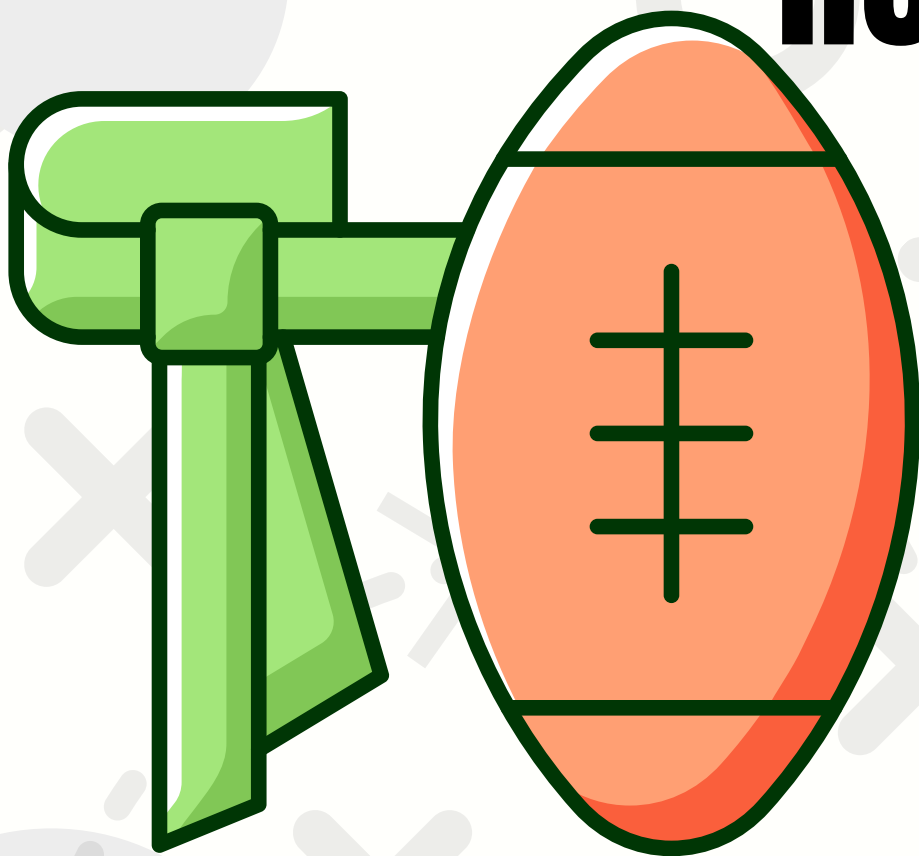




CITY OF ESCALON
RECREATION DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:

2025 FLAG FOOTBALL RULEBOOK



Digital Version:



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Welcome to Escalon Youth Flag Football!

Thank you for joining Escalon Youth Flag Football for a fun and positive season.

This program is part of a long-standing Escalon tradition, operated by the City of Escalon Recreation Department with support from volunteer coaches and local families. Appreciation is extended to everyone who contributes to making the program successful each year.

The goal of the program is simple: help kids learn the game, try their best, and have fun. Coaches and parents are expected to encourage all players and demonstrate good sportsmanship.

Additional focus is placed on helping younger players and beginners feel welcome, included, and confident.

Thank you for being part of the Escalon flag football community. Wishing all teams a great season!

About the Rules

The Escalon league is part of the NFL Flag program. While the NFL Flag Rulebook serves as a foundation, certain rules have been modified to better fit the local fields, players, and overall structure of the program.

This rulebook serves as the official guide for league play.

- If a situation arises that is not addressed in this rulebook, league staff will review and make decisions based on safety, fairness, and what is appropriate for the program.
- The NFL Flag rulebook should not be used to make in-game calls or decisions.
- Rule updates may occur as needed, and coaches will be informed accordingly.

⚠ Important Reminder: In past seasons, enforcement of league rules has not always been consistent. All rules outlined in this rulebook must be followed by all participants and will be enforced by referees. Failure to comply will be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct and may result in game forfeiture or formal review.

Note: Portions of this rulebook are taken directly from or adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook. These sections are noted within the document.

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2. Registration Information

Flag football registration typically opens around July 1 and closes by August 19 with late registration not guaranteed.

Dates are tentative and may close early depending on registration numbers and coach availability.

2.1. Player Registration

- All players must be fully registered through the Recreation Department before participating in any practices or games. All Registration is done online through the TeamSideline website.
- Players will be placed in the division that matches their age eligibility (Age as of September 1 of the season year). The Recreation Department reserves the right to adjust player placement if needed for the benefit of the participant or the program.
- Siblings registered the same division will automatically be placed on the same team, unless a parent submits a written request asking for them to be separated.
- Parents are responsible for completing their child's registration accurately, including the player's full name, date of birth, contact information, and uniform size.
 - If a uniform size is entered incorrectly, the registrant will be responsible for the cost of any replacements or exchanges, including additional order and shipping fees.

