

FLAGELITE

Professional 7v7 Screen Flag Football

FlagElite Official Rulebook

Updated: October 2026

This document contains the complete and authoritative rules for the FlagElite League (FEL). It supersedes prior editions. The website rules page remains a brief overview; this PDF provides full detail and examples to eliminate ambiguity.

DISCLAIMER

FlagElite League (FEL) is a 7-on-7 screen, non-contact football league. Participation in sport carries inherent risks, including but not limited to physical injury, permanent disability, or death. By registering, paying fees, and participating in FEL games, practices, tournaments, and related events, all players, coaches, team staff, and spectators acknowledge and voluntarily accept these risks. By entering the field of play, each participant agrees they are playing at their own risk and accept full responsibility for any and all injuries or harm that may result from participation. FEL, its directors, staff, officials, sponsors, and venue partners are not liable for injury, illness, loss, or death arising from participation, except where liability cannot be waived under applicable law. Participants affirm they are physically capable of playing and carry or have access to appropriate health insurance coverage.

By participating, players waive the right to pursue legal claims against FEL and its affiliates for injuries or damages incurred as a result of league play, except in cases where such waiver is prohibited by law.

Participation Waiver Requirement

All players must complete and sign the league waiver before participating. A player who has not completed and signed the waiver is not eligible and may not participate. This requirement applies to rostered players and pick-up players.

SECTION 1 — THE GAME

Article 1 — Coin Toss

A coin toss shall begin each game. The visiting captain calls the toss. The winner may choose offense, defense, or which goal to defend. The other captain receives the remaining option. Teams switch directions at halftime.

Article 2 — Possessions

There are no kickoffs in FEL. All initial possessions (game start, second half, and post-score unless onside is declared) start at the 5-yard line. Touchbacks and safeties also start at the 5-yard line. Interceptions may be returned; possession after a turnover is spotted where the interceptor's flag is pulled (or at the spot of one-hand touch if the flag is absent).

Article 3 — Snaps

The ball must be snapped between the snapper's legs or side-snapped from the ground. Backfield direct handoffs that constitute the snap are not legal. The recipient of the snap must be at least two yards behind the snapper at the snap. The snapper must be set for at least one second before the snap.

Article 4 — Play Clock

Teams have 30 seconds to snap the ball, beginning when the previous play ends. The referee announces 25 seconds remaining, then 20, 15, and 10, followed by a countdown of each remaining second. Delay of game is 5 yards.

Article 5 — Screen Blocking (No Contact)

Only screen blocking is legal. Screen blocks must be set with hands at the sides or behind the back; no extended arms, holds, wedges, or charges. Blockers must remain on their feet. Any contact initiated by the blocker is illegal.

Article 6 — Interceptions

Interceptions are live and returnable. The ball is spotted where the interceptor is downed. Fouls during a return are enforced per Section 16.

Article 7 — Age & Eligibility

All players must be 18 years of age or older. All players on the field are eligible receivers. All players must complete and sign the league waiver before participating. A player who has not completed and signed the waiver is not eligible and may not participate. This requirement applies to rostered players and pick-up players.

Article 8 — Zero Tolerance

FEL enforces Zero Tolerance for fighting, threats, harassment, or physical assault. Officials may eject participants immediately; league review may impose suspensions or bans. Ejected individuals must leave the premises.

SECTION 2 — THE FIELD

Article 1 — Field Dimensions

The field is 100 yards total length composed of an 80-yard playing field plus two 10-yard end zones. Width is facility-dependent between 25 and 30 yards. Field markings should include yard lines, hash marks, and end lines that are clearly visible. There are three first-down lines: the offense's own 20-yard line, the 40-yard line (midfield), and the opponent's 20-yard line.

Article 2 — Boundaries

A player is out of bounds when any part of the body touches the sideline. The ball is spotted where the flag is pulled or where the carrier exits the field of play.

Article 3 — Team Areas

Team areas run along the sidelines between the 20s. Coaches, substitutes, and authorized personnel must remain in the team area and may be disciplined for leaving the area to argue calls or interfere with play.

SECTION 3 — THE PLAYERS

Article 1 — Roster Size

Active rosters may include up to 15 players. All active players must be listed prior to the first scheduled game.

