

Football Rulebook

The Boro Sports & Social Club. Read with the General League Rules & Code of Conduct.

Friday-night lights, minus the pads. Seven a side, no tackling, no blocking, lots of trick plays you drew in the dirt. Every game, every level, is two-hand touch. No flags.

1. Field and Equipment

- **Field:** about **70 × 30 yards** with two 10-yard end zones and a midfield line, marked with cones. The field is split into two halves for first downs.
- **Ball:** league-supplied regulation-size ball. A slightly smaller "women's size" ball may be used by any QB if both captains agree before the game.
- **Two-hand touch, no flags:** all levels (Sipper, Sweater and Swagger) play two-hand touch. No flag belts are used.
- Rubber or molded cleats OK. No metal. No hard braces without padding.

2. Teams and Co-ed Rules

- **Roster:** 12 recommended, 18 max.
- **On the field:** 7 players, with **at least 3 women** (Sipper teams may play with 2 if both captains agree). Short a woman? Play 6. Teams need **at least 5 players (2 women)** to avoid forfeit. Your roster must include enough women to meet this minimum every game.
- **Co-ed play rule:** on every set of downs, at least **one legal forward pass must be thrown to a woman** before the offense can score a touchdown on a pass to a man. A completed pass to a woman resets the rule for the next possession. (Runs and passes to women always count.)

3. Game Length and Timing

- **Two 20-minute halves**, running clock, 3-minute halftime. Each team gets **one 60-second time-out per half**.
- **Final 2 minutes of the 2nd half:** clock stops on incompletions, scores, out-of-bounds and turnovers **if the score is within 14**.
- **Mercy:** a 28+ point lead with under 10 minutes left ends the game.
- **Overtime (playoffs only):** each team gets one play from the 10-yard line. The team that scores without the other matching wins. Repeat as needed.

4. Starting Play and Downs

- **No kickoffs.** Coin toss winner picks ball or end. Each possession starts at the offense's own **5-yard line**.
- **4 downs to cross midfield** for a first down. Then **4 downs to score**.
- **Punting:** on 4th down the offense may declare a punt. The ball moves to the opponent's 5, or 15 yards back if inside the opponent's half. No live punts.

5. Offense

- The center snaps through the legs or from the side, in one motion.
- **Rush:** defenders must line up **7 yards** off the line of scrimmage (the ref or a cone marks it) to rush the QB. The QB may not run the ball past the line of scrimmage unless the defense rushes on that play. Any other player who takes a handoff may run. In Sipper leagues, the "Mississippi count" option (five-Mississippi before a rusher may cross) applies if captains agree.
- **No-run zones:** the 5 yards before the goal line and the 5 yards before midfield. Inside them, the offense must pass.
- Multiple handoffs and laterals behind the line are allowed. **One forward pass per play.**
- Receivers need **one foot in bounds** for a catch.
- **Ball-carrier rules:** no stiff-arms, no spinning in Sipper leagues, and no diving forward to gain yards. Touch guarding (using a hand, arm or the ball to block a defender's touch) is a 5-yard penalty from the spot.

6. Defense and Contact

- **Down by: two-hand touch below the shoulders at the same time**, at every level. Both hands must touch the ball carrier at once; no shoving, grabbing or holding.
- **No blocking. No tackling. No holding.** Offensive players may "screen" (stand still in a lane) but may not move into a defender.
- Defenders play the ball, not the receiver. Pass interference: automatic first down at the spot (or the ball on the 1 if in the end zone).

7. Scoring

- **Touchdown:** 6
- **PAT from the 5-yard line:** 1
- **PAT from the 12-yard line:** 2
- **Co-ed bonus:** +1 on top of the PAT when it's scored by a pass to (or run by) a woman
- **Safety** (ball carrier downed in own end zone): 2, and the scoring team takes possession at its own 5
- **Interception returned for TD:** 6

8. Penalties (summary)

- **Offside / encroachment, illegal rush:** 5 yards
- **Delay of game** (30-second play clock): 5 yards
- **Touch guarding, illegal contact by ball carrier:** 5 yards from the spot
- **Illegal screen / block, holding:** 10 yards
- **Pass interference:** automatic 1st down at the spot (defense) / loss of down (offense)
- **Unsportsmanlike conduct:** 15 yards; a 2nd unsportsmanlike = ejection
- **Unnecessary roughness, tackling:** 15 yards + possible ejection

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