2.2. Post-Deadline Registration & Waitlist


- Once the final registration period closes, no new players will be added to the program.
- Families may request to be placed on a waitlist.
- Players on the waitlist will be considered in the order the requests are received.
- A player will only be moved off the waitlist and placed on a team if:
 - A player in the same division withdraws, and
 - The dropped player's uniform size matches the waitlisted player's size, and
 - The change occurs before uniforms are distributed.
 - Used uniforms will not be passed on.
- Team requests are not accepted for players added from the waitlist. They will be placed only to fill the spot of the withdrawn player.
- A late fee of \$20 will be added to the full registration cost if the player is placed on a team.

2.3. Coaches & Sponsor Registration

- The deadline to register as a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, or Sponsor is the final day of player registration.

Late registrations will not be accepted.

- Sign-ups may open early to help begin forming teams. Head Coaches are always needed, and teams can be formed without an Assistant Coach.
- Assistant Coaches may register without a Head Coach, but placement is not guaranteed. If we are unable to pair you with a Head Coach, your registration will be canceled.
- All coaches must complete the required steps by the player registration deadline, including:
 - Fingerprinting/background check
 - All required trainings and certifications

 It is your responsibility to ensure these are completed on time.

- Please verify your contact information when registering. All communication is sent via email and occasional text alerts. Signing up for text alerts is strongly encouraged to avoid missing important updates.
- Head Coaches must submit sponsor information and frozen player requests before the registration deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.

2.4. Waitlist & Team Size Policy

- During registration, players may be automatically placed on a waitlist to help control team sizes.
- As coaches register, players will be moved from the waitlist into available team spots.

For example: With two coaches and a limit of 8 players per team, a maximum of 16 players can be placed. The 17th registrant will be placed on a waitlist until an additional coach is confirmed and a new team can be formed.

- Parents and guardians are encouraged to consider volunteering as coaches to help accommodate more participants.

2.5. Team Formation


- **All** teams are formed through a draft. See "Draft" section for details.

3. Cancellation & Refund Policy

3.1. General Refunds

- Refunds are available until registration closes
- Refund = Registration fee minus \$20 admin fee and any processing fees
- TeamSideline payments: refunded to original card
- In-person payments: refunded by check (4–6 weeks by mail)

3.2. Medical Refunds

- Available after registration closes but before the season starts
- Requires a signed doctor's note
- Must be requested within 14 days of the note date
- Refund = 50% of registration fee, minus fees
-  No refunds once the season begins

3.3. Program or Division Cancellations

If a program or division is canceled due to low numbers, lack of coaches, or other issues:

- A **100% refund** will be issued, minus any credit card processing fees charged by the online registration platform for payments made by credit card.
- We'll notify families and offer alternatives when possible

3.4. How to Request a Refund

Email recreation@cityofescalon.org with:

- Player's name
- Division
- Reason for the request

4. Team Organization

4.1.Coach & Assistant Coach Responsibilities

- Attend all scheduled coach meetings and pick up your team's equipment bag.
- Contact team families before the first practice to introduce yourself and share basic info.
- Be a role model. Promote teamwork, respect, and good sportsmanship.
- Know and follow all league rules and safety policies.

4.2.1st Player/Parent Meeting

- Hold a brief parent meeting at or before the first practice.
- Discuss player expectations, practice schedules, and game days.
- Explain how you'll communicate with families (TeamSideline, text, etc.).
- Review the Parent/Player Code of Conduct.
- Remind parents to support all players and be respectful on the sidelines.

4.3.End of Season

As the season comes to a close, we encourage all coaches to take a moment to celebrate their players' hard work, growth, and teamwork.

- Each player will receive a certificate of achievement.

Please make time during your last practice or game to hand these out and recognize each child. A few kind words can go a long way in making a player feel proud of their season.

- Some coaches like to wrap up the season with something special, such as a pizza party, popsicles, a water balloon fight, or team awards.

These small celebrations create lasting memories and reinforce the fun and community spirit of the game.

4.4.Practices

- Must hold at least one practice per week.
 - Practices must:
 - Be held in Escalon
 - Be open to the full team (no private practices)
 - Coaches choose their own schedule.
 - Any city park may be used on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - *Tip: Hogan Park is the most popular location and tends to get crowded. Please consider using other parks to help reduce congestion.*
 - Recommend 1–2 practices per week depending on age group and coach availability.
- Coaches must notify families of weather cancellations or changes.

