PYLON GIRLS 7ON7 FLAG FOOTBALL

OFFICIAL RULES

2026–27 SEASON · VERSION 1.0 · OCTOBER 2026 · 15U & 18U

This rule book uses CIF girls flag football playing mechanics — 7-on-7, flag pull, screen blocking, all players eligible, quarterback runs — on the same one-way field the Pylon boys circuit uses. It is a club and tournament rule book, not the official CIF or NFHS high school rule book.

WHAT CHANGED FROM THE BOYS CIRCUIT

- Flag pull ends the play — not a two-hand tag below the neck.
- Non-contact screen blocking is legal. Tackling is not.
- The quarterback may run. All seven offensive players are eligible receivers.
- Four downs to each first-down marker (boys circuit uses three).
- No rush until the ball is snapped at or inside the 25-yard line.
- No punts, no kickoffs, no field goals.
- Try distances follow girls flag: 1 point from the 3, 2 points from the 10.
- Soft helmets are optional. Mouthguards and a legal two-flag belt are required.

WHAT CHANGED FROM CIF HIGH-SCHOOL GIRLS FLAG

- One-way 40-yard field plus a 10-yard end zone (not the CIF 80 × 40 two-way field).
- Every new series starts at the 40-yard line, first-and-four to the 25.
- First-down lines are the 25 and the 10, then the goal line.
- Defense may not rush outside the 25. A 7-second pass clock applies outside the 25.
- No punts. Failed fourth down gives the opponent the ball at the 40.
- Default game is a 25-minute running-clock tournament game (CIF four-quarter timing is in the appendix).
- An interception is live. The interceptor may advance toward the 40. Crossing the 40 is a defensive touchdown (6). If she is de-flagged first, her team starts at the 40.

1. QUICK REFERENCE

ITEM	RULE
Players on field	7 vs. 7 (must start with 7; may continue with 5)
Roster	Maximum 24 players
Field	40-yard playing field + 10-yard end zone (50 yards total). Width 30–40 yards.
Direction	One-way. Every series attacks the same end zone.
Start of every series	40-yard line, choice of hash
Downs / markers	4 downs to the 25, then 4 downs to the 10, then 4 downs to score
Rush	Illegal outside the 25. Legal at or inside the 25 — any number, immediately.
Pass clock	7 seconds outside the 25. None at or inside the 25.
Punts / kickoffs / FGs	None
Scoring	TD 6 · Pick-six (reach the 40) 6 · Try 1 from 3 or 2 from 10 · No safety
Clock (default)	25-minute running clock. Stops only for injury or official timeout.
Play clock	25 seconds
Timeouts	Two 30-second timeouts per team per game
How a runner is down	Flag pull, knee / elbow / body down, ball hits the ground, or out of bounds
Blocking	Non-contact screens only
Flags	One-piece junior belt, two hip flags, 1.5" × 14" to 2" × 16"
Required gear	Mouthguard. Jersey tucked. Pocketless bottoms. Flags visible.

2. THE FIELD

40-yard playing field plus 10-yard end zone with markers at 40, 25, and 10

- Playing field: 40 yards long. End zone: 10 yards. Total length: 50 yards.
- Recommended width: 30 to 40 yards. Use existing boys-circuit hash marks.
- Mark the 40, 25, 10, and goal line. The 25-yard line is both a first-down line and the rush line.
- There is no second end zone. The area behind the 40 is backfield / out of play for scoring purposes.
- Team boxes: from the 40 to the 20 on each sideline, two yards off the sideline. Only one offensive coach may be on the field.

3. GAME FORMAT

PLAYERS AND ROSTER

- Each team plays with seven players on the field.
- A team must start the game with seven. Play may continue with five if no eligible substitute is available. Fewer than five is a forfeit.

- Maximum roster: 24 players.
- All seven offensive players are eligible receivers.

STARTING THE GAME

- A coin toss determines first possession. The winner may take the ball or defer. The other team chooses the hash for the opening snap.
- The offense starts every series — including the first snap of the game, after a score, after a try, after a turnover, and after a failed fourth down — at the 40-yard line.
- A whistle starts and ends the game. Officials keep official time and score on the field.

