



2026 Padded Flag League Rules

2026 Badger East Youth Football League Padded Flag (8 vs 8) Rules

Updated: 1/22/2026

2026 WIAA/National Federation Football Rules will govern with the following exceptions:

A. GENERAL GAME INFORMATION

1. Current 4th & 5th Grade students only are allowed to play.
2. All decisions made by the officials are final.
3. All unnecessary physical contact MUST be avoided.
4. No use of tobacco/alcohol by any coach, official, or spectator during any game.
5. Only approved coaches and the players are allowed on the team sideline. Absolutely no parents or spectators are allowed on the sideline of the playing field that the teams are using.
6. Each team must have at least 2 USA Football certified coaches on the team's sideline during the game.
7. Rosters must be available at every game and must include all coaches, assistants, each player's name, jersey number, and current school grade.
8. A copy of the rules must be printed and a hard copy available at each host location.
9. Teams must have gator-clip belts with flags that stay attached to the belt. Flags cannot be the same color as the player's game pants.
10. If flags are noticed to be harder to remove than other flags, flags will be checked by the officials and can be removed from the game.
11. Jerseys must be tucked in and flags clearly exposed.
12. Pre-game meetings must occur, including both coaches, game referees and team captains to go over game expectations and player-to-player contact, ensuring everyone understands the rules.

B. GAME

1. Each game will consist of two 25-minute halves with a continuous running clock and a 5-minute half time. The clock will stop for injury at the official's discretion.
2. Each team's possession starts at the 40-yard line. This includes starting the game, after a touchdown, interception, turnover on downs or starting the second half.
3. (2) 30-second timeouts are provided to each team per half. Unused timeouts do not carry over into the 2nd half.
*Timeouts called for rule interpretation where the official made a mistake may not be counted towards the team's timeouts. This is at the official's discretion.
4. 1 coach per team is allowed on the field of play. The Offensive coach must remain behind the line of scrimmage. The Defensive coach must be behind the player furthest from the line of scrimmage. Coaches must make every effort not to obstruct any player or play.
5. When the ball is spotted by the official, the offense has 45 seconds to initiate a new play.
6. Teams must use a Junior-sized (9-12) composite football. Each team can use their own ball.
7. The offensive team will have 3 downs to secure a first down. First downs will occur at the 30-yard line, 20-yard line and 10-yard line.

C. PUNTS & SCORING

1. No kicking, punting, or extra point/field goal kicking attempts allowed.
2. The use of a scoreboard is not required. The focus is on player skill development – not the score.
3. A touchdown = 6 points
4. Extra Point Attempts
 1. 1 Point for an extra point attempt from the 5-yard line
 2. 2 Points for an extra point attempt from the 10-yard line

D. THE PLAYING FIELD

1. The playing field is 40 yards long, 30 yards wide, with a 10-yard end zone. On a standard football field, this width is from the sideline to the far hashmark.

E. DEFENSE

1. 2 linemen must be in a 3-point stance and line up directly over the guards.
 1. No one can line up over the center or in the center/guard gap.
2. All other players must be 5 yards off the ball. This includes cornerbacks – no press coverage.
3. If the offense uses a tight end, a 3rd defender can be on the line of scrimmage in a 3- or 4-point stance.
4. No blitzing is allowed.
5. Once the ball has been handed off in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, or the quarterback has broken outside of the tackle box, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
6. An offensive player in possession of the ball is ruled down when their flag is removed. Officials should spot the ball at the location where the flag is removed, not where it lays on the ground.
7. Unnecessary roughness (obvious avoidable contact) is an automatic first down at the start of the next zone or at the 5-yard line if inside the 20 and the player may be removed from play for the day.
8. It is the defensive player's responsibility to avoid unnecessary contact when attempting to pull an offensive player's flag.
9. Defense **CANNOT** force the ball carrier out of bounds with a shoulder push. This will result in a minimum of a 5-yard penalty up to immediate disqualification from the game for that player depending on severity.

F. OFFENSE

1. 4 players must be on the line of scrimmage for every play. This includes 3 linemen.
2. Linemen must be in a 3-point stance and the line must be balanced within the tackle box. Linemen are not eligible receivers.
3. If a Tight End is used, they must be in a 3-point stance lined up next to the guard.
4. Shifts and motion are allowed, however, 4 must be on the line of scrimmage prior to the ball being snapped.
5. The ball must be snapped between the legs either under center or in shotgun formation.
6. The first player **taking possession** of the ball after the snap may not advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
 1. Example: If QB in shotgun tips a high snap and the running back catches it, that running back is the first to take possession. The running back cannot advance the ball, they would need to pass or hand it off to another player.
7. A fumble is immediately dead once it hits the ground. The offense retains possession at the spot of the fumble, not the spot of the ball.
8. All blocking must be done above the waist and without taking the defensive player to the ground.
9. Ball Carrying:
 1. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball.
 2. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
 3. Runners may leave their feet without a flag guarding penalty being enforced **ONLY** if there is a clear indication that this has been done to avoid a collision with another player.
 4. An offensive player may not lower their shoulder into a defensive player to avoid a flag pull. Players doing so will receive an unnecessary roughness penalty.
 5. Spinning and stiff arms are allowed.

G. PENALTIES

1. If the offense is in possession of the ball on the 40-yard line and the offense commits a penalty, the ball stays at the 40-yard line and there is a loss of down.

5 Yard Penalties:

- Pushing player out of bounds without going for their flag
- Delay of Game
- Encroachment
- False Start
- Illegal Formation (including Defense not properly aligned)
- Illegal Blitz (linebacker or DB behind Line of scrimmage before handoff or QB is outside Tackle starting position)
- Illegal Shift or Motion
- Snap Infraction
- Ineligible receiver illegally downfield
- Failure to properly wear required equipment
- Illegal Forward Pass - and loss of down if by offense
- Intentional Grounding - and loss of down

10 Yard Penalties:

- Holding
- Illegal Block – blocking in back, below the waist, chop block

15 Yard Penalties:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct – by a player or non-player - such as profanity, trash talk, derogatory remarks, taunting, kicking or swinging at a player or official, or spiking the ball.
- Face Mask– any and all infractions
- Late Hit
- Clipping
- Roughing – Passer
- Spearing
- Tripping
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Pass Interference and loss of down if by offensive player.

Immediate Disqualification:

- Striking, kicking, or kneeing.
- Intentional physical contact with an official
- Any act unduly rough or flagrant.
- A second unsportsmanlike foul by a player.

Removal from premises:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct – by a non-player - such as profanity, trash talk, derogatory remarks, taunting, kicking or swinging at a player or official, or spiking the ball.