4.5.Uniforms & Equipment

- Players must wear league-issued jerseys/uniforms to all games. All players must wear official NFL FLAG belts and flags which will be issued alongside their uniform.
- Mouthguards and Cleats (no metal) are required for both practices and games.
- Coaches will receive a loaner equipment bag that they must check out at the beginning of the season. Coach equipment bags include:
 - 4 division appropriately sized footballs
- Coach bags must be returned at season's end. Lost/unreturned bags may result in a replacement charge.
- The league does not provide additional equipment, but coaches may bring their own at their own expense if desired.

4.6.Team Communication

- Coaches should communicate with families regularly (e.g., practice updates, games, reminders).
- TeamSideline is preferred, but text, email, or other apps are allowed.
- If you cannot reach a family after reasonable attempts, contact the Recreation Department for help.

5. Code of Conduct & Expectations

Escalon Recreation prioritizes respect, sportsmanship, and a fun, safe environment for all players. Every coach, player, and parent/guardian is required to review and agree to the Code of Conduct as part of the registration process.

While these were once signed manually, they are now signed electronically during registration. Coaches must review these expectations with their team families at the start of the season.

5.1.Coach Expectations

Coaches must:

- Lead by example and promote good sportsmanship at all times.
- Encourage players positively - cheer for your team, not against others.
- Abide by all decisions made by officials.
- Never use foul language or heckle referees, players, or spectators.
- Alcohol, tobacco, and substance use is not allowed before or during games and practices.
- Remain calm and respectful, even in competitive situations.
- Ensure parents do not speak to referees before, during, or after games about game-related matters. Coaches are responsible for all referee communication and should remind families to follow this policy to maintain a respectful environment.

Consequences for Violations:

- If a coach is ejected by an official, they will be suspended from practices and games (duration set by the Recreation Department).
- A second suspension may result in permanent removal from coaching.
- Escalon Recreation reserves the right to remove any coach for repeated complaints or failure to uphold standards.

5.2.Player Expectations

Players must:

- Play for fun and always do their best.
- Show respect to teammates, coaches, referees, and opponents.
- Follow the rules of the game and practice good sportsmanship.
- Refrain from using foul language or disrespectful behavior.
- Take care of team uniforms, equipment, and city facilities.

Consequences for Violations:

- Ejection from a game may result in a suspension from future practices or games (duration set by Recreation Department).
- Repeated or serious violations may result in removal from the league.

5.3.Parent/Guardian Expectations

Parents must:

- Show positive support for all players, coaches, and officials.
- Respect referees' decisions - no heckling, arguing, or foul language.
- **Do not approach referees before, during, or after games to discuss calls, rules, or game-related concerns.** All communication with referees must go through the coach.
- Alcohol, tobacco, and substance use is not allowed before or during games and practices.
- Allow coaches to coach and officials to officiate.
- Help foster a positive and supportive sideline culture.

Consequences for Violations:

- If a parent is ejected by an official, they will be suspended from practices and games (duration determined by Recreation Department).
- Repeated violations or serious complaints may result in being barred from future attendance and/or having their child removed from the program.

Referee Interaction Policy

Referees will be instructed **not to engage in discussions with parents** regarding calls or game-related decisions before, during, or after games. All concerns must be directed through the coach or submitted to the Recreation Department.

Parents who **approach or confront referees after a game** may be **ejected from the field**, even if the game has concluded. This policy is in place to support referees and maintain a respectful, safe environment for all participants.

Final Note

Any coach, player, or parent who fails to follow the Escalon Recreation Code of Conduct may be expelled from games and/or the program. These policies are in place to support the development and well-being of all players, and to maintain a safe, welcoming recreational environment.

6. Player Draft

6.1.Draft Process

- The draft is used to form teams in all divisions.
- Drafts are organized by the Recreation Department
- Head Coaches attend the draft and select players in a serpentine order (e.g., 1–8, then 8–1)
- Coaches draw numbers to determine their draft position
- All registered players are listed on a draft board/list by division

6.2.Siblings (Draft)

- Siblings in the same division will automatically be placed on the same team, unless a parent submits a written request asking for them to be separated.
- If a coach selects one sibling during the draft, they are automatically selecting the other sibling as well. Both will be assigned to the same team.

6.3. Coach Draft Eligibility

- Coaches and Assistants must complete all required trainings and pass a background check before the registration deadline in order to be eligible for a freeze spot at the draft.
- If a Coach or their Assistant are not fully cleared, they will be removed from the roster and any associated frozen player will be removed from the team and placed back into the draft

6.4.Frozen Players

A frozen player is a player who is pre-assigned to a team before the draft due to their connection to a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, or a Team Sponsor.

Frozen players are not extra players as they take the place of a draft pick and count toward the team's roster and draft rounds.

