

# **PICKUP FOOTBALL**

Official Rule Book and Guidelines

Version 1.6

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## 1 UNIFORMS / EQUIPMENT

- Teams will provide their own uniform shirts, matching in color with as little variation as possible.
- Teams must use the official tournament ball, provided by **Pickup Football**.
- **Pickup Football** will provide belts and flags. Players may bring their own belts/flags as long as the belts have two flags and are “popper” style.
- Shirts must be tucked into belts or pants/shorts.
- Sandals/flip flops, dress shoes, and metal cleats are not allowed. Molded cleats and sneakers are the only acceptable footwear on the field.

## 2 FIELDS

- The field is approximately 75 yards long and 30 yards wide.
- End zones are seven (7) yards long
- Possessions to start halves, following scores, or following touchbacks will begin at the 5-yard line.
- Two first down markers split the field lengthwise into thirds, each approximately 20 yards in length.

## 3 ROSTERS

- Games will be played 7-on-7, with a maximum of 4 men on the field.
- Teams must have at least five (5) players to start a game, with a minimum of one (1) woman. Games will begin as scheduled as long as both teams have at least five (5) players.
- Teams are allowed up to 15 players on their roster for tournament play (minimum three women).

## 4 GAME TIMING

### 4.1 Game Length

**Pickup Football** tournament games consist of two 18-minute halves with a running clock until the final minute of the second half (see One-Minute Warning Timing below).

### 4.2 Rock-Paper-Scissors

Referees will conduct a one-round rock-paper-scissors (RPS) in place of a coin toss. The winner of the RPS can choose offense or defense. The RPS loser will choose direction of play for the first half. To start the second half, possession and direction of play will reverse from these initial declarations.

### 4.3 Play Clock

The offense will have a 15-second play clock, beginning when the ball is spotted from the previous down or when referee signals play is ready following a stoppage or change of possession.

### 4.4 Timeouts

- Teams start each game with two timeouts, to be used at any time.
- Timeouts stop the game clock and reset the play clock. There is no additional time included for a timeout. (In other words, timeouts “last” zero seconds.)
- Timeouts can be called by any player, whether they are on the field or sideline.
- No additional timeouts will be added for overtime.

### 4.5 Halftime

Tournament halftimes will last two (2) minutes.

#### 4.6 One-Minute Warning

- The one-minute warning applies only to the second half.
- The referee will stop the game clock and reset the play clock at the 1:00 remaining mark of the second half; if a play is in progress the game clock will stop immediately following the conclusion of that play.
- On offensive penalties that occur during one-minute timing, the defense has the option to accept a 10-second run-off, except for pre- and post-snap penalties when the clock is already stopped.

##### One-Minute Warning Timing

- If the point differential is nine (9) points or more, the referee will restart the game clock after announcing the one-minute warning and running-time will resume. If the point differential is eight (8) points or less, one-minute warning stoppages will apply.
- In the case of a scoring play that pushes the point differential to nine (9) points or more, the clock will revert to running time when an extra point is snapped following a touchdown that increases the point differential to nine (9) points or more; OR the offense snaps the ball following an extra point or safety that increases the point differential to nine (9) points or more.
- Extra points are untimed if the point differential is eight (8) points or fewer.

##### Clock stoppages after the 1-minute warning occur for:

- Team timeouts.
- Official's timeouts (injuries, discussion, foreign balls/players on field, etc.) If the clock is stopped for an injury, the injured player must leave the field for one play. If the injured player's team uses a timeout, the injured player may re-enter the game immediately.
- Incomplete passes, including legal spikes by the quarterback.  
QB must catch the snap before spiking the ball. If the quarterback does not catch the snap before directing the ball to the ground, it will be deemed a fumble and the clock will run.  
A female QB spiking the ball does not count as a female play.
- Offensive players in possession of the ball going out of bounds to end a play. If the ball is lateraled or fumbled out of bounds, the clock will run.
- Punts.
- Turnovers.
- Scoring plays that do not create a nine (9) point or more differential.
- Penalties

Note: If the clock is running and offense commits a penalty, the defense has the option to accept a 10-second run-off; following the 10-second run-off, the clock will continue once the ball is snapped for the next play.