DEFAULT TOURNAMENT CLOCK

- Each game is 25 minutes with a running clock.
- The clock does not stop except for injury or an official's timeout.
- The official will announce when two minutes remain.
- If a team scores a touchdown with no time remaining and trails by 2 points or fewer, it is entitled to its try (untimed down).
- There is no overtime in pool play. Bracket overtime is in Section 11.
- Each team has two 30-second timeouts per game. Unused timeouts do not carry into overtime.

PLAY CLOCK

- The offense has 25 seconds to snap after the official marks the ball ready.
- Delay of game is 5 yards from the previous spot, repeat the down.
- The offense is responsible for retrieving the ball and returning it to the official. Delay in doing so is delay of game.

---

4. DOWNS AND LINES TO GAIN

- The offense has four (4) downs to reach the next marker.
- From the 40: four downs to reach or cross the 25.
- From the 25: four downs to reach or cross the 10.
- From the 10: four downs to score a touchdown.
- Reaching or crossing a marker awards a new set of four downs.
- A failed fourth down is a turnover. The opponent starts a new series at the 40, first-and-four.
- There are no punts and no declared kicks of any kind.

- A loss of yardage that moves the ball back across a marker restores that marker as the line to gain on the next snap (example: offense reaches the 25, then is flagged or stuffed back to the 28 — next snap is still first-and-four to the 25 only if a new series was awarded and then lost by penalty; otherwise the original line to gain remains). Officials enforce the line-to-gain that was in effect when the down began, unless a first down was awarded.

LINE-TO-GAIN IN ONE SENTENCE

40 → 25 (4 downs) · 25 → 10 (4 downs) · 10 → goal (4 downs). Miss on fourth and the other team starts at the 40.

---

5. RUSH RULE

This is the circuit-specific replacement for both the boys "one blitz per game" rule and the CIF "anyone may rush from one yard off the line" rule.

- **Outside the 25:** No defender may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is handed off, tossed, or the quarterback crosses the line. A defender who crosses early is offside / illegal rush.
- **At or inside the 25:** Any number of defenders may rush immediately from on or behind their line of scrimmage. There is a 1-yard neutral zone. There is no wait count and no limit on the number of rushers.
- If a loss of yardage or a penalty moves the ball back outside the 25, the no-rush restriction is restored on the next snap.
- The rush line is determined by the spot of the snap, not by where a runner later carries the ball.
- An illegal rush outside the 25 is 5 yards and a repeat of the down. If the rusher contacts the quarterback, add unnecessary roughness if the contact warrants it.

7-SECOND PASS CLOCK (OUTSIDE THE 25 ONLY)

Because the defense cannot rush from the 40 to the 25, the quarterback cannot hold the ball indefinitely.

- When the ball is snapped from outside the 25, the quarterback has 7 seconds to throw a pass, hand the ball off, pitch it, or cross the line of scrimmage.
- Officials will give an audible count or a visual signal. If 7 seconds expire with the quarterback still in the backfield holding the ball, the play is dead at the spot — loss of down.
- There is no pass clock on snaps at or inside the 25. The live rush is the clock.

---

6. LIVE BALL, DEAD BALL, AND HOW A RUNNER IS DOWN

- The ball is live at the snap.

- A runner is down, and the ball is dead, when: a flag is pulled; a knee, elbow, or body other than the hand or foot touches the ground; the ball touches the ground; or the runner steps out of bounds.
- A receiver may dive to catch a pass. A runner may not dive or hurdle to advance. A defender may not dive to pull a flag.
- Flag guarding (stiff-arm, slapping a defender's hand, covering or tying a flag, lowering the helmet/shoulder into a defender to protect a flag) is a 10-yard penalty from the spot and a repeat of the down. If it occurs in the end zone on a scoring play, the score comes off.
- Jerseys, shirts, and hair may not cover the flags. Covered flags are flag guarding.
- A player who loses a flag during the play may still complete the play and is down by one-hand touch between the shoulders and the knees.
- Fumbles (including a bad snap) are dead at the spot. The offense retains possession. There is no stripping the ball.
- A backward pass that hits the ground is dead at the spot. Offense retains possession.
- There is no safety. If a runner is de-flagged behind the 40, or runs out the back of the 40, the ball is dead at the 40 and the down counts. If that was fourth down, it is a turnover and the opponent starts at the 40.