Freeze Spot Guidelines

- Each team may have up to 3 freeze spots, one for each of the following:
 - Head Coach
 - Assistant Coach
 - Team Sponsor (Not one assigned by The Recreation Department)
- Each freeze allocation may include one set of siblings (maximum of 2 players), if the following conditions are met:
 - The siblings are in the same division

- They are siblings by blood, marriage, or legal adoption
- If a Coach, Assistant Coach, or Sponsor has no child in the division, they may freeze one player with written parent/guardian permission.
- Permission must be emailed to the Recreation Department before registration closes.
- This is only allowed if they have no child participating in that division.
- No player will be frozen in the 5th or 7th round to a team who does not have a Coach/Assistant Coach or Sponsor.
- Special circumstances may be brought to the Recreation Commission for review

6.5. Sponsor Freeze Requirements

- To qualify for a sponsor freeze, the sponsor must be a private sponsor who is specifically sponsoring the coach, team, or player
- Sponsors assigned by the Recreation Department do not qualify for a freeze spot

Additional Notes

- Maximum of 6 frozen players per team (if all 3 freeze spots include a set of siblings)
- All frozen players must be submitted before player registration closes. Late freeze requests will not be accepted.
- Teams without a registered Head Coach, Assistant Coach, or Sponsor may not have any frozen players
- The Recreation Department reserves the right to alter the draft process.

No Trades or Late Freezes

- No trades are allowed during or after the draft
- Late freeze requests (After Player registration Closes) will not be accepted
- Teams may not provide roster spots for unregistered or late-registered players without specific instructions from the Escalon Recreation Department.

7. Game Day Rules & Conduct

These rules apply to all divisions and are in place to ensure a safe, fair, and enjoyable experience for all players, coaches, and spectators.

7.1. Player Eligibility & Appearance

- **Eligibility:** No player may participate unless they are officially registered through the Recreation Department and placed on a team roster.
- **Game Day Uniform Requirements:**
 - All participants must wear the official league-issued uniform.
 - Jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they extend below the belt line.
 - Players must wear official NFL FLAG belts and flags. Belts and flags will be issued with uniforms, but players are responsible for bringing them to each game.
 - Flag belts and flags cannot be the same color as the player's shorts or pants.
 - All players are required to wear a mouthguard. Mouthguards are not provided by the league and must be purchased separately.
 - Shorts or pants must not have pockets or belt loops. Games will not be delayed for players to tape pockets.
- **Mouthguards:** Mouthguards are mandatory for both practices and games. They must be worn at all times during plays. Players not wearing a mouthguard will not be allowed to participate.
- **Appearance & Equipment:**
 - Players must remove all jewelry and hats. Headbands or winter beanies are permitted.
 - Soft shell helmets, halos, and sunglasses are allowed, but must be secured at all times while on the field. Prescription glasses are permitted without a strap.
 - Steel or metal cleats are not allowed.
 - Players may tape their forearms, hands, and fingers. Gloves, elbow pads, and knee pads are permitted.
 - Braces with exposed metal are not allowed.
 - No dangerous equipment, as determined by the referee, may be worn.

7.2.Injuries & Substitutions

- If a player is injured, the Referee may stop the game at their discretion and allow for substitution

7.3.Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is expected from **everyone** involved in all Escalon Youth Programs—players, coaches, parents, and spectators.

- Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, assistant coaches, and spectators on their sideline.
- Players should be encouraged to play hard, play fair, and show respect—win or lose.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior from anyone will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the field or future games.
- Let the kids play, the coaches coach, and the referees officiate.

7.4.Sideline Behavior

To keep the environment positive and safe for everyone:

1. Do not distract or yell at players or referees during the game.
2. Coaches must not make derogatory remarks or gestures toward referees, players, or spectators.
3. Spectators are not allowed to coach players during the game.
4. Anyone—coach, parent, or spectator—may be removed by Recreation staff for inappropriate behavior or violation of these rules.
5. No alcohol, tobacco, or vaping is allowed at the fields. No exceptions.

Infractions may lead to warnings, ejection, and further disciplinary action as determined by the Recreation Department.

8. Basic Game Rules

Playing Format: 5V5 - Coaches must ensure all players have an equal amount of playing time

****2025 Fall Season:** U12/U14 Boys (Only) will play 7v7 due to large teams

Ball Size By Division:

6U: Mini Football (8.5" Long)

8U & 10U: Pee Wee Football (9.75" Long)

12U & 14U: Junior Football (10.5" Long)

8.1. Game Setup and Flow

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. There is no option to defer. Teams will automatically switch sides of the field and the team that started the game with possession will begin the 2nd half on defense.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) downs to score a touchdown.
 - If the offensive team fails to cross midfield after 3rd down and elect to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposing team will start a new possession from its own 5-yard line. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross midfield, the opposing team will start a new possession from the spot where 4th down ended.
 - Any time there is a 'PUNT or PLAY' decision on 4th or 3rd down, the referee WILL ask the offense's Head Coach to declare 'Punt or Play'. The coach MUST make an immediate decision or risk a delay of game penalty.
 - Teams may use a timeout to change the declaration of "Play" at any time prior to the expiration of the play clock.
 - After crossing midfield, if the offense fails to score on 3rd down, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts at its 5-yard line.



