

# **CHRISTIAN SCHOOL LEAGUE FOOTBALL RULES**

Friends Christian-Heights Christian  
Ontario Christian-Pasadena Christian  
San Gabriel Christian-Valley Christian  
West Covina Christian-Whittier Christian

Revised September 21, 2009

**SHALL BE THE SAME AS FOR C.I.F. RULES.**

**\*\*NOTE: If a problem arises during the course of a game with regards to a rule interpretation, the following procedure should be followed:**

- a. A "conference time out" should be called by one of the coaches.**
- b. If the opposing coaches agree on a change that should be made, the officials will make the appropriate change.  
(See rule #3)**
- c. If the opposing coaches do not agree on a rule, it will be up to the officials to make the final decision.**

From the National Federation Rule Book:

"Flag football is a game of skill both offensively and defensively. It is not a game where rough tactics are to be used. Plays and tactics should be designed to employ speed and deception rather than violent contact." (Page 76)

For any rule not specifically covered, revert back to rule #1 or open agreement of both coaches before the game begins.

Each team shall consist of eight players.

All teams should strive to be at the prearranged playing field on time. If a team is late, every attempt should be made to play the game, even if this means shorter quarters. Forfeits are to be called only as a last resort. (Administrator's Decision)

6. Coach of the home team shall contact the visiting team at least three days before the game to confirm.

Any decision to cancel or postpone a game for other than a good reason will be considered a forfeit. (Rain or smog alerts are considered good reasons).

The home team provides three qualified officials for each game.

All students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to play provided they have not played for their school more than one year in any of these grades.

IF A PLAYER IS EJECTED FROM A GAME BY AN OFFICIAL, THAT PLAYER WILL BE INELIGIBLE TO PLAY IN THE NEXT GAME AS WELL. Both coaches should call the league president with the name of the ejected player.

- If that same player is ejected from a second game he will be considered ineligible to play for the rest of the football season.
- If a player is ejected in his school's last game of the season, that player will be ineligible to play in the first game of the next sports season. (i.e. If a player is ejected from the championship football game, he will also be ineligible for the first basketball league game).

## THE PLAYING FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

### MINIMUM FIELD MARKINGS:

EL	GL	20	40	20	GL	EL

10. The field size is to be 40 yards wide by 80 yards long with end zones no more than 10 yards deep. This is the official size and the CSL strongly recommends that all fields adhere to this. If these dimensions cannot be met, the playing field must be no smaller than 35 yards wide and 70 yards long between goal lines. Both end zones must be no smaller than 8 yards deep.

If your field doesn't meet the minimum standards, you must notify the visiting team of this fact prior to the day of the game.

**The game should not be played on that field.** You may

agree to play on either a neutral field or on the field of the visiting team.

11. **NO GAME MAY BE PROTESTED (about field conditions) ONCE THE GAME HAS BEGUN.**
12. The legal ball is to be intermediate or Youth size (Y). Junior size (J) footballs are not considered legal game balls.  
The No ball in play stays in play. You may not change balls on kicks, punts or extra points. If the ball becomes wet or muddy it may be replaced. The intent is for teams not to have a "kicking ball" that may be of inferior quality.
13. Flags are 17.5" long by 2" wide. No pop-type or other type flags are legal. This includes the type that pulls the entire belt from the player when pulled. The flags must be a different contrasting color than the pant and jersey worn by the team. Illegal flags could result in forfeiting of games won. Torn flags should be replaced.
14. Arm and Hand Pads are considered illegal except in case of a player using it to protect an injury. In this case, the player must have a written note from a doctor. **Mouthpieces are highly recommended, but optional.**
15. Shoes may be molded or soft rubber screw-on type but no longer than 1/2 inch. **No metal cleats allowed.**
16. It is recommended that all players wear an athletic supporter or support-type underwear.
17. The flag belt must be secured tightly around the waist to prevent flags from sliding from the hips to the back of the belt.
18. Player's shirts must be tucked inside their shorts and cannot cover any part of the flags.

19. Numerals must be affixed to at least the rear of the shirt. No team may have players with the same numbers.
20. If both teams have the same color shirts, the visiting team shall change to a different color. They may wear T-shirts if necessary without numerals. This should be worked out before the team arrives.