#### 4.7 Delay of Game

- Two (2) consecutive delay of game penalties by the offense will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and loss of down.
- Two (2) consecutive delay of game or offsides penalties by the defense, whether accepted or declined, will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. If the game is in one-minute warning timing, the clock will continue to run after the ball is spotted for play. The offense will always have the option to decline these penalties; if the defense continues to delay the game, the referees will declare a forfeit.
- Delay of game penalties include throwing/kicking/spiking the ball out of play to delay spotting of the ball; intentionally obstructing an opponent's path to the line of scrimmage; intentionally incurring an offsides penalty prior to the snap.

#### 4.8 Injuries and Extended Delays

In the event of an injury or other delay that stops the game clock for an extended time, games may be shortened in order to keep tournament schedules on time. Referees and tournament coordinators will do everything possible to ensure games are not delayed or shortened.

#### 4.9 Referee Delays / Clock Correction

In the event of a disparity in game clock, referees may add time or an untimed down if they deem that time was lost in error.

- Example: Referee mistakenly adjusts position and has to reset himself, delaying offense's ability to snap the ball.
- Example: Referee stops play to clarify a rule or call, and the delay is significant enough to warrant clock being stopped.

## 5 GENERAL PLAY / "POST-SNAP"

### 5.1 Terms

- **Quarterback:** The offensive player who receives the snap.
- **Ball carrier:** Any player who has established possession of the ball either by receiving the snap, receiving a hand-off or lateral from another ball carrier, or legally catching a forward pass.
- **Catch / Interception / Loose ball recovery:**  
Possession is gained when a player has (1) complete control of the ball with hands or arms **AND** (2) one foot or any other part of their body, other than hands, completely on the ground inbounds **AND** (3) either: performs any act common to the game (e.g., tucks ball, extends the ball forward, takes an additional step or turns upfield) **OR** maintains control of the ball long enough to do any of the above. This standard for gaining possession of the ball applies to the field of play, the sideline, and the end zone.

#### Clarifications

- If a player gains control of the ball with hands or arms while in the air, then contacts the ground and loses control of the ball, there is no possession if the ball hits the ground before they regain control, or if they regain control out of bounds.
  - In accordance with **Pickup Football's** no contact rules, if a player who otherwise would have been inbounds is pushed, tripped, carried, or otherwise physically forced out of bounds by an opponent while gaining possession of a pass or fumble, the play will be ruled in bounds and a roughing penalty will be enforced at the spot of the foul. If the player attempting possession in this scenario does not maintain possession of the ball, a penalty of either roughing or pass interference will apply.
  - An offensive player who has gone out of bounds cannot be the first player to touch the ball; this player **IS** eligible to receive a tipped or deflected pass or a lateral once they have re-established themselves in the field of play.
  - The snapper is ineligible to receive a forward pass, a hand off, or a lateral behind the line of scrimmage, but is eligible to catch a deflected pass.
  - All defensive players are eligible to catch a forward pass or lateral.
- **Lateral**  
A lateral or backward pass occurs when a ball carrier throws the football to a teammate in a direction parallel to or away from the opponents' goal line. The ball may be lateraled at any time by the offense or defense. A lateral that is not completed will be considered a fumble and ruled down at the spot where the ball lands. Possession cannot change when a fumbled lateral hits the ground.
  - **Handoff**  
Handoffs are legal behind the line of scrimmage to any player excluding the snapper. Beyond the line of scrimmage, handing the ball forward to a teammate is illegal; a forward handoff occurs when the ball is handed to a player who is ahead (towards opponent's end zone) of a teammate who hands off the ball.

- **Huddle**

A huddle is the action of two or more players in the field of play or in the end zone who, between plays, form a group for receiving instructions for the next play or for any other reason. Except during official stoppages in play, no more than seven players are allowed in a huddle.