---

7. OFFENSE

SNAP AND FORMATION

- The ball may be snapped from a shotgun or under center. A QB-Tee is permitted but not required.
- A legal snap requires a snapper on the line of scrimmage and the player receiving the snap set at least two yards off the line (measured by her feet). Under-center snaps are legal if that spacing is met.
- One offensive player may be in motion at the snap, not toward the opponent's goal line.
- At least one receiver must be on the line on each side of the snapper. Receivers line up outside the tackle box.
- Illegal formation, illegal motion, or a snap infraction is 5 yards, repeat the down.

PASSING, HANDING, AND RUNNING

- One forward pass per play, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.
- All seven offensive players are eligible.
- The quarterback may run on any down, including outside the 25.
- Hand-offs, pitches, and laterals behind the line are legal. Trick-play laterals downfield after a completed pass are legal if they are backward.
- No toss-pass (forward pitch beyond the line) and no second forward pass.
- Intentional grounding: throwing the ball into an area with no eligible receiver to avoid a flag pull or the pass clock is 5 yards from the spot and a loss of down.

- A runner may pass the ball backward at any time except to conserve time by throwing it out of bounds.

SCREEN BLOCKING

- Non-contact screen blocking is legal anywhere on the field.
- A screener must have her feet on the ground, hands and elbows in, and may not initiate contact, extend her arms, lean into a defender, or take a running start into a defender.
- The defender must go around a legal screen. She may not shove, grab, or run through the screener.
- An illegal screen is 10 yards, repeat the down.
- There is no blocking with contact. Contact blocking is a 10-yard penalty and a loss of down.

---

8. DEFENSE

- Defenders line up at least one yard off the line of scrimmage (neutral zone). Encroachment before the snap is 5 yards, repeat the down.
- Outside the 25, defenders may not cross the line until a hand-off / pitch or the quarterback crosses the line. See Section 5.
- At or inside the 25, any number may rush immediately.
- The play ends by pulling a flag — not by wrapping up, tackling, or two-hand touching a player who still has both flags.
- Holding, grabbing the runner's jersey, wrapping the runner, or hooking an arm to restrain her is 10 yards and a repeat of the down.
- Roughing the passer (contact with the quarterback after the ball is gone, hitting the throwing arm, or running through the quarterback) is 10 yards and an automatic first down.
- Defensive pass interference is 15 yards from the previous spot and an automatic first down. If it occurs in the end zone, the ball is placed at the 3-yard line, first-and-goal.
- Face-guarding without contact is legal. Playing through the receiver's body is not.
- A defender may not dive to pull a flag.

---

9. INTERCEPTIONS AND SCORING

INTERCEPTION (ONE-WAY FIELD RULE)

The interceptor is not running toward the end zone she was defending. She runs the other way — toward the 40-yard line — which is how a pick-six works on this field.

- An interception is a live ball.
- The interceptor may advance toward the 40-yard line. Reaching or crossing the 40 is a defensive touchdown (6 points).

- If she is de-flagged, goes out of bounds, or a knee goes down before the 40, the play is dead. Her team starts a new series at the 40. No points.
- An interception in the end zone is a touchback. Intercepting team starts at the 40. No points.
- Laterals by the intercepting team are legal if backward. A dropped lateral is dead. Intercepting team starts at the 40.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct by the intercepting team on the return cancels any score. They start at the 40.
- A try (PAT) interception is a dead ball. No points for the defense. The try is over. The opponent then starts at the 40.
- This circuit does not use the boys-book +2 interception award.