### **OFFENSIVE RULES:**

21. A first down is awarded after a team gains 10 yards.
22. The man receiving the snap from center may cross the line of scrimmage without needing to release the ball by means of a pass, lateral, or handoff. (DIRECT RUN IS ALLOWED)
23. Multiple handoffs on the same play are allowed as long the second and any subsequent handoffs are made behind the ball carrier.
24. One man playing in the backfield may be in motion before the snap from the center as long as he does not move toward the line of scrimmage before the snap.

**NOTE:** The man in motion may make a jab step forward toward the line of scrimmage as he starts in motion and then turn to go parallel to the line of scrimmage. The jab step cannot be an aggressive step that is used to draw the opponent off-sides.

25. **A ball carrier may jump, hurdle, and spin, but diving head-first is not allowed.**

**NOTE:** It is the ball carrier's responsibility to avoid contact with the defender. If the ball carrier leaves his feet and "charges" into a defender an unnecessary roughness penalty should be called. **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM THE SPOT OF THE FOUL.**

26. The ball carrier may not protect his flags in any way.  
**PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM THE SPOT OF THE FOUL AND LOSS OF DOWN.**
27. Any ball that is fumbled or touched without gaining possession is a dead ball. A bad snap from the center that touches the ground is considered dead at the point where it is first touched the ground. (The clock continues to run unless there is a change of possession.)
28. There must be a minimum of five men on the line of scrimmage at the time the ball is snapped. (You may not start with five and then put one in motion and end up with four.)
29. All backs and the two ends are eligible receivers. The three interior players are not eligible and may not wear flags. (UNBALANCED LINES ARE PERMITTED). The player who snaps the ball to the QB will remain ineligible at all times.
1. When an official sees an interior lineman with flags, he can momentarily stop play and instruct such player to take his flags off with no penalty.
2. If the official deems that a player intentionally kept his flags off for the purpose of deception a penalty should be called: **PENALTY: ILLEGAL FORMATION (5 YARDS FROM LINE OF SCRIMMAGE).**
30. The ball carrier is considered down if his knee touches the ground whether a defensive player has pulled his flag or not.
31. The ball carrier is considered down if his flag falls off by means other than being taken by a defender.
32. If a player without a flag handles the ball, it becomes dead immediately.
33. After a tipped ball, an offensive player may catch the ball, but not advance it if either of his flags were taken while the ball

was tipped into the air.

34. It shall be illegal for a player to deliberately withdraw an opponent's flag unless the player is in possession of the ball. The official shall consider this action as unsportsmanlike conduct. **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM POINT OF FOUL AND AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.**
35. A team is allowed 30 seconds from the time the referee spots the ball until the snap from the center. The referee will issue a 10 second warning. **PENALTY: 5 YARDS FROM THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.**
36. Line blocking shall be the same as for regulation tackle football. When pass blocking, the hands must be open and the arms extended. Any rough tactics such as attempting to run over or batter down an opponent or any contact that is above the shoulders MUST BE PENALIZED AS UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS. **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM POINT OF FOUL. \*An offensive back who is in motion is not allowed to "crack block" on any defensive lineman.**
37. In the open, or down-field blocking, no part of the blocker's body except his feet shall be in contact with the ground throughout the block, Arms must be extended at the point of contact and the block must be made by using the hands, not the shoulder or elbow.
38. The offensive team may have the quarterback spike the ball forward into the ground in order to stop the clock. This must be done immediately after receiving the snap from the center, not after a play has been set in motion. (This can be done by a direct snap or from the shotgun). The ball may also be thrown out of bounds to stop the clock as long as the pass is thrown in a forward direction immediately after taking the snap.
39. **In the case of an inadvertent whistle**, the offensive team has the option of taking the ball at the spot it was at when the whistle blew, or replay the down.

40. A two-point conversion may be attempted from the five-yard line. All other conversions shall be marked at the three-yard line and will be worth one point.

### **DEFENSIVE RULES:**

41. The play is considered dead when the defensive player pulls one of the ball carrier's flags.
42. Tackling is not permitted. The defense must not hold, push, or run through the ball carrier, but must **PLAY THE FLAG RATHER THAN THE MAN**. Any action against the runner other than merely pulling his flag is unnecessary roughness. **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM POINT OF FOUL.**
43. A defensive player may not push the ball carrier out of bounds. This shall be considered unnecessary roughness. **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM POINT OF FOUL AND AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.**
44. Defensive players may not attempt to strip the ball from the offensive player, but must play the flag rather than the ball. **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FOR UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS.**
45. A defensive player may not make any contact with the arm or hand of any offensive player attempting to make a throw. No contact may be made with the ball while it is still in the hand of the offensive player either. (see rule 44) **PENALTY: 10 YARDS FROM THE PREVIOUS SPOT FOR ROUGHING THE PASSER AND AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.**
46. A defensive player may bump a receiver on the line of scrimmage.
- **If the receiver is making an attempt to run a pass route, the defensive player must let him go immediately after initial contact.**
  - Contact can continue if the offensive player is attempting to

block the defensive player.