## 5.2 Conclusion of a play

A play ends when any of the following occurs:

- Incomplete pass.
- Inadvertent whistle. See [inadvertent whistle](#) section.
- Ball carrier's flag is pulled; if any of the ball carrier's flags are not attached to their belt, the play is dead when the ball carrier is touched by a defender.
  - In the case of a player's flag being pulled before they have possession of the ball, once they secure the ball (becoming a ball carrier), they will not be marked down until another flag is pulled or until they are touched by a defender.
  - Players may carry/wear towels, but any items hanging from a player's belt will be considered a "flag" if pulled by a defender.
- Any part of the ball carrier's body touches out of bounds.
- Any part of the ball carrier's body excluding feet, hands, or ball (as extension of hands) touches the ground.
- Any part of the ball, in possession of the ball carrier, crosses the plane of the end zone; players already in end zone receiving a forward pass must establish possession as normal (see [definition](#) of "catch").
- A fumbled ball touches the ground. There are no fumble recoveries; offense resumes possession at the spot of the fumble.

## 5.3 Spotting

- Spotting of the ball is based entirely on the location of the ball, not the ball carrier's hips or feet.
- There are no hash marks or specific boundaries for spotting the ball within the width of the field. Referees will spot the ball roughly in the center of the field; the offense may "center" the ball at their discretion.

## 5.4 Pre-snap Formation

- All seven (7) members of the offense must become set for at least one (1) second at some point prior to the snap; once they are set, one (1) member of the offense may then go in motion laterally or backwards before/at the snap.
  - Note on MOTION: Offensive players without the ball may not impede the defensive rusher. If a player goes in motion at the snap or executes a fake hand-off post snap, that player is responsible for avoiding a blitz. This clarification is meant to discourage teams from using motion to disrupt blitzes, as such a strategy would increase the likelihood of contact. Conversely, a blitz must be equally aware of the potential for handoffs.
- Offensive players are not required to line up on the line of scrimmage; there is no minimum or maximum number of offensive players "on" the line of scrimmage.
- Offense is not required to "balance" the line; all five (5) receivers may line up on one side of the center.

## 5.5 Substitutions

Substitutions can occur at any time before a play as long as:

- No more than seven (7) players are in a huddle.
- Offense is set with no more than seven (7) players on the field for a full second before the snap.
- Either team is permitted to play with fewer than seven (7) players on the field; players may not enter the field of play after the ball is snapped.

## 5.6 Snapping / Hiking the Ball

- Any offensive player can receive the snap, regardless of position in formation.
- Any offensive player can verbally "hike"/initiate the snap. The offense can snap the ball on a silent count.

- The ball must be snapped from the ground, even in the rain (ball can be snapped from the surface of snow if applicable).
- Prior to the snap, the snapper may adjust the ball in order to pick it up or reposition it.
- The snap must be delivered in one motion, i.e., no double clutching or delayed motion, no standing up then pitching ball, etc.
- Snapper must remain stationary after snapping the ball; snapper can squat or stand in place but may not “mirror” rusher’s position during rush count or extend arms or legs in path of rusher.
- There is no blocking or setting of screens by any player. The snapper may move once a forward pass is thrown or a ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage.
- The snapper may catch any deflected/tipped pass and may receive a lateral from the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage.
- If a turnover occurs, the snapper becomes a defender and can pursue ball carrier.

## 6 RUSHING THE PASSER

The defense is NOT required rush the quarterback and may align itself in any formation; there is no requirement for a designated “rusher” to line up across from the center or stay near the line of scrimmage. At the conclusion of the rush count or on a blitz play, any defender may rush the quarterback from any position on the field. A defender who lines up in a traditional “rusher” position in front of the snapper may drop into coverage at any time.

The rush count will be administered by a referee. Starting as soon as the snapper initiates the snap, the referee will count to four (4), at which time the defense may cross the line of scrimmage in order to rush. Defenders may not cross the line of scrimmage before the word “four,” unless:

- The quarterback hands off or laterals the ball to another offensive player.
- The quarterback throws a forward pass.
- The defense uses a blitz.

### 6.1 Quarterback Runs

The quarterback may run beyond the line of scrimmage with the ball as soon as any defender crosses the line of scrimmage, including blitz plays. If the defense chooses to not to rush after the four count, the quarterback may not run.

### 6.2 Blitzing

The defense is allowed one (1) blitz during each offensive possession, to be used at the defense’s discretion. A blitz is executed by rushing the quarterback at any time after the snap but before the referee’s count reaches “four”.

