

FLAG FOOTBALL

League Rules



EDMONTON SPORT & SOCIAL CLUB

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1. COORDINATORS

An Event Coordinator (EC) is a player in the league who is already registered on a team for that specific season, who has agreed to help coordinate games and manage the field booking.

ROLES OF THE EC

- Arrive early, and act as the onsite contact
- Bring all required equipment and permits
- Update players with pre-game announcements
- Ensure that games start and end on time
- Record the scores and submit to the ESSC office

ROLES OF PLAYERS IN AN EC'D LEAGUE

- Record the game results on the score sheet after each game/match
- Help the EC set-up and take-down the equipment before and after the games are played

2. FIELD REQUIREMENTS

League	Total # of Players Required on the Court	Minimum # of F Players Required on the Court	Maximum # of M/X Players Allowed on the Court
5 on 5	5	2	3
Men's 5 on 5	5	0	5

The ESSC welcomes people of all gender identity or expression. Minimum female player requirements are inclusive of *anyone* who identifies as a female (i.e. players who identify themselves as M and X will not count towards female player minimums).

3. DEFAULT MINIMUMS & SCORES

Format	Minimum Players to Avoid Default	Default Score
Traditional	4 (1 Female Player)	0-28
Men's League	4 (0 Female Players)	0-28

4. FORMAT & EQUIPMENT

GAME FORMAT

- Players should arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time
- Teams will play one game per night
- Each game will be 90-minutes in length:
 - Two 40-minute halves

- 10-minute half-time
- Near the end of each half a '5-minute warning' will be called
 - Each team will receive one final possession before the half ends
 - If the team with the ball has already run a play already during the current possession, the current possession will be played out, but will not count as that team's final possession
 - If the ball is intercepted during the final series, the intercepting team can score on the play

SCORING

- There are two methods of scoring points in Flag Football:
 - **Touchdown:** 6 points
 - **Convert:** Occurs immediately following a touchdown
 - If successful from the 5-yard line – results in 1 point
 - If successful from the 10-yard line – results in 2 points
- Mercy is called and the score freezes if a team gains a 28-point lead
- **Regular Season:** Ties are allowed
- **Playoffs:** Ties are not allowed:
 - An overtime period will be used to determine the winner
 - Teams will use any suitable means to determine who kicks or receives to start the overtime period
 - Each team will receive a possession or set of downs during the overtime period
 - Teams will play continuous overtime periods until the tie is broken

EQUIPMENT

- Metal cleats are not permitted in ESSC Flag Football Leagues
- Players should bring a light and dark shirt to each game
- The Event Coordinator will provide all of the flags and belts
 - Flags must be worn at the hips or sides of the body, and cannot be obscured by a shirt
- The Event Coordinator will provide the warm-up and game footballs, which are NFL-sized (not CFL)

5. GAME PLAY

STARTING & RE-STARTING PLAY

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Substitutions can only be made in the following scenarios:
 - Before the start of an offensive or defensive series
 - Between plays within a given series
 - After a touchdown, convert, or scoring play
 - At half-time
 - To replace an injured player

START OF PLAY

- Teams can use any suitable means to determine which team has the choice of three privileges to start the first half:
 - The opportunity to receive the kickoff, or to kick off
 - The choice of side
 - Defer selection until the second half
- If the winning team does not defer, the opposition must choose from the remaining options
 - The opposition will then have first choice of privileges to open the second half
- If the winning team defers, the opposition must choose their privilege first, and the winning team will choose from the remaining options
 - The winning team will then have first choice of privileges to open the second half

LINE OF SCRIMMAGE RULES

- The ball should always be centered on the field to start a down
- The offensive team will consist of a quarterback and four receivers
- The quarterback can snap the ball themselves, or take a shotgun snap from a teammate
- Receiver motion is allowed on the offensive side of the ball prior to the football being snapped.
- The offensive team has 4-downs, or plays from the line of scrimmage, in which to score
 - There are no first-downs in Flag Football
 - If the offensive team does not score during their 4-downs, the result is a turnover
- **The offensive team must put the ball into play within 30 seconds of starting their huddle**
- **A female player must be an integral part of the play in at least one down during the series:**
 - The following scenarios count as an integral part of the play:
 - Playing quarterback on a forward passing play
 - Being the intended receiver on a passing play
 - Receiving a lateral on a play
 - Punting the ball on 4th down
 - If a team scores during the first, second, or third play of the series, the score counts, regardless of whether a female was an integral part of the play
 - If a team finishes a series and a female was not used as an integral part of the play during any single down, possession will be awarded to the opposition at the third-down line of scrimmage

OFFENCE

PASSING

- A forward pass may not be thrown if the ball has been advanced beyond the line of scrimmage
- For a forward pass, underhand pitches are allowed
- Only one forward pass may be thrown on each play
- Teams are permitted an unlimited number of laterals (sideways or backwards passes) on any given play
 - Teams cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage following a lateral, unless the defensive team has rushed the quarterback following a 5-steamboat count

RECEIVING

- All players on the field are considered eligible receivers
- When making a catch, the first point of contact with the ground determines whether the catch is complete:
 - If the ball makes contact with the ground before the receiver has control, it is an incomplete pass
 - If the receiver is touching the boundary line, or is out-of-bounds at first point of contact, the catch does not count (unless contact from a defender forced the receiver out of bounds in mid-air)
 - If the receiver touches inside of the boundary line but is carried out-of-bounds by their momentum, the catch is good
 - The receiver only needs one foot planted in-bounds while possessing the disc for it to be a completion
 - A receiver is 'down' at the spot where their flag is pulled
 - A receiver must be entirely in the end-zone before being flagged for the score to count
- A receiver is allowed to bobble the ball before making a catch, but cannot use controlled bobbling to advance the ball forwards up the field of play
- **There are no fumbles in ESSC Flag Football Leagues**
 - If a player drops the football after gaining full possession, the play is immediately dead (down is complete) at that spot and the offence retains possession