Article 2 — Players on Field

Seven (7) players per team are on the field during play. Legal formations are described in Section 14.

Article 3 — Forfeits & Pick-ups

A minimum of five (5) rostered players is required to start. With opponent consent, pick-up players may be used for that game only (age 18+). All players, including pick-up players, must complete and sign the league waiver before participating. Players without a completed and signed waiver may not participate. If consent is not given and a team cannot field five eligible players, the game is a forfeit.

Article 4 — Substitutions

Unlimited substitutions are allowed between plays from the team area. No substitutions during a live play.

Article 5 — Protests

Judgment calls are not protestable. Administrative or rule interpretation errors may be protested in writing within 48 hours for league review.

SECTION 4 — EQUIPMENT

Article 1 — Ball

FEL requires a regulation-size football suitable for competition. Defective balls will be removed by officials.

Article 2 — Flags & Belts

An approved two-flag pop system is required, with one flag on each hip. Flags must be visible and properly secured. If a carrier's flag falls without contact, the player is down by one-hand touch between shoulders and knees.

Article 3 — Cleats & Shoes

Rubber or turf shoes are permitted. No metal spikes or exposed metal studs.

Article 4 — Jerseys & Apparel

Jerseys must be numbered and tucked in. Shorts may not have belt loops or external pockets that could catch a flag.

Article 5 — Jewelry & Accessories

Injury-risk jewelry is prohibited. Medical alert items must be taped flat. Glasses must be sports-safe. Hats are allowed if they do not obstruct view or interfere with flags.

SECTION 5 — TIMING & OVERTIME

Article 1 — Game Length

Games are 40 minutes long: two 20-minute halves. The game clock runs continuously except during halftime and as specified in Article 2. The 30-second play clock and referee countdown are described in Section 1, Article 4.

Article 2 — Clock Stoppages

The game clock runs continuously until the final two minutes of the second half. During those final two minutes, an incomplete pass, a play ending out of bounds, or a timeout stops the game clock. A first down briefly stops the clock; once the line of scrimmage is established, the clock resumes running. The clock also stops after a touchdown, and the extra point attempt is untimed. After the touchdown and extra point attempt, the clock restarts on the snap of the next possession. Penalties and changes of possession alone do not stop the clock, except as specified for a timeout called with none remaining in Article 3.

Article 3 — Halftime & Timeouts

Halftime is two minutes. Each team receives two timeouts per half, each lasting 30 seconds. One timeout is permitted per overtime period. If a team calls a timeout with none remaining, a 10-second runoff and a 5-yard penalty are assessed. The game clock restarts once the referee has set the line of scrimmage and reached the sideline.

Article 4 — Overtime Procedure

Regular season: Each team receives one possession from the 20-yard line with four downs to score. If still tied after one OT period, the game ends in a tie. Playoffs: If tied after one OT, teams go to alternating 2-point conversion attempts until one converts and the other does not.

SECTION 6 — SCORING

Article 1 — Scoring Values

Touchdown = 6 points. Safety = 2 points. No field goals.

Article 2 — Try Options & Returns

After a touchdown the scoring team attempts one try: 1-point from the 5 (pass only), 2-point from the 10 (run or pass), or 3-point from the 15 (run or pass). The defense may return a turnover on a try for 2 points. In the final two minutes of the second half, the clock stops after a touchdown, the try is untimed, and the clock restarts on the snap of the next possession. Once an extra point value is declared, it is final unless the team calls a timeout before the snap; only then may the team change its try selection.

SECTION 7 — LIVE BALL / DEAD BALL

Article 1 — Live Ball

A play is live at the snap and remains live until the ball is ruled dead.

Article 2 — Dead Ball & Fumbles

There are no fumbles. Any ball that hits the ground on a run or backward pass is dead at the spot. Forward passes that hit the ground are incomplete. The ball is dead when a flag is legally pulled or the ball carrier is down by one-hand touch.

Article 3 — Ball Out of Bounds

If a ball carrier goes out of bounds, the ball is spotted at the point where the flag was pulled or where the player exited the field.

