



2026 Flag Football Rules

We are pleased that you and your child have made the choice to participate in our program. Our goal is to provide a quality experience for your child; one that focuses on fun while learning how to play the game. Our program will provide your child with opportunities to learn essential values in life such as sportsmanship, winning and losing, teamwork, and much more. The staff believes that leisure or recreation opportunities are necessary throughout one's life by helping maintain a healthy balance.

Staff/Special Needs

The staff are available to answer your questions and to assist you as needed. We encourage you to discuss ideas, suggestions, problems, and concerns with us at any time. The Town of Wytheville, Wythe County Parks and Recreation, and the Bland County Youth Sports Department make recreation programs and facilities available for use by everyone. Please discuss with us any accommodation needed to enjoy this program.

Department Guidelines:

- The playing field will be roughly 20 yards x 40 yards plus 10-yard endzones.
- If a youth league or mini-league has more participants and needs to split into two or more teams, a draft must be completed with an equal number of players from each grade group. (or as close as possible).
- A team must have at least 7 players to be able to begin a season in this mini-league.
- Drafts are to be conducted by Parks & Rec staff along with head coaches.
- There shall be no parents on the sideline unless tending to an injured child.

Rules of the Game:

1. A coin toss will determine the first possession of the game.
2. **Game Structure & Minimum players:** Games will be 6 vs 6. A team can start and play with no less than 4 players in a game. If that team drops below 4 players, they must forfeit that game. A 10-minute grace period is in place if a team doesn't have enough players present. If after the 10-minute grace period is up and that team does not have enough players, they must forfeit.

3. **Time & Player minutes:** Games will consist of two 20-minute halves. Clock will not stop except for the last two minutes of the game, injuries or time outs. Each team will receive two 2 minute time outs per half. Half times will be 5 minutes long. Every player **must** play 10 consecutive minutes a half or two consecutive (5) minutes played in each half. The head coach has this option.
4. **Possession:** The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its own 5-yard line and has a series (4 plays) to cross midfield (20-yard line). On 4th down the offensive team has the option to run another play or declare to punt. If that team decides to punt and the ball is on the offensive teams side of the 20 then the ball goes to the 20. If the ball is on the opponent's side of the 20 then the ball will be moved to the 5 yard line.
5. **Getting a 1st Down:** Once a team crosses midfield then it has a new series (4 plays) to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to gain a first down, score a touchdown or doesn't punt, then the opponent gains possession at the point designated by the result of the previous play.
6. **Scoring:**
 - a. A touchdown is 6 points
 - b. Extra point from the 3 yard line is 1 point
 - c. Extra point from the 5 yard line is 2 points
 - d. Safety is 2 points
7. **Overtime:**
 - a. During the regular season, there will only be 1 overtime per game. If game is still tied after each team's possession, game will end in a tie.
 - b. Each team has four plays to score a touchdown from the defense's 10 yard line.
 - c. If a team scores they must go for an extra point from the 5 yard line – 2 points.
 - d. There will be no timeouts during overtime.
8. **Equipment rules:**
 - a. Players may wear shorts or pants
 - b. Players must wear a mouthpiece and must have them in when they come to the line of scrimmage.
 - c. Shirts **MUST** be tucked in and **CANNOT** hang over flags or belts
 - d. Players may wear arm or knee pads
 - e. Only rubber sole shoes or rubber cleats may be worn
 - f. Belts **CANNOT** be tied or taped together
9. **Basic Game Rules:**
 - a. No deliberate contact allowed
 - b. No player may initiate contact with another player
 - c. No blocking or screening. The offense may not attempt to engage or otherwise obstruct the defense, which includes flag guarding.
 - d. Substitutions can be made on any dead ball
 - e. One coach is permitted on the field on offense and defense. Coaches must stay back away from players once teams come up to the line. **Three coaches per team total.**
10. Offense must have at least one player (The Center) on the line of scrimmage at the snap.
11. All 6 players are eligible to catch a pass.
12. Defense may use any formation.

13. There will be no rush on the QB or running backs until a 7 second count is over or unless they cross the line of scrimmage.
14. Unlimited handoffs, pitches and passes are permitted behind the line of scrimmage. These things are not permitted once the ball crosses the line of scrimmage.
15. The ball carrier may not lower his shoulder, deliberately run into a defender, stiff arm or shield/protect the flag.
16. All penalties will be 5 yards except for unsportsmanlike conduct which will be 10 yards. Penalties will be:
 - a. Illegal procedure
 - b. Illegal pass, pitch or handoff
 - c. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.)
 - d. Offensive or defensive pass interference
 - e. Flag guarding
17. There are no fumbles. If the ball touches the ground, it is a dead ball and the team retains possession. If it is a 4th down and the team elects to run a play and gains a first down then fumbles, the ball will be dead at the place of the fumble and it will be a first down. The only exception is the QB. The QB may pick up a fumble BEHIND the line of scrimmage and either run, pass or hand the ball off.
18. Interceptions can be returned for touchdowns.
19. Any rules not covered in this section will be ruled upon by the official or field supervisor.
20. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED BY COACHES, PLAYERS OR PARENTS!!**

CANCELLATIONS

If games are canceled due to inclement weather, WCPR will notify each Youth League President/Athletic director and then it will be up to them to notify the coaches. WCPR does have a cancelation line (276-223-4520). Updates to schedule changes will be recorded if able. WCPR will attempt to post on social media as well. The Town of Wytheville Parks & Rec Dept and Bland County Youth Sports department will notify coaches and parents via the band app for cancellations and will also post on the Town of Wytheville Facebook page.

NO WEAPONS, PETS, TOBACCO PRODUCTS OR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WILL BE ALLOWED ON PUBLIC SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Concussion Awareness

Athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms below after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body may have a concussion.

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
 - Forgets an instruction or play
 - Is unsure of score or opponent
 - Moves clumsily
 - Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)

- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
 - Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
 - Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported By Athlete

- Headache or pressure in head
 - Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
 - Double or blurry vision
 - Sensitivity to light
 - Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
 - Confusion
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

Action Plan

If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion you should take the following steps.

1. Remove the athlete from play. **WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!**
2. Inform the athlete's parent/guardian about the possible concussion and give them the facts and symptoms observed
3. Do not judge the severity of the injury yourself – utilize EMS if they are on site or call 911 as needed.
4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until they show no symptoms and an appropriate health care professional says they are OK to return to play.

The Wythe County, Wytheville Parks and Recreation Department and Bland County Youth Sports staff and certified EMTs at local youth league games have the right to sit any player out of action they believe has a possible concussion. Then the 24 hours of rest goes into effect, and the player must be cleared by a health care professional with a written clearance provided to the appropriate recreation department before the player can return to practices or games.