- Any number of defenders may blitz.
- If the defense has a blitz available, and inadvertently rushes early, (e.g. defender accidentally steps over the line while covering a receiver) the play will count as their blitz, not an early rush.
- Once the defense has used its blitz on a given possession, any subsequent early rush will result in a penalty.
- In the case of a single play where possession changes more than once (e.g. an interception where the defense laterals the ball and it is caught by a member of the original offensive team) the defense’s blitz will reset, as a new possession has occurred.
- If the defense’s blitz was not used prior to a score, they may blitz on a conversion.

#### Blitzes and penalties

- Any penalty that results in replaying a down will nullify a blitz that took place on that down. If a penalty is declined by either team on a play where the defense blitzed, the blitz will count.
- In the case of blitz plays where there is an accepted penalty that does not nullify the play (i.e., roughing, holding the ball carrier, intentional grounding, a post-play personal foul), the blitz will count.

In all of the below examples, the defense has used their blitz for the original play in question:

- **Example 1, Defensive penalty, down replayed:** The offense throws an incompleting, but the defense is flagged for pass interference. Result: If the Offense accepts penalty, play does not count, and Defense retains its blitz.
- **Example 2, Defensive penalty, yardage tacked on:** The offense throws a completed pass and the defense is flagged for roughing the ball carrier/receiver. Result: Defense does not retain blitz.
- **Example 3, Offensive penalty, replay down:** The offense completes a pass, but is flagged for an illegal pick. Result: Defense accepts penalty and retains its blitz.

## 7 GAINING FIRST DOWNS

Teams will have four (4) downs to achieve a first down, gained either by crossing first down markers or by accepting a penalty that results in an automatic first down. There are two sets of first down markers, which divide the length of the field into three equal sections (approximately 20 yards each).

A new set of downs begins after a first down marker is crossed or a penalty results in an automatic first down. Once a set of markers has been passed, that first down cannot be regained again in the same set of downs\*.

*\*In a scenario in which the offense loses yardage beyond a gained first down marker, then accepts a penalty accompanied by an automatic first down, the nearest marker would again become an attainable first down.*

## 8 SCORING

### 8.1 Touchdowns

Touchdowns are worth six (6) points.

### 8.2 Conversions

After a touchdown, the scoring team can attempt a one (1) or two (2) point conversion. One (1) point conversions will be attempted from four (3) yard line. Two (2) point conversions will be attempted from eight (6) yard line. One (1) and two (2) point conversions are returnable by the defense and are worth two points for the defense in either case.

**Touchdowns** and **conversions** are scored when the ball, in possession of a ball carrier, crosses the plane of the end zone, or the ball is caught legally in the opponent's end zone.

### 8.3 Safeties

Safeties are worth two (2) points and occur when:

- A ball carrier has their flag removed while ANY part of the ball is behind their own goal line.
- A ball carrier touches out of bounds while ANY part of the ball is behind their own goal line.
- The possessing team fumbles the ball and:
  - The ball lands in their own end zone.
  - The ball travels into their own end zone then out of bounds (i.e. a lateral thrown through the ball carrier's end zone or a snap thrown through the end zone).
  - The possessing team commits a penalty in their own end zone.

In the case of a defensive player whose momentum carries them into their end zone while they are gaining possession of the ball:

- If the ball carrier's flag is removed in the end zone or they go out of bounds in the end zone, no safety is awarded.
- Referees will have discretion to determine whether momentum carried the ball carrier into the end zone.

## 9 CONTACT

**Pickup Football** is a **NON-CONTACT** league. In every case, players (offense AND defense) are responsible for avoiding contact with opponents (and teammates). No blocking, guarding of flags, stiff-arming, setting of screens, etc. is allowed. While not all incidental contact will be penalized, our referees will have full discretion to flag contact that they deem unnecessary. Referees will also have full discretion to eject players for excessive contact, without warning.