SECTION 8 — RUNNING

Article 1 — QB Runs & Handoffs

The QB may run the ball and execute handoffs, laterals, and pitches behind the line of scrimmage except in the No Run Zone.

Article 2 — No Run Zone

Within five yards of the opponent's end zone, runs and handoffs are not permitted. All plays must be legal forward passes that cross the line of scrimmage.

Article 3 — Safety & Advancement

Diving and jumping are allowed at the player's own risk. If the opposing team catches a pitch out of the air, it is an interception, and the ball remains live and may be returned.

Article 4 — Backward Passes & Pitches

Multiple backward passes and pitches are permitted. If a backward pass hits the ground, the ball is dead at that spot. If the opposing team catches a pitch out of the air, it is a live, returnable interception.

SECTION 9 — PASSING

Article 1 — Forward Pass

One forward pass per down from behind or on the line of scrimmage.

Article 2 — Illegal Forward Passes

A forward pass thrown after the passer has crossed the line of scrimmage, or a second forward pass on the same down, is illegal and results in loss of down with enforcement per Section 16.

Article 3 — Backward Passes & Laterals

Backward passes and laterals are permitted anywhere on the field and may be thrown multiple times during a play. If a backward pass hits the ground, the ball is dead at that spot.

Article 4 — Throwaways

FEL does not enforce intentional grounding; a passer may throw the ball away to avoid a loss provided no other safety or personal foul occurs.

SECTION 10 — RECEIVING

Article 1 — Eligible Receivers

All offensive players are eligible receivers if legally aligned.

Article 2 — Motion

Only one player may be in motion at a time and must be moving laterally or away from the line of scrimmage at the snap. Forward motion is illegal.

Article 3 — Legal Catch

A legal catch requires control of the ball and one foot in bounds. If a receiver establishes possession and then goes out of bounds, he may not be the first to touch the ball upon returning.

Article 4 — Defensive Contact (FEL Rule)

Within three yards of the line of scrimmage, defenders may use a controlled two-hand jam on receivers (hands on chest or shoulders only). Beyond three yards, any contact is illegal and may be enforced as defensive pass interference.

SECTION 11 — KICKING GAME & ONSIDE

Article 1 — Kickoffs & Punts

FEL does not utilize kickoffs. Initial and post-score possessions start at the 5-yard line except as modified by penalties or onside rules. A team may declare a punt. The ball is then placed at the receiving team's own 20-yard line, leaving that team 60 yards to score. A punt declaration is final unless the declaring team calls a timeout before the punt is administered; only then may it change its decision and go for it.

Article 2 — Extra Point Tries

After a touchdown, choose one try: 1-point from the 5 (pass only); 2-point from the 10 (run or pass); 3-point from the 15 (run or pass). The defense may return turnovers on try attempts for 2 points. Any onside attempt must be declared before the try. In the final two minutes of the second half, the clock stops after a touchdown, the try is untimed, and the clock restarts on the snap of the next possession. Once an extra point value is declared, it is final unless the team calls a timeout before the snap; only then may the team change its try selection.

Article 3 — Onside Play (FEL Standardized)

Only the losing team may declare an onside attempt, and only with under 8 minutes remaining in the game. The team must declare the onside before the extra point try. If the team forgets to declare the onside, it may call a timeout before the snap of the extra point try and then declare it. Once declared, an onside decision may be changed only by calling a timeout before the extra point snap, except when the try ties the game or gives the team the lead and automatically cancels the onside. The team must still meet all onside eligibility requirements. If the extra point puts that team in a tie or winning position, the onside attempt is canceled and the opposing team takes possession as normal.

The declaring team receives one untimed play from its own 20-yard line and must reach or pass the 40-yard line (midfield).

If the pass is incomplete, the opposing team takes possession at its own 20-yard line. If a pass is caught and the receiver's flag is pulled before reaching midfield, the opposing team takes possession at the spot of the flag pull. If the declaring team reaches or passes midfield, it retains possession at the spot where the ball carrier's flag is pulled.

If the play is intercepted, the interception is live and returnable, and the intercepting team takes possession at the spot where the defender's flag is pulled. A touchdown scored by either team on the onside play counts. The onside play is untimed.

