



9V9 FALL SEASON RULEBOOK

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BILLINGS, MONTANA

1. GAME PLAY

- 9 vs 9
- 30 minute halves, 5 minute half time
- Each team has **two 60 second timeouts/half**. Unused timeouts do not carry over to the second half.
- Roster Size – 9 minimum, 18 maximum
- Field dimensions - Official size, 100 yds

1.1 EQUIPMENT

- All players must use the flag belts provided by Montana Flag Football League, and **must return the flag belts when finished**.
- Mouthguards are highly recommended during game play
- Game balls will be provided. Other footballs are not allowed to be used for game play.
- All jerseys MUST be tucked in (under flags) before play begins
- All jerseys MUST match in color. Any player who does not match jersey colors, will not be allowed to play.

2. STARTING THE GAME

- Before each game, the referee will conduct a coin toss. The team listed first on the official game schedule will call the toss while the coin is in the air. The winner of the toss may choose possession, defend a goal, or defer their choice until the second half.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at it's own 20 yard line and has 4 downs to advance the ball to the next 1st down marker (10yds) or score. Offense will be awarded another set of 4 downs if a 1st down is successful.

- **Declared punt:** At 4th down, the offense has the option to declare a punt or “go for it”. **The decision must be declared.**
- No actual punts. A declared punt will “travel” 35 yards from the line of scrimmage. If the punt would reach the endzone, the receiving team starts at its own 20 yard line.

2.1 SCORING

- Touchdowns are worth 6 points.
- PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point, 5yd line, pass or run.
2 point, 10yd line, pass or run.

3. OFFENSE

- Offense must have 3 down lineman; a Center and a guard on both sides. **Lineman are ineligible** to receive.
- Blocking must be with open hands to the chest. Illegal blocking may be called at the ref’s discretion.
- Offense must have 5 players “on the line” (including Center and Guards) all other players must line up “off the line”.
- Tight ends are eligible.
- **30 sec play clock** – Offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball after it’s been spotted.
- QB may run with the ball at any time, after the snap.
- All players must have their shirts/jerseys tucked in, under the flag belt. (At the ref’s discretion, a holding penalty may not be called if the players flag belt is under the shirt)

3.1 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-carriers flag is pulled. **(If the ball carriers flag inadvertently falls off, he must be physically “tagged” by the defense, in order to be called down.)**
 - The ball carrier steps out of bounds.

- The ball carriers knee or arm hits the ground.
- Ball carrier leaves their feet. (Diving, Leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding)
 - 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 - **“one foot in”**
 - In the case of **simultaneous possession** by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

4. DEFENSE

- Defense must have 3 down lineman; a Nose and two Defensive Ends. Defensive lineman may or may not rush.
- Rushing defense must use open hands to the chest. Intentional elbows, forearms, and shoulders may be considered a penalty. (unsportsmanlike)
- All defenders are eligible to blitz at anytime after the snap.
- Defenders may “jam” or “bump” receivers (with open hands to the chest) within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage. (unsportsmanlike conduct may be called at the ref’s discretion)
- Interceptions are returnable for the amount of points being attempted. (6 points or PAT) If the return is unsuccessful, it’s simply a turnover on downs, and the new offense will begin at their own 20 yard line.

4.1 ILLEGAL DEFENSE

- Defenders must attempt to pull the flags of the runner.
- Pushing the runner out of bounds prohibited
- Stripping the ball prohibited
- Holding the runner with one hand while grabbing for the flags with another hand is not allowed.

5. OVERTIME

If the game is tied at the end of regulation, an overtime period will determine the winner – with one play from the 5 yard line for a chance to score. cont...

- The team with possession at the end of regulation gets the ball for the OT period.
- If the offense scores, they receive 6 points and they win the game.
- If the defense stops the offense from scoring, they receive 2 points and win the game.

6. PENALTIES

• Defensive Spot Fouls

- Defensive Pass Interference ----- (Automatic 1st down)
- Holding ----- (+5 yds and auto 1st down)
- Stripping ----- (+10yds and auto 1st down)

• Offensive Spot Fouls

- Charging ----- (-10yds and loss of down)
- Flag Guarding ----- (-10yds and loss of down)

• Defensive Penalties

- Unnecessary Roughness ----- (+10yds and auto 1st down)
- Unsportsmanlike ----- (+10yds and auto 1st down)
- Offside ----- (+5 yds from LOS and auto 1st down)
- Roughing the Passer ----- (+5 yds from LOS and auto 1st down)
- Taunting ----- (+5 yds from LOS and auto 1st down)

• Offensive Penalties

- Unnecessary Roughness ----- (-10 yds and loss of down)
- Unsportsmanlike ----- (-10 yds and loss of down)
- Offside/False Start ----- (-5 yds from LOS and loss of down)
- Offensive Pass Interference ----- (-5 yds from LOS and loss of down)
- Illegal Motion ----- (-5 yds from LOS and loss of down)
- Delay of Game ----- (-5 yds from LOS and loss of down)
- Taunting ----- (-5 yds from LOS and loss of down)