



FFFL “4 Hard” Rulebook

RULE 1. OVERVIEW

SECTION 1. THE FIELD

Article 1. Standard dimensions of the field are 30 yards long by 25 yards wide with 7 yard endzone. There will be a 7 yard buffer zone behind the midfield line and that the offense must not leave while starting at midfield. If a sack occurs in the buffer zone defense will get 1 point and offense will retain ball next down.

SECTION 2. THE GAME

Article 1. Minimum 3 players to start a game. May only have up to 5 players on the field at any one time. Maximum roster size is 7 players.

Article 2. A coin toss determines 1st possession. The winner can elect to have offense or defer. 1st choice in the 2nd half will be awarded to team who deferred or loser of coinflip if no defer.

Article 3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at midfield and has 4 plays to score. If the offensive team fails to score, the ball changes possession. All drives start from midfield

SECTION 3. GAME CLOCK FORMAT

Article 1. Tournament clock is 25 minutes long. Two 12 minute halves and 1-minute halftime.

Article 2. Each team has two 30 second timeouts PER GAME. If a time out is called after a TD the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

Article 3. The play clock is 25 seconds from the end of the previous play.

SECTION 4. FIRST HALF CLOCK

Article 1. The clock will run continuously during the 12 minutes of the first half unless a team timeout is used or play is stopped by an official (e.g. deal with an injury, challenge, referee conference, game management purposes, etc.)

Article 2. The head official will give a verbal one-minute warning.

Article 3. The clock will run during point-after-touchdown attempts (PATs) in the first half unless either team opts to use a team timeout.

SECTION 5. SECOND HALF CLOCK

Article 1. In the second half the clock will run continuously for the first 11 minutes unless a team timeout or an official's time out is used.

Article 2. The one-minute warning will stop the clock in the second half if the score difference is 8 points or less.

Article 3. The head official will give a verbal one-minute.

Article 4. At the one minute warning officials will use a “pro” clock mechanic for the remainder of the contest.

RULE 2. OFFENSE

SECTION 1. RUNNING

Article 1. The quarterback may run IMMEDIATELY unless the ball is spotted inside the NO RUN ZONE.

Article 2. Teams may handoff (unlimited), pitch, or throw back in the backfield. UNLIMITED laterals or throwbacks behind the LOS are allowed for the player to remain eligible to pass.

Article 3. Pitching (backwards/laterally) is allowed downfield (unlimited). Handoffs are allowed forward or backwards when behind the line of scrimmage, and only backwards beyond the line of scrimmage. A handoff DOES NOT count as a lateral/throwback.

Article 4. A forward pass DOES NOT have to cross the LOS to be a legal play.

Article 5. A handoff has to be behind LOS

Article 6. No run zone is located 5-yards before the end zone. You may not run the ball in the no run zone, only forward passes are allowed to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage. Laterals and handoffs are still allowed.

Article 7. Ball is spotted where the ball is at the time of the flag pull. The ball must break the plane of the goal line to be considered a touchdown.

Article 8. Players may NOT block down field in any form.

SECTION 2. PASSING

Article 1. 5 second QB pass clock.

Article 2. There is no arm in motion, if the ball is in hand when the quarterback's flag is pulled then it will be ruled a sack.

Article 3. Interceptions are dead at point of interception and defense is awarded 2 points and ball is turned over for play to start at midfield..

Article 4. The rusher may not have any contact with the QB (no hitting the QB arm or knocking the ball out of the QB hand).

Article 5. If ANY part of the players body is touching over the LOS it is an illegal forward pass.

Article 6. No under center snaps. All snaps must be received at or beyond the QB SNAP LINE (this line is an imaginary line running parallel 2 yards behind the LOS from sideline to sideline). An illegal snap (under center or not traveling to or beyond the QB Snap Line) will continue the play but result in a 5 yard penalty and loss of the down.

SECTION 3. RECEIVING

Article 1. All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched or handed off in the backfield.

Article 2. Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

RULE 3. DEFENSE

SECTION 1. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

Article 1. Players that blitz/rush the quarterback must be a minimum of 5 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

Article 2. The rusher must DECLARE their intent to rush with 1 hand raised high above their head until the snap is initiated. This signal will notify the officials and the offensive team who is rushing and who to avoid in the rusher's path to the line of scrimmage. Failure to signal will result in the rusher losing his/her right of way/direct path to the line of scrimmage.

Article 3. Players that are not 5 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped may not enter into the backfield until there is a change of possession.

Article 4. The blitzer/rusher is allowed a direct lane to the line of scrimmage as long as he or she rushes from either side of the center or outside the bunch formation. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher if he or she has established a lane. Officials will announce LANE or NO LANE for rushers/blitzers prior to the snap. This is a judgement call/decision based on the spacing between the players in the offensive formation. A space of 12" or greater in length between two players constitutes a lane at the officials discretion.

Article 5. The rush of a blitzer has to be immediately after the snap, quick and straight towards the point where the quarterback receives the snap in order to retain the right of way. If a blitzer is rushing late, slowly, aiming at another spot, changing direction during the rush or just does not rush the quarterback, the player loses the right of way but still can participate as any other defensive player.