This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.

8.2. Terminology

Boundary Lines	The outer lines marking the playing field's perimeter, including sidelines and end zones.
Line of Scrimmage	(LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.
Line-to-Gain	The yard line the offense must reach for a first down.
Rush Line	An imaginary line 7 yards from the line of scrimmage on the defense's side.
Offense	The team with possession of the ball.
Defense	The team trying to stop the offense and regain possession.
Passer	Any offensive player who throws the ball, not just the quarterback.
Rusher	The defensive player who starts from the rush line and tries to pressure the quarterback by either pulling flags or blocking passes.
Live Ball	Refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties. Live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
Dead Ball	The time between plays when no action is occurring.
Whistle	Official's signal to stop play for timeouts, end of plays, or game periods.
Inadvertent Whistle	An official's whistle that is sounded in error.
Charging	When a ball-carrier illegally runs directly into a set defensive player. This includes leading with the head or making contact with shoulder, forearm, or chest.
Flag Guarding	An illegal act when the ball-carrier tries to block defenders from pulling their flags - whether by stiff-arming, dropping their elbow/head, or using the ball itself as a shield.
Shovel Pass	A legal forward pass across the LOS (Underhand, backhand or by pushing the ball forward).
Lateral	A backward or parallel toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	Confrontational or offensive behavior or language.

This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.

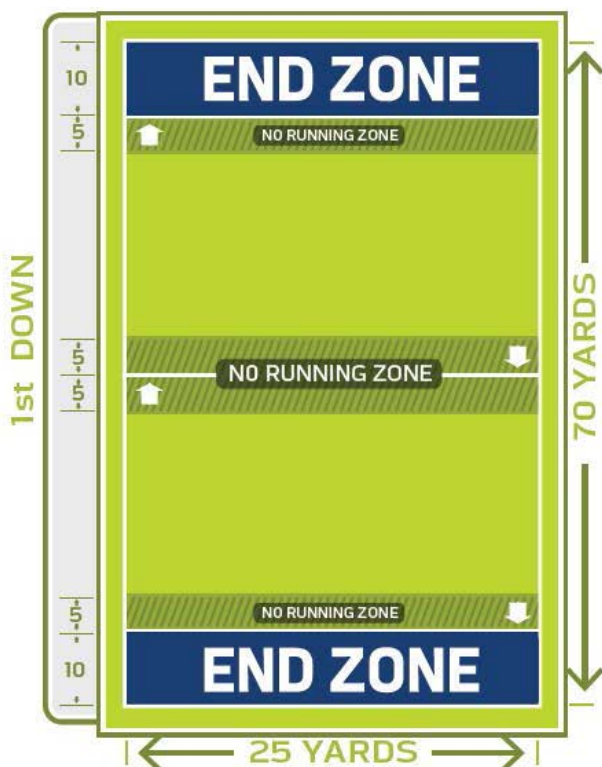
8.3. Field Dimensions and Layout:

6U & 8U Divisions: 25 yards wide × 64 yards long with 7-yard endzones

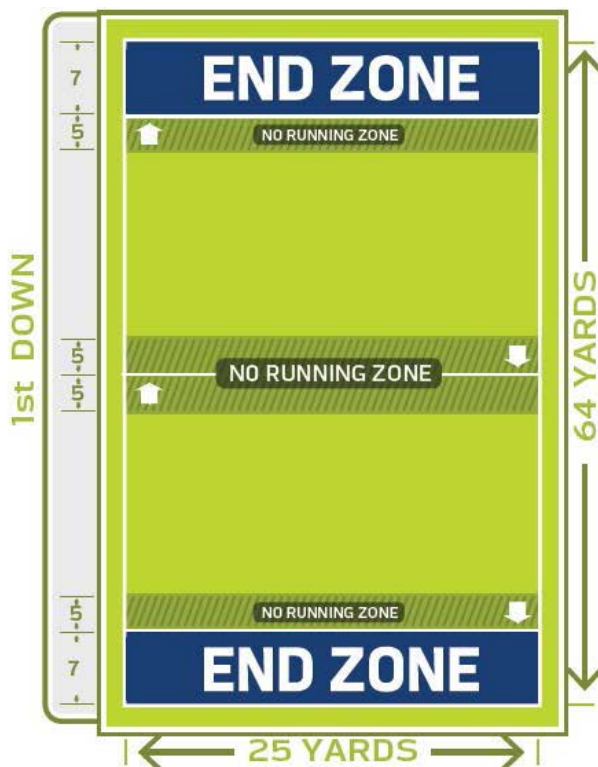
10U & 12/14U Divisions: 25 yards wide × 70 yards long with 10-yard endzones