47. There can be no loss of possession due to a fumble or a muff. Change of possession can only occur as a result of an intercepted pass, intercepted lateral or turnover on downs.
48. **"BREAKAWAY RULE"**: If a ball carrier has broken away from the pack and is either "tackled" or "pushed out of bounds" by the last defender, that ball carrier will be awarded the touchdown provided he is inside the 20 yard line.

### **KICK-OFFS:**

49. In the pre-game meeting between the team captains and the officials there will be a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss will have one of three options:
  - 1) Receiving the kick off
  - 2) Choosing the goal to defend.
  - 3) Deferring the choice to the second half

If the team that wins the toss chooses to "defer", the other team may choose to receive or the goal. If the coin toss winner chooses to defer, that team can choose to receive the ball or defend a goal at the start of the second half.

**\*Note: If the coin toss winner chooses the goal to defend, they might not get the ball at the start of the second half either as it is the other team's choice at the start of the second half.**

50. The kick off will be from the 30-yard line (or 10 yards behind the mid-field line on a short field).
51. There must be a minimum of 4 defenders within 10 to 12 yards from the kicking line on all kick-offs.
52. If the kick-off goes out of bounds the receiving team has three

choices:

- 1.) Re-kick from 5 yards behind the kicking line.
- 2.) Take the ball at the spot it went out of bounds.
- 3.) Take the ball 25 yards from the kicking line (25-yard line).  
**(This may need to be adjusted for 70-yard fields prior to the start of the game.)**

### **53. On a kick-off:**

**1. All muffs or misplayed attempts to catch the ball in the air or off the ground are live and playable if the muff occurs inside the 20-yard line.**

- 1) Any muffs or fumbles **outside** the 20-yard line will be considered dead at the spot. The receiving team starts with a first down and 10.
- 2) A touchback will be spotted at the 20-yard line.
- 3) There can be no change of possession during a kick off except by intercepting a lateral or pitch.

**4) If the receiving team does not attempt to receive the kick off, the kicking team may down the ball.** \*Example: Team A kicks off to team B. Team B lets the ball go and it rolls to the 5-yard line where team A downs it. Team B will start first and ten from the 5-yard line.

5) IF AN OFFICIAL BLOWS AN INADVERTANT WHISTLE ON A BALL THAT IS MUFFED INSIDE THE 20 YARDLINE—THE RECEIVING TEAM CAN TAKE THE BALL AT THE SPOT OR HAVE THE BALL RE-KICKED.

### **PUNTING:**

54. On fourth down, the offensive team must inform the officials of their decision to punt or go for the necessary yardage. This decision must be declared before the team breaks the huddle.
55. On all punts there must be a minimum of five receiving team players within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. The returning team players may move back when the ball is snapped, but must wait until the ball is kicked in order to move forward across the line of scrimmage.

56. The returning team may not cross the line of scrimmage to rush or block the punt. However, if the punt is low and hits a player from the punting team, or is blocked by the team returning the punt, the ball is dead where touched.
57. **All punts must be kicked within 4 seconds from the time of the snap.** A ball that is not kicked within 4 seconds will be placed at the line of scrimmage. It is a turnover against the punting team and the defense is awarded possession.
58. All punts must be long snapped. If the ball hits the ground, it can still be picked up and punted as long as it is done within 4 seconds.
59. **If the ball is snapped into the end zone but punted before four seconds, it is not a safety.**
60. **Any two players on the punting team may go downfield at the time of the snap. They may be blocked by the receiving team.** All other offensive players must wait until the ball is kicked before they cross the line of scrimmage.
61. A muffed punt is dead at the spot it was touched and dropped.
62. A punt that bounces before it is touched is playable, but if it is muffed or fumbled in the attempt to field the ball the play is blown dead at the spot it was touched.
63. The team punting the ball must give the returning team a "halo" of two yards to catch the ball. After the ball is caught they may attempt to pull the returner's flags.
64. There can be no change of possession on a punt unless the punting team intercepts an intentional pitch or lateral.