SECTION 2. PASS COVERAGE

Article 1. Contacting receivers is not allowed

Article 2. Pass interference normally occurs above the waist; entangled feet are not considered pass interference. Incidental contact is not considered pass interference.

Article 3. If defensive pass interference occurs in the end zone the ball will be placed on the one-yard line, automatic first down.

Article 4. Interceptions are considered dead at point of interception. Defense will be awarded 2 points and will take over the ball at midfield.

Article 5. Contact away from the direction of the pass is not considered pass interference but may be considered illegal contact.

Article 6. Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on pass interference. The benefit of the doubt is given to the receiver. Examples of pass interference include:

- Shoving or pushing off to create separation.
- Playing through the back or shielding from the front..
- Hook and turn: grabbing the torso and turning an opponent before the pass arrives.
- Arm bars, hooking, restricting, grabbing wrists, or turning a receiver.
- Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched, commonly seen through "pick plays".

RULE 4. SCORING

SECTION 1. POINTS

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Point After Touchdown:
 - (PAT) 1 point from the 5-yard line (no-run zone in effect)
 - 2 points from the 12-yard line, run, pass (outside of no-run zone)
 - Interceptions are worth 2 points
 - Sack of QB in neutral zone 1 point next down for offense.

SECTION 2. POINT AFTER TOUCHDOWN (PAT)

Article 1. Following a touchdown, once the scoring team has informed an official of which point conversion choice they want to attempt, the decision cannot be changed unless the scoring team uses a team timeout.

Article 2. If a penalty occurs during an extra point attempt, the penalty will be assessed but the extra point value remains the same.

Article 3. Decisions cannot be changed after a penalty. For example, if the offense attempts a 1-point PAT and is penalized five yards for a false start, they cannot change their mind and go for a 2-point PAT. They will still be attempting a 1-point try even if they call a timeout.

Article 4. Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct, personal fouls, or roughing penalties during a successful touchdown attempt will be assessed at half the distance to the goal during the PAT attempt (e.g., 2-point PAT attempts will be spotted at the 6-yard line, 1-point PAT attempts will be spotted at the 2.5-yard line). All other defensive penalties may be declined by the offense and the score will stand.

Article 5. Dead ball fouls committed by the offense that do not carry a loss-of-down penalty (false start) may result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.

Article 6. Fouls by the offense during a successful PAT attempt that carry a loss-of-down penalty (flag guarding, illegal advancement, illegal forward pass, etc.) will result in the PAT being no good.

Article 7. Fouls committed by the offense in unsuccessful PAT attempts will be declined by the defense and the PAT will be “no good” and will not be replayed.

Article 8. Fouls by the defense during an unsuccessful PAT attempt will result in a retry after the options are administered.

SECTION 3. OVERTIME EXTRA POINT SHOOT-OUT

Article 1. A coin flip determines first possession, 1 timeout per OT period

Article 2. Teams will go in reverse order if more than 1 OT is required

Article 3. Teams can elect to go for 1 or 2 points

Article 4. Winner will be determined once the value of the extra point exceeds the other team’s attempt.

SECTION 4. MERCY RULE

Article 1. If a team is up by 28 points or more, the game will be over.

RULE 5. PENALTY CHART

Penalty	Yardage	Penalty Assessment	Result
Flag Guarding	5	Spot of foul	Loss of down
Illegal Advancement	5	Spot of foul	Loss of down
Illegal Forward Pass	5	Previous spot	Loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference	5	Previous spot	Loss of down
Defensive Pass Interference	10 or spot foul	10 from Previous spot or spot foul (whichever the offense chooses)	Automatic 1st down
Personal Foul/Unnecessary Roughness	15	End of the play or previous spot	By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15	End of the play or previous spot	By the Offense: Loss of down

			By the Defense: Automatic 1st down
Roughing the Passer	10	Previous spot	Automatic 1st down
Delay of Game	5	Dead ball – Previous spot	Replay down
False Start	5	Dead ball – Previous spot	Replay down
Offsides	5	Previous spot	Replay down
Illegal Rush	5	Live ball – Previous Spot	Automatic 1st down
Encroachment	5	Dead ball – Previous spot	Automatic 1st down
Cool Down Period	0	No foul	Player must sit out 5 plays
Illegal Shift or Illegal Motion	5	Previous spot	Loss of Down
Stripping or Attempted Stripping	5	Spot of the foul	Automatic 1st down
Illegal Contact	5	Previous spot or spot of the foul	By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down
Early Flag Pull	5	Previous spot	Automatic 1st down
Illegal Participation	5	Previous spot	By the Offense: Loss of down By the Defense: Automatic 1st down
Illegal Blocking	5	Spot foul or from previous spot if behind LOS	Loss of down
Holding	5	Spot of the foul	Automatic 1st down
Impeding the rusher	5	Previous spot	Loss of down
Charging	5	Spot of the foul	Loss of down
Last Man Rule	15 or TD	Spot of the foul	Automatic 1st down or TD if inside the 5 yard line