### Points of emphasis

- When attempting to grab flags, defensive players may not physically obstruct a runner's path. This includes stopping the ball carrier with your body before grabbing for a flag and holding any part of the ball carrier's body, clothing, or equipment.
- Ball carriers may not run through a defender who has established their position; this includes lowering of the shoulder and stiff-arming; conversely, a defender may not establish position in the path of a "blind" runner, as in the case of a receiver who has just caught the ball but has not yet turned upfield.
- Ball carriers may jump side-to-side and jump cut. Ball carriers may jump/leap forward to gain extra yards or reach the ball forward but, in doing so, must also avoid initiating contact with other players. Ball carriers may also jump over another player who is on the ground in their path if it helps avoid contact.
- When reaching the ball for extra gain or raising their arms to avoid a defender, ball carriers must avoid contacting defenders; referees may consider such contact flag-guarding or roughing, even if the contact is not to the defender's hands or arms.
- Quarterback's follow-through and rusher contact:  
If a rusher is reaching for a flag or holding their arms up to attempt to deflect a pass, referees will have discretion to determine when the quarterback's follow-through motion was obstructed. If the quarterback's throwing hand contacts the rusher's hand as the rusher is reaching for a flag, no penalty will be assessed.

***Intentionality is not a factor in determining whether contact will be deemed excessive.*** "Going for the ball" is not an excuse for contact, either by the offense or the defense.

## 10 FEMALE PLAYS

At least one (1) of every three (3) offensive plays must feature a female player in any of the following ways:

- A woman is the quarterback; this counts as a female play whether she attempts a legal pass or is sacked, as long as she makes a valid attempt to gain yardage in the eyes of the referee.
- A woman receives a handoff, lateral, or forward pass behind the line of scrimmage from the quarterback (man or woman) and makes a valid attempt to get back to the line of scrimmage.
- A woman receives a handoff, then attempts a pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
- A woman is the intended receiver of a pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Any pass that first touches a female player counts as a female play. The deflected or tipped ball may be caught by any other player legally.

The following will not count as a female play:

- A pass from a male quarterback that is penalized for intentional grounding.
- A male quarterback is sacked during a mandatory female play.
- A male ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage laterals to a female.
- A woman catches or touches the ball after a male player touches it first (i.e. male player catches or tips the ball first).
- A woman either takes the snap or receives a handoff from the quarterback, but then hands off or laterals the ball to a male, who throws a pass to another male player or attempts to run the ball himself.
- A female receives the snap and spikes the ball to stop the clock.
- Any kneel down by a male or female player.

## 11 CHANGE OF POSSESSION

### 11.1 Punts

There are no punt plays. If the offense opts to “punt” on fourth down, the defense will take over possession with the ball spotted as follows:

- If the punting team’s possession ends past the initial first down marker, the ball will be spotted at the opposing team’s five (5) yard line (same as a touchback or start of possession after a score).
- If the punting team’s possession ends behind the initial first down marker, the ball will be spotted at the opposing team’s ten (10) yard line.

Teams may use the entire play clock to make their punt declaration, but during one-minute timing, the clock will stop following the offense’s declaration.

### 11.2 Fumbles

Fumbles can be caught in the air by either team (as with laterals).

- If the ball is fumbled forward and caught out of the air by an offensive player, it is a dead ball and spotted where the original player lost the ball. The ball cannot be “fumbled forward” for gain.
- If the ball is fumbled and caught out of the air by a defender, the defender becomes the ball carrier and can advance the ball.
- Stripping/taking the ball from a ball carrier is never legal. If the ball carrier makes incidental contact with another player and loses control of the ball, it will be in the referee’s discretion to determine whether the ball was stripped or not.

A fumbled ball that is not recovered in the air is considered dead when the ball lands in or out of bounds.

- If the unrecovered fumble travelled forward, the next play will be spotted where the ball carrier lost control of the ball.
- If the unrecovered fumble travelled laterally or backward, the next play will be spotted where the ball landed or crossed out of bounds.

### 11.3 Interceptions

- An interception is secured by the same rules as a completion. See the [definition](#) of “catch” above. In cases of a simultaneous catch by opponents, the ball is awarded to the offense at the spot of possession.
- Laterals are legal on interception returns.

## 12 INADVERTENT WHISTLE

Any time the referees on a given field blow their whistle, the play is dead.