SECTION 12 — RUSHING THE PASSER (BLITZ)

Article 1 — Alignment

The declared initial rusher must align at least seven (7) yards off the line of scrimmage before the snap. Entering this zone early is offside (5 yards). Additional rushers are governed by Article 2.

Article 2 — Number of Rushers

Only one declared rusher is required to start at least seven (7) yards off the line of scrimmage. Once that declared rusher crosses the line of scrimmage, any other defender may blitz the quarterback. There is no limit to the number of additional rushers.

Article 3 — Rush Restrictions

Rushers must attempt to pull the quarterback's flag only. Contact with the quarterback is a personal foul; forcible contact may warrant ejection.

SECTION 13 — FLAG PULLING & SAFETY

Article 1 — Legal Flag Pull

A legal flag pull occurs when a defender removes the flag from a ball carrier in possession; the ball is dead at that spot.

Article 2 — Illegal Acts

Stripping or swatting at the ball, tackling, holding, tripping, or running through the carrier are illegal. If a flag falls without contact, the carrier is down by one-hand touch between shoulders and knees.

Article 3 — Illegal Pulls

Pulling a flag by grabbing clothing or from inside the waistband is illegal. Pulls made prior to possession during a pass contest are defensive pass interference if contact occurred.

SECTION 14 — FORMATIONS & MOTION

Article 1 — Line Requirements

The offense must have at least four players on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The center is on the line; the quarterback must be off the line.

Article 2 — Motion & Shifts

Only one player may be in motion at the snap and that player must be moving laterally or away from the line. Multiple players moving at the snap or forward motion is illegal (5 yards).

Article 3 — Illegal Formation

Failure to legally align results in illegal formation (5 yards, replay down).

SECTION 15 — CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

Article 1 — Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike acts include taunting, abusive language toward officials, leaving the bench to engage in an altercation, or aggressive physical contact outside the scope of play. Penalties may include yardage, loss of down, ejection, suspension, or forfeit.

Article 2 — Crowd & Bench Control

Coaches or captains are responsible for the conduct of players and spectators. Interference with play or violent behavior may result in penalties or forfeiture.

SECTION 16 - PENALTIES & ENFORCEMENT

Article 1 - Administration

Officials call penalties. Live-ball fouls are enforced before the play is complete. Games cannot end on an accepted defensive penalty. Yardage inside half the distance to goal is enforced accordingly.

Article 2 - Defensive Penalties

Defensive Pass Interference - Spot foul; automatic first down.

Defensive Holding - Spot foul; 10 yards added to the spot.

Defensive Stripping - Spot foul; 10 yards.

Defensive Unnecessary Roughness - Spot foul; 10 yards and automatic first down.

Defensive Charging - 10 yards and automatic first down.

Offside - 5 yards from the previous spot.

Illegal Flag Pull (before possession) - 5 yards from the previous spot.

Roughing the Passer - 10 yards and automatic first down.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct / Taunting - 10 yards and automatic first down.

Article 3 - Offensive Penalties

Offside / False Start - 5 yards from the previous spot.

Illegal Forward Pass - Spot foul; 5 yards and loss of down.

Offensive Pass Interference - 10 yards and loss of down.

Illegal Shift / Motion (more than one moving or forward motion) - 5 yards.

Illegal Formation - 5 yards; replay down.

Delay of Game - 5 yards.

Charging - Spot foul; 10 yards and loss of down.

Flag Guarding - Spot foul; 10 yards and loss of down.

Offensive Unnecessary Roughness - Spot foul; 10 yards and loss of down.

Calling a Timeout with None Remaining - 5 yards and a 10-second runoff. The game clock restarts once the referee sets the line of scrimmage and reaches the sideline.

SECTION 17 — MODIFICATIONS & CONTACT

Article 1 — Rule Modifications

FEL may modify rules for safety, competitive balance, or special events. Changes will be published on the website and communicated to teams.

Article 2 — Official Contact

Direct questions about rules or scheduling to the FlagElite office via the contact information provided on the official website.

Article 3 — Appeals

Administrative appeals are limited to procedural or administrative errors only. Submit within 48 hours of the game. Judgment calls are final on the field.