1. Field will have a midfield line to gain for a first down. 'No Run Zones' are located 5 yards prior to midfield and 5 yards prior to the opponent's endzone.
2. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
3. 'No Run' Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting run plays. While in the 'No Run' Zones, teams cannot run the ball across the line of scrimmage. All plays must result in a forward pass across the Line of Scrimmage.
4. The referee will spot the ball in the middle of the field prior to the 'Ready to Play' whistle. The ball may NOT be closer than 10-yards to any sideline.

**6U & 8U Divisions:
Fields A & C**



**10U & 12/14U Divisions:
Fields B & D**



8.4. Game Time and Overtime

- **Game Length:** All games will be played with a 50-minute continuous clock, consisting of two 25-minute halves.
- **Halftime:** 5 minutes.
- **Play Clock:** Once the ball is spotted, a team has 40 seconds to snap the ball.
- **Clock Stoppage:** The clock stops only for time-outs or at the referee's discretion (e.g., player injuries).
- **Time Outs:** Each team has one (1) 60-second time-out per half. Time-outs do not carry over.
- **Mercy Rule:** If a team gains a 35-point advantage, the game will end immediately. Teams may agree to continue playing, but no additional points will be recorded.
- **NO Overtime:** No overtime will be played. Games may end in a tie.
- **Time Slot Requirement:** All games must be completed within the scheduled 55-minute time slot to allow the next game to begin on time. Referees may shorten halftime, limit stoppages, or adjust as necessary to keep games on schedule.

8.5. Scoring Guide

- **Touchdown:** 6 points
- **Extra Point (PAT):**
 - 1 point from the 5-yard line (pass only)
 - 2 points from the 10-yard line (run or pass)
- **Interceptions:** A returned interception during regulation play is worth 6 points. Interceptions returned on extra point attempts are worth 2 points.
- **Safety:** 2 points. (Occurs when the ball-carrier is downed in their own end zone by flag pull, stepping out, knee/arm down, fumble in end zone, or bad snap into end zone.)
- **Conversion Attempts:** Teams must declare 1- or 2-point try. Any change requires a timeout. No changes after a penalty.
- **Mercy/Forfeit:** Game ends when a team leads by 35+ points. Forfeits are scored 35–0.
- **Scorekeeping:** Coaches, officials, and scorekeeper may verify scores at the field. If a coach does not verify, the scorekeeper's record stands as final. (*Note: Scores are not used for standings/placement.*)

8.6. Live Ball/Dead Ball Regulations

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
 - It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. The game officials may give teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds, as long as the first foot or a body part other than the hand, contacts the ground in the field, while maintaining possession.
4. Substitutions may be made during any dead ball period.
5. The defense may not simulate the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. Other unfair acts would be; not returning five (5) eligible players to the field of play after halftime, a team or officials' time out prior to the 'Ready to Play' signal by the referee. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the Head Coach.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.

Play is ruled "dead" when:

- a. The ball hits the ground.
 - If the ball hits the ground as a result of a snap, backwards pitch or lateral, the ball will be placed where the ball hit the ground.
- b. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
- c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
- d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
- e. The ball-carrier's knee, shin, leg, forearm or arm hits the ground.
- f. The ball-carrier's flag falls out.
- g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of 1 or 0 flag(s).
- h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
- i. Inadvertent whistle
- j. Ball-carrier leaves their feet to dive, jump or hurdle a player.
(Exception: A PLAYER CAN DIVE TO CATCH A PASS OR PULL A FLAG)

NOTE: Fumbles / loss of possession: Ground contact must be made for the play to be dead at that spot. A fumble is loss of possession by a player, resulting in the ball contacting the ground.

8. If an inadvertent whistle occurs, the team in possession has two options:
 - Take the ball where the whistle blew and the down will count
 - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage

If an IW occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.

9. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced.

This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.