- If an inadvertent whistle is blown while a ball carrier is in control of the ball, the play is dead immediately and yards gained or lost will count.
- If a pass is in flight at the time of the inadvertent whistle, the down will be replayed.
- If an inadvertent whistle occurs before the end of the rush count or before the defense blitzes and the quarterback is still in possession of the ball, the down will be replayed.

## 13 OVERTIME

If teams are tied at the end of regulation in an elimination game, an untimed overtime will follow regulation. There will be no overtime during pool play. **Pickup Football** will use a “college-style” format for overtimes:

- Teams will take turns attempting to score from their opponent’s fifteen (15) yard line.
- Teams will have four (4) downs to score.
- If a touchdown is scored, the scoring team can choose to attempt a one (1) or two (2) point conversion.
- If the teams are still tied after each has possessed the ball, a second overtime will be played, and so on.

- First downs can be gained via penalty only.

Interceptions can be returned. If an interception is returned for a touchdown during the first half of a rotation, the game is over.

Possession in the first overtime will be determined by RPS. The winner of the RPS can decide whether to start on offense or defense. If a second overtime is needed, the team that lost the RPS will be given the option of offense or defense. The decision will alternate for each overtime period needed. Teams will also change end zones after each full rotation.

## 14 STANDINGS

### 14.1 Wins, Losses, Ties

#### Two Teams

1. Head-to-head (best won-lost-tied percentage in games between the clubs)
2. Best won-lost-tied percentage in games played within the division
3. Best won-lost-tied percentage in common games
4. Strength of victory (point differential)
5. Coin toss

#### Three or More Teams

1. Head-to-head (best won-lost-tied percentage in games among the clubs)
2. Best won-lost-tied percentage in games played within the division
3. Best won-lost-tied percentage in common games
4. Strength of victory (point differential)
5. Coin toss

If two (2) teams remain tied after a third team or other teams are eliminated during any step, the tiebreaker reverts to step one (1) of the two-team format.

## 15 DISCIPLINE

Players who have been ejected from a tournament game for excessive contact, abusive behavior towards referees or other players, multiple unsportsmanlike conduct penalties, or fighting may be ejected from the tournament. Tournament officials and referees will review every ejection after the game to determine the need for additional discipline. Any player who engages in a physical fight with any tournament participant will be asked to leave.

## 16 WEATHER

Tournament play will continue through rain, snow, and cold/hot temperatures. If lightning or dangerous winds force games to be cancelled or postponed, **Pickup Football** will do its best to reschedule games.

## 17 ALCOHOL / SUBSTANCES

Any tournament participant or spectator found drinking alcohol, smoking, or using illegal drugs on the tournament grounds will be asked to leave immediately. **There are no exceptions to this rule.**

## 18 PENALTIES

### 18.1 General Penalties

Description	Penalty	Examples
<b>Too many players on field</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team has more than 7 players on the field after the ball is snapped.</li> </ul>
<b>Delay of game</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offense, failure to snap the ball before play clock expires</li> <li>Offense/Defense, spiking or throwing ball out of play resulting in extra time to spot the ball</li> <li>Defense intentionally goes offside to incur penalty/attempt to stop clock</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal forward pass</b>	3 yards, loss of down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Throwing a forward pass a second time on a given play</li> <li>Throwing a forward pass when ENTIRE body is beyond line of scrimmage</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal timeout</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team attempts to use two timeouts during the same dead ball period.</li> </ul>
<b>Blocking</b>	5 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Player not carrying the ball impedes the path of a defender.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The non-ball carriers should stand still or remain behind the ball carrier to avoid unnecessary contact.</p>
<b>Flag guarding</b>	spot foul; ends play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covering flag/belt with arms or hands outside of reasonable running motion (referee's discretion).</li> <li>Attempting to stiff arm defensive player, regardless of whether contact is made.</li> <li>Holding the ball above head or outside body can be interpreted as flag guarding if defender is put in vulnerable position. (Defenders should not have to avoid elbows, hands, arms when attempting to pull flags.)</li> </ul>
<b>Diving, Jumping</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diving in an attempt to extend the ball or gain extra yards is illegal; referees will have discretion to interpret falling, tumbling, tripping, etc. (Players may dive to catch a pass.)</li> <li>Ball carrier initiates contact with a defender while jumping forward or side-to-side. Note: Jumping is legal as long as no contact is initiated.</li> </ul>
<b>Quarterback Contact</b>	5 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contacting quarterback's throwing arm. If contact is made below the waist, i.e. at the end of the throwing motion and in an attempt to pull the quarterback's flag, referee will have discretion to deem the contact incidental.</li> </ul>
<b>Unnecessary roughness</b>	15 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any extraneous contact, to be widely applied. "Going for the ball / flag" is not an excuse for contact.</li> </ul>