## **IN CASE OF A TIE:**

65. Regular season ties will be decided by a CIF tie-breaker.

### **EXPLANATION:**

- 1) There will be a coin toss.
- 2) The winner gets the choice of 1st or 2nd possession.
- 3) The ball is spotted on the 10-yard line. Both teams will run their offensive plays at the same end of the field (which will be chosen by the officials).
- 4) The first team on offense has up to 4 downs in which to score a touchdown. If they are successful they will also attempt a P.A.T. (for either 1 or 2 points) if a touchdown was scored. \*The extra point attempt does not constitute a down.
- 5) The second team is then given up to 4 downs in which to match or exceed their opponent's point total.
- 6) This process is repeated until the tie is broken. If a turn-over is committed, the offensive team's possession is finished.

**Example:** Team A scores in its possession, and then Team B takes over. Team B's quarterback throws an interception on the second play—GAME OVER.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Once Daylight Savings Time has occurred, all games should start no later than 3:00 p.m. to avoid the safety hazard of darkness.

# TIMER INSTRUCTIONS

**Note: the clock should be run by an adult or by an official on the playing field if no adult is available.**

## TIMING OF GAMES:

Quarters	8 Minutes (stopped time)
Between Quarters	1 Minute
Team Time Outs	1 <sup>st</sup> Half – 2 2 <sup>nd</sup> Half - 3 (1-minute each) Conference Time Outs--1 per Half
Between Halves	10 minutes

1. The clock should not start on a kickoff until the receiving team touches the ball.
2. The clock stops on all incomplete passes, time-outs, change of possessions, and runs that end out of bounds (Watch the official for a signal to stop the clock). The clock starts again on the snap of the ball.
3. The clock stops on penalties, and to reset the chains when directed by an official. It starts again on the whistle from the official once the ball has been set.
4. The clock shall continue to run on all bad snaps, muffed hand-offs, and dropped pitches etc. unless there is a change of possession.
5. The clock stops after a touchdown is scored and does not restart until the receiving team touches the ball on the kickoff.
6. If the clock is not visible, please call out time remaining to both teams at regular intervals.

## **CHRISTIAN SCHOOL LEAGUE SUMMARY OF PENALTIES FOR OFFICIALS**

<b><u>OFFENSIVE VIOLATIONS</u></b>	<b><u>PENALTY</u></b>	<b><u>DOWN</u></b>	
<b><u>ENFORCE FROM:</u></b>			
Illegal Formation of Scrimmage	5 Yards	Same	Line
Delay of Game (30 seconds) of Scrimmage	5 Yards	Same	Line
Intentionally Grounded Pass of Foul	5 Yards	Loss	Spot
Illegal Hideouts of Scrimmage	5 Yards	Loss	Line
Illegal Block (diving to make block) B.E.S.	10 Yards	Loss	
Illegal Use of Hands (holding) B.E.S.	10 Yards	Same	
"Charging" (running over defender) B.E.S.	10 Yards	Same	
Diving by ball carrier	10 Yards	Same	B.E.S.
Clipping	10 Yards	Same	B.E.S.
Offensive Pass Interference Scrimmage	10 Yards	Loss	Line of
Illegal Forward Pass of Scrimmage	5 Yards	Loss	Line
Guarding the Flags Foul	10 Yards	Loss	Spot of

### **DEFENSIVE VIOLATIONS**

Defensive Illegal use of Hands	10 Yards	Same	B.E.S.
"Tackling"	10 Yards	Same	B.E.S.
Roughing the Passer Scrimmage	10 Yards	1st Down	Line of
Defensive Pass Interference Scrimmage	10 Yards	1st Down	Line of

## **COMMON FOULS**

Encroachment (Dead ball Line of Scrimmage)	Immediately	5 Yards		Same
Unnecessary Roughness		10 Yards	Same	B.E.S
Unsportsmanlike Conduct		10 Yards	Same	B.E.S
Tripping		10 Yards	Same	B.E.S

INADVERTANT WHISTLE      OFFENSIVE TEAM HAS CHOICE OF SPOT WHEN WHISTLE WAS BLOWN OR REPLAYING THE DOWN.

### \*B.E.S.=Basic Enforcement Spot

If a foul occurs during a down, the Basic Enforcement Spot is fixed by the type of play. There are 2 types of plays:

- 1) Running Play—Enforce from spot of foul. This would also be the case after a receiver has caught a pass and is running.
- 2) Loose Ball Play—Enforce from previous spot