KICK-OFFS

- Occur to start each half, and after a scoring play (touchdown or convert)
- Kickers are allowed to use the kicking tee
- Teams will always kick-off from their own 10-yard line
- No player may pass the line of scrimmage until the kicker has made contact with the football
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds prior to reaching the opponent's end-zone, the receiving team can:
 - Request a re-kick
 - Take possession of the ball 5-yards up from where it crossed the boundary line
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds through the opponent's end-zone:
 - The result is a touchback and the receiving team will start possession on the 10-yard line
 - No single-point is awarded to the kicking team for a touchback
- Laterals are permitted on kick-off returns
- **Loose Balls:**
 - The kicking team must give the receiving team a 5-yard radius to recover the ball
 - Once the ball has been touched by the receiving team, the 5-yard rule is no longer in effect
 - Once a kick-off is touched by the receiving team, only the player who first touched the ball may return the kick-off or attempt to advance the ball
 - The kicking team cannot recover a kick, even if the ball was touched by the receiving team

PUNTING

- A team can only punt on the 4th down
 - **There are no fake-punts in ESSC Leagues**
- No player may pass the line of scrimmage until the kicker has made contact with the football

- Defensive teams cannot block a punt
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds prior to reaching the opponent's end-zone, the receiving team will take possession of the ball from where it crossed the boundary line
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds through the opponent's end-zone:
 - The result is a touchback and the receiving team will start possession on the 10-yard line
 - No single-point is awarded to the kicking team for a touchback
- The punting team can down a punt
 - If the receiving team has not yet made a play on the ball, the punting team can touch the ball to down the ball at that spot
 - The kicking team cannot gain possession or recover a punt, even if the ball was touched by a member of the receiving team

BLOCKING AND PICK-PLAYS

- All ESSC Flag Football Leagues are non-contact
- Blocking by the offence is never permitted (line of scrimmage, post-reception, on a kick-off or punt returns)
 - The ball carrier is permitted to use stationary teammates as blocks, as long as they were ahead of the ball carrier to start the play, and are not moving while blocking
- Pick-plays are not permitted by the offensive team
 - For a play to be considered a 'pick' an imminent collision or physical contact must have occurred
 - Crossing patterns are permitted by receivers as long as no contact is made with the defenders

DEFENCE

STEAMBOAT COUNTING

- The defensive team will count steamboats
 - 1 steamboat = 1 second
 - The count always starts at 1-steamboat, even if the defensive team forgot to start counting earlier
- The defensive team is allowed to rush the quarterback after 5-steamboats:
 - Once the defensive team crosses the line of scrimmage, the quarterback is allowed to run the ball
- If not rushed by the defensive team, the offensive team has a 10-steamboat count to make a play
 - If the offensive team has not initiated a pass when the count reaches 10, the play is dead

PULLING FLAGS

- A player is considered "down" in the following scenarios:
 - One or more of the flags from their belt is pulled
 - The player touches the field with their body (from their knee up)
 - Hands are excluded, it is okay to touch the field with
 - The player steps out-of-bounds
- If a player inadvertently loses a flag during a play:
 - The play is dead at the spot of the lost flag, if the player was carrying the ball

- The play is dead at the spot of the reception, if a receiver catches a pass after losing the flag
- Play continues if the player was not the ball carrier, or intended receiver
- If a player is flagged down in their own end-zone
 - The offence retains possession and the line of scrimmage is moved to the one-yard line
 - **There are no safeties in ESSC Flag Football Leagues**

INTERCEPTIONS

- The defensive team can intercept a forward pass or lateral from the offensive team
- An interception can be returned for a score (touchdown)
- If the defensive team intercepts a convert attempt and scores, they will be awarded as many points as the offensive team was attempting (1 or 2)
- If an interception occurs in the end-zone and the player is flagged down, a touchback will occur, and the intercepting team will gain possession on the 10-yard line

VIOLATIONS & FOULS

VIOLATIONS

Violations are intentional or unintentional rule infractions. A violation may result in the re-playing of a down if the opposing team was put at a disadvantage by the violation. Players are expected to call violations committed by themselves or their team.

- Offside
- Quarterback Crossing the Line of Scrimmage before Being Rushed
- Illegal Pass
- Fast Steamboat Counting

FOULS

Fouls are non-malicious physical infractions that occur during gameplay. Players are expected to call fouls committed by themselves or their team.

- If a foul is called, the play is halted:
 - A defensive foul will result in the following choices for the offensive team:
 - Accept - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
 - Accept - Play the next down from the spot where the foul occurred
 - Decline - Play the next down from the spot where the previous play concluded
 - An offensive foul will result in the following choices for the defensive team:
 - Accept – Loss of down for the offensive team
 - Decline – The result of the previous play stands
- If a foul occurs while the football is in the air, the play is always completed
- If a defensive foul occurs on the 4th down, the offensive team can accept the foul (original line of scrimmage, or spot foul) and replay 4th down
- **If there is ever a disagreement over a foul call, replay the down from the original line of scrimmage**

DEFENSIVE INTERFERENCE

- Body contact, holding, pushing
- Screening a receiver (intentionally covering the eyes or blocking their vision)
- Prematurely pulling a flag from an offensive player's belt

OFFENSIVE INTERFERENCE

- Body contact, pushing-off, or any sort of blocking
- Includes pick-plays
- Flag Guarding
 - Includes covering the flags with clothing, using arms or hands to guard the flags, or jumping to avoid being flagged down
- Charging
 - Aggressively running through stationary defenders that are in front of the ball carrier