Description	Penalty	Examples
<b>Unsportsmanlike conduct</b>	15 yards*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abusive language/behavior directed at referee.</li> <li>▪ Abusive language/behavior directed at players from either team.</li> <li>▪ Physical contact outside of play, i.e., shoving, tripping, fighting, etc.</li> <li>▪ Two (2) consecutive delay of game penalties by the offense or defense. See the <a href="#">Delay of Game</a> section.</li> </ul>

*Any player assessed two unsportsmanlike and/or unnecessary roughness conduct penalties in a game will be ejected from that game and subject to further potential discipline. Any player assessed three unsportsmanlike conduct penalties in the course of the tournament will be ejected from the tournament.*

## 18.2 Offensive Penalties

*Offensive penalties that occur during one-minute timing result in the option of a 10-second run off for the defense, except for pre- and post-snap penalties when the clock is already stopped.*

Description	Penalty	Examples
<b>Ineligible player downfield</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Snapper leaving line of scrimmage prior to forward pass attempt.</li> </ul>
<b>Female play violation</b>	loss of down, remains female play	See Female Play section <a href="#">above</a> .
<b>Illegal forward pass</b>	3 yards, loss of down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Throwing a forward pass a second time on a given play.</li> <li>▪ Throwing a forward pass when ENTIRE body is beyond line of scrimmage.</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal QB run</b>	3 yards, loss of down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quarterback cross line of scrimmage before defensive rush is initiated (defense crossing line of scrimmage on either blitz or regular rush).</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal motion, false start</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offense fails to come to a set position for one (1) second prior to snap.</li> <li>▪ More than one offensive player in motion at snap.</li> <li>▪ Offensive player in motion towards line of scrimmage at snap.</li> </ul>
<b>Offensive pass interference</b>	5 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Illegal contact with a defender while the ball is in the air.</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal pick</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Member of offense deliberately impedes a defender's path or sets a screen in order to open space for a receiver.</li> </ul>
<b>Offsides, illegal formation</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offensive player(s) lines up beyond the plane of the ball at the snap.</li> </ul>

Description	Penalty	Examples
<b>Intentional grounding</b>	3 yards from spot of foul, loss of down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At referee’s discretion, quarterback is deemed to have intentionally spiked a ball in order to avoid a sack, regardless of position of intended receiver.</li> </ul> <p><i>Clarification: A ball that lands at the feet of a receiver is not automatically illegal; referees will be watching for a distinct and deliberate spiking motion, not just the result of the throw.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At referee’s discretion, a forward pass is deemed to have no intended receiver and does not reach the line of scrimmage.</li> </ul>

**18.3 Defensive Penalties**

Description	Penalty	Examples
<b>Illegal strip</b>	3 yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knocking the ball out of ball carrier’s hands.</li> </ul> <p>Clarification: A receiver or a defender attempting to catch a pass does not have a “right” to the ball. Until possession is established (see “Catch” <a href="#">above</a>), the ball can be knocked out of a player’s hands as long as contact rules are not violated.</p>
<b>Offsides</b>	3 yards	A defensive player lining up in the neutral zone at the snap or crossing the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.
<b>Illegal rush</b>	3 yards	See “Rushing the Passer” <a href="#">above</a> .
<b>Holding</b>	5 yards and automatic first down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grasping or holding a receiver’s body, clothing, or belt prior to a pass.</li> <li>Grasping or holding a ball carrier’s body, clothing, or belt.</li> </ul>
<b>Defensive pass interference</b>	Spot foul and automatic first down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illegal contact with a receiver while the ball is in the air.</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal contact</b>	5 yards and automatic first down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact with a receiver prior to a pass.</li> </ul>