SCORING VALUES

SCORE	POINTS
Touchdown (offense, or interceptor reaches the 40)	6
Interception, downed before the 40	0 — next series at the 40
Try from the 3-yard line (run or pass)	1
Try from the 10-yard line (run or pass)	2
Safety	Not used on this field
Defensive score on a try	Not allowed — ball is dead

TOUCHDOWN AND TRY

- A touchdown is scored when a player in legal possession crosses the goal-line plane or catches a legal pass in the end zone.
- After a touchdown, officials inspect the scorer's flag belt. A teammate pulls both flags. If a flag is missing, tied, or illegally altered, the touchdown is waved off and the ball returns to the previous spot, loss of down.
- The scoring team then attempts a try: 1 point from the 3-yard line or 2 points from the 10-yard line. The offense chooses the hash. If the coach does not declare, the official places the ball on the 3.
- Once declared, the choice cannot be changed unless a foul before the snap lets the offense re-declare.
- The try is an untimed down. Rush rules follow field position: the 10-yard try is inside the 25 so the defense may rush; the 3-yard try is also rush-legal.
- Only the offense may score on a try. A turnover ends the try. No return.
- After the try — successful or not — the opponent starts at the 40.

10. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM

FLAGS

- One-piece junior flag belt. Adult belts are illegal.
- Exactly two flags, one on each hip. Flags must hang freely and contrast with the pants / shorts / skirt.
- Size: no smaller than 1.5 inches × 14 inches and no larger than 2 inches × 16 inches.
- Flags must be removable. No knots, no tape, no adhesive, no cutting that changes how the flag releases.
- The belt is worn snug at the waist, not on the hips, and must stay visible. A shifting belt comes off the field until it is tightened.

OTHER REQUIRED AND PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

- Mouthguard required for every player on the field.
- Soft-shell helmets are optional on the girls circuit (required on the boys circuit). If worn, they must be worn correctly.
- Pocketless bottoms. No exposed drawstrings, belt loops, or towels covering flags.
- Jersey tucked in. Numbers recommended (0–99). Home wears dark, visitors wear light when possible.
- No jewelry (medical / religious items taped under the uniform are the only exception). No metal cleats. No hard casts.
- Football: youth or women's size, tan / brown, properly inflated. Each team supplies at least one legal ball.

11. COACHING, SIDELINE, AND OVERTIME

COACHING YOUR TEAM

- One offensive coach may be on the field, positioned behind the offensive huddle. She or he must not interfere with play or officials.
- No defensive coach is allowed on the field.
- All other coaches, players, and personnel stay in the coach's box, which ends at the 20-yard line. The defensive coordinator may come as far as the 15 for visibility.
- Players waiting for the next series stay in the on-deck area. They may not enter the field until the previous series is over and possession has been exchanged.
- Sideline warnings: first warning is free. Second warning is 10 yards or half the distance. Third warning is removal of the head coach from that game.
- Coaches may not challenge an official's ruling.
- Only one team photographer is allowed on the field, 10 yards behind the offense.
- The head coach is responsible for the conduct of coaches, players, and fans.

OVERTIME — BRACKET / SINGLE-ELIMINATION ONLY

- No overtime in pool play.
- If a bracket game is tied at the whistle, a coin toss is held. The home team calls it. The winner chooses offense or defense. The loser chooses the hash.
- Each team gets one four-down series from the 10-yard line. Running and passing are both legal. Rush is live (inside the 25).
- A touchdown is worth 6. The scoring team then attempts a try (1 from 3 or 2 from 10).
- Turnovers on downs end that team's series. An interception in overtime is live toward the 40; reaching the 40 is 6 points. If the interceptor is downed first, her team's series (if not already used) starts at the 40.
- If the score is still tied after both series, teams alternate single plays from the 3-yard line (1-point tries) until a winner is decided. The team that defended first in OT now goes first. Running is legal.
- Each team has one timeout for the entire overtime. No blitz restriction — rush is live from the 10 and the 3.
- No game clock in overtime. 25-second play clock remains.

---

12. PENALTY SUMMARY

Unless noted, live-ball fouls by the offense are from the previous spot. Spot fouls are marked from the spot of the foul when that is the standard enforcement for that foul.

OFFENSE

FOUL	YARDS	RESULT
False start / illegal motion / illegal formation / snap infraction	5	Repeat down
Delay of game	5	Repeat down
Illegal forward pass / second forward pass	5	Loss of down
Intentional grounding	5 from spot	Loss of down
7-second pass