8.7. Running Game

1. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
2. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball across the Line of Scrimmage. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap under center directly or in shotgun formation.
3. Direct handoffs, pitches, and laterals are permitted behind the line of scrimmage only. If this takes place, after the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, the play is to be blown dead by the official. The ball shall be placed at the spot possession was lost for the next play.
 - "Center sneak" play is NOT allowed. The QB may NOT handoff, pitch or lateral the ball first to the center.
 - Any player who receives a handoff, backward pass, pitch or lateral can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
 - Once the ball has been handed off, in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, or a backward pass, pitch or lateral has occurred, the 7-second passing clock is eliminated and all defensive players are eligible to rush.
4. Definition of a "Legal Handoff" - Total loss of possession directly from 1 offensive play to another.
5. Teams are not allowed to run in the 'NO RUN ZONES' - (Reminder: Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
6. Runners are not permitted to jump, leap or hurdle, in the officials' judgement, while advancing the ball. The play is to be blown dead and the ball spotted where the jump, leap or hurdle occurred.
7. Ball carriers may leave their feet and the play will continue for spinning, jump cuts, QB's passing or if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid a collision with another player. The play will continue without stoppage. However, if while leaving the ground, illegal contact is made, a penalty may be enforced by the official.
8. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
9. Offensive players in close proximity of the ball carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.
10. Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.
11. Once the ball is advanced beyond the LOS, the current ball carrier is the only player allowed to have possession of the ball until the play is dead.

This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.

8.8. PASSING

1. Only 1 forward pass, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, is permitted each offensive play. The ball must be released prior to crossing the line of scrimmage. There can be unlimited backward passes behind the line of scrimmage.
 - There is no intentional grounding. The quarterback may throw the ball anywhere across the line of scrimmage to avoid a sack.
 - All forward passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender. All forward passes must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed and must be a forward pass, from behind the line of scrimmage, and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a 7 second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, the play is dead, the down counts and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.
 - If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7 second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS) and it will be the next down.
 - If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

8.9. RECEIVING



1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage).
2. A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first with possession.
3. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
4. Interceptions are returnable. If returned for a score during regular game play, the score will be worth six points, two points if returned during conversions and/or overtime.

This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.



8.10. RUSHING THE PASSER

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Up to two (2) players can rush the quarterback. Rushers MUST identify themselves by raising their hand before the snap. Rushers MUST rush the passer immediately after the snap. Delayed rush is NOT permitted. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend the line of scrimmage.

REGULAR SEASON LEAGUE PLAY - 8U & 6U Divisions: Defenders may not rush the passer.

2. Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled backwards behind the line of scrimmage, all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage to defend and pull the flag.
3. A special marker, or the game official, will designate a rush line 7 yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.

A legal rush is:

- Any rush by the 1 or 2 designated rushers, 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off, pitched or thrown backwards by the player receiving the snap.

A penalty may be called if:

- The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff, pitch, lateral or pass – Illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
- Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Encroachment (5-yards from line of scrimmage and first down).
- Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed, pitched, lateraled or handed off – Illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
- If the offense draws the identified rusher(s) across the 7 yard marker prior to the snap of the ball, the rusher(s) CANNOT legally rush. Jumping the rush is not a penalty until the rusher crosses the line of scrimmage prior to a handoff, pitch, lateral or forward pass.

Teams are never required to rush the quarterback with the 7 second clock in effect

4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
5. The offense cannot impede the rusher's PATH to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an 'Impeding the Rusher' penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher(s) responsibility to go around the offensive player and avoid contact.
6. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is when the flag is pulled.
 - A 2-point Safety is awarded if a flag pull takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.



8.11. FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
5. If a player who has one or no flags on their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
6. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flag(s) off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
7. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.



This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.

8.12. FORMATIONS

1. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
2. Movement simulating the snap, by a player who is set, is considered a false start.
3. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

****Only one player is allowed in motion when the ball is snapped. The player MUST be in motion, off the line of scrimmage. All motion must be parallel or backwards to the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.**

****Players may shift positions on offense at any time, all players must still reset for 1 second, prior to the snap.**

8.13. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

If the field monitor or game officials' witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the game officials' discretion. No appeals will be considered.
INTENTIONAL PHYSICAL PLAY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED!

Offensive or confrontational language is NOT allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the officials' will penalize for unsportsmanlike conduct and determine if an ejection is warranted.

Players or Coaches may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or game official.

Ball-carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.

5. Defenders must give free releases off the line of scrimmage to offensive players and are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags. Offensive players may NOT initiate contact at the line of scrimmage with defenders.
6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
 - Fans should cheer on their players only, not harass officials or opposing team.
 - Comments must be clean and profanity free.
 - Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
1. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly and adhere to league requirements for seating:
 - Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
 - Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.
 - Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.
1. **Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:**
 - Defensive penalty +10 yards from the dead ball spot and an automatic first down
 - Offensive penalty -10 yards from the dead ball spot and a loss of down
 - Two (2) unsportsmanlike penalties on any player or coach in a game result in a disqualification and may lead to additional discipline.

8.14. PENALTIES

i. General

The game officials' will administer all penalties.

The officials will determine incidental contact that may result from the normal run of play.

