= 2points, 15 yards= 3 points

DEFENSE

1. Players must line up on or behind the restraining line, which is 3 yards from line of scrimmage. If a defender crosses the restraining line into the "neutral zone," he may return before the ball is snapped.

2. Defenses may send in as many rushers past the line of scrimmage as they choose, or none. **Rushers must make themselves known to the official and be 7 yards behind the LOS.**
3. There is no "bull rushing." The pass rusher may not try to run through the center or any blocker or use his hands/arms to push. He must try to move inside or outside of them with minimal body contact. (10-yard penalty)
4. The rusher may only go for the quarterback's flags, or he can try to block the ball once it is released.
5. Absolutely no stripping or attempting to knock the ball out of the offensive player's hands. Defenders must only attempt to pull the ball carrier's flags. (10-yard penalty)
6. The defender is allowed to try and knock the ball away if the receiver is trying to establish possession. However, once the ball is secured, it may not be stripped.
7. No "bump and run" coverage. Defenders may not make contact with the offensive players even if it is within the first five yards of scrimmage.
8. No face guarding. The defender must turn and look for the ball in play. Face guarding which leads to contact will result in the same consequence as a pass interference penalty.
9. Last Man Rule: If the last defender available to make a play on a ball carrier holds, pushes, tackles, or in any way impedes the offensive player's progress without pulling the flags, the result of the play is a touchdown. This is a judgment call by the official.
10. Interceptions are live and may be returned. Laterals are allowed on an interception return. If an interception occurs in the end zone and the flag is pulled or the player takes a knee while in the end zone, it is then a touchback and the ball will be placed on the 5-yard line. If the ball is advanced beyond the goal line, the new offense will get the ball at the spot of the flag pull.
11. If an interception occurs on a PAT play and then returned by the defense for a score, the point value of the defensive return is worth the same value as the original PAT attempt by the offense.
12. When determining the spot of the ball when a flag is pulled, the spot will be where the ball is, not where the flag has been pulled.
13. When the official gives the offense the 10-second warning, the defenders, their teammates on the sidelines, coaches, and/or any spectators may **NOT** count down out loud.

14. Defensive players, their teammates on the sidelines, and/or coaches are allowed to communicate, or call plays before the snap. However, they may not do anything to draw the offense into a false start. (5-yard penalty)

15. Defensive players, their teammates on the sidelines, coaches, and/or any spectators may not call out any signals that interfere with the offensive team's communication. (5-yard penalty).

16. Taunting on defense (or offense) is strictly prohibited. (15 -yard penalty)

CONDUCT

1. All players shall respect the calls of the officials. Questioning calls for clarification and respectful discussion is allowed but arguing/complaining is not.

2. There will be no protests following a game. The official calls are final.

3. Any player involved in fighting shall be immediately ejected from the game and subject to suspension.

4. ANY profanity on the field/sidelines will first result in an immediate unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and ejection.

5. Players receiving a second unsportsmanlike penalty in the same game will be automatically ejected and subject to possible suspension for future team play.

6. Teams must clean up any mess and remove any trash from their bench area following each game.

7. No alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, cigars or other forms of tobacco or E-cigarettes are allowed at the ballpark.

8. Team coaches, captains AND players are responsible for the conduct of their fans and guests. Failure to adequately supervise fans/guests could result in ejections, suspensions, and/or forfeiture of games.

Penalty Definitions

Penalties with a loss of 5 yards

1. Delay of game
2. Illegal substitution/Too many players
3. Interference with opponent or ball before snap
4. Stripping or purposeful contact with the ball in an attempt to strip it
5. Offensive False start
6. Defensive Off-sides or encroachment
7. Less than 3 players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap
8. Illegal procedure (shift or motion)
9. Illegal forward pass
10. Illegal equipment (shirt not tucked, etc.)

Penalties with a loss of 10 yards

1. Delaying the start of either half
2. Offensive pass interference
3. Defensive pass interference (automatic first down)
4. Offensive holding
5. Defensive holding a receiver/blocker, or a ball carrier to remove their flag

6. Clipping, hurdling, diving
7. Illegal use of hands, elbows, or arms
8. Illegal blocking/rushing
9. Roughing the passer (includes any contact with QB before/after ball is thrown)
10. Guarding the flag (from spot of foul)
11. Stiff arming

Penalties with a loss of 15 yards

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct such as profanity, purposely shoving players to the ground, tackling, taunting, and tripping opponents.