All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)

Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations.

Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.

Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.

Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

Spot fouls administered in the end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down) / Offensive (Safety)

ii. Defensive spot fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding/Illegal Contact	+5 yards and automatic first down
Stripping	+5 yards and automatic first down

iii. Offensive spot fouls

Screening or blocking	-5 yards and loss of down
Charging	-5 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-5 yards and loss of down
Holding/Illegal Contact	-5 yards and loss of down

iv. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside / illegal substitution	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

v. Offensive penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start / illegal substitution	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion (More than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Taunting	-10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

8.15. 8U & 6U GUIDELINES

These are NFL FLAG recommended and adopted adjustments to the rules that have been proven successful among RCX grade based NFL FLAG leagues and NFL leagues throughout the country from their direct input to assist with teaching the game in the younger age groups.

a. 8U

- 'No Run' zones are eliminated. Teams may run anywhere on the field.
- Defenders may NOT rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield
- One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre-snap to help their players, but MUST be off the field prior to the snap of the ball.

b. 6U

- 'No Run' zones are eliminated. Teams may run the ball anywhere on the field.
- Defenders may NOT rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.
- One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre and post snap to help their players, but post snap at a safe distance to plays completion.
- If the ball falls to, or touches the ground during the initial center to quarterback exchange, the play is ruled a 'Do Over' with no loss of down, once per down. On a second consecutive occurrence, the down is consumed.
- Defenders MUST line up at least five yards from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap. If the ball is spotted on or inside the 5-yard line, the distance is reduced to three (3) yards.



This section is reprinted/adapted from the NFL FLAG 2025 Rulebook.

10. Disciplinary Policy

To maintain a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all participants, Escalon Recreation has adopted the following disciplinary policy:

10.1 General Expectations

All players, coaches, and spectators are expected to:

- Follow the league's Code of Conduct
- Treat referees, staff, and others with respect
- Display good sportsmanship at all times
- Abide by league rules and safety guidelines

10.2 Violations & Consequences

• 1st Offense (Minor/Nonviolent):

- Verbal warning from league staff or officials
- Coach or parent notified
- Documented by the Recreation Department

• 2nd Offense or Serious Misconduct:

- Possible suspension from practices and/or games
- Length determined by the Recreation Department
- Written notice to the individual and team coach

10.3 Ejections:

- If a coach, parent, or player is ejected by a referee they will be suspended from practices and games (duration will be determined by the Recreation Department)

10.4 Repeat Offenses or Complaints:

- If the Recreation Department receives multiple complaints or incidents, the individual may be barred from coaching, attending, or participating in current or future programs

10.5 Severe Behavior:

- Any physical violence, threats, or harassment may result in immediate removal from the program without a refund. Law enforcement may be involved as needed

10.6 Oversight & Final Decisions

All disciplinary matters will be reviewed and decided by the Recreation Department, the Recreation Commission, the Police Chief, and/or the City Manager, as appropriate. Decisions are final.

9. Complaint & Reporting Process

We are committed to providing a positive and safe environment for all players, coaches, and families. If you have a concern or need to file a complaint, please follow the steps below:

1. Step 1: Speak with the Coach (if applicable)

- Many issues can be resolved quickly through direct communication with the team coach.

2. Step 2: Contact the Recreation Department

- If the issue is not resolved or is more serious in nature, please contact the Recreation Office by phone, email, or in person.
- Provide a clear description of the concern, including any relevant dates, names, and details.

3. Step 3: Formal Review

- The Recreation Department will review the complaint, gather any necessary information, and follow up as needed.
- Depending on the nature of the issue, additional steps may include meetings, written statements, or other documentation.


4. Step 4: Resolution & Follow-Up


- We will make every effort to address the concern in a timely and fair manner.
- You will be notified of any outcomes or actions taken, as appropriate.


All complaints will be kept as confidential as possible. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a respectful and supportive environment for everyone involved.

Contact Information:

Escalon Recreation Department

 (209) 691-7372

 recreation@cityofescalon.org

 2060 McHenry Ave., Escalon, CA 95320

HOGAN-ENNIS PARK

FLAG FOOTBALL FIELD MAP



ENTRANCE

FIELD A

25 x 70 YARDS

6U & 8U

ENTRANCE

FIELD B

25 x 70 YARDS

10U & 12/14U

FIELD C

25 x 65 YARDS

6U & 8U

SNACK BAR

ENTRANCE



RESTROOMS



FIELD D

25 x 70 YARDS

10U & 12/14U

ENTRANCE

Arthur Rd

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Digital Version:



More Info :

(209) 691-7372

recreation@cityofescalon.org

www.cityofescalon.org

UPDATED: 10/9/25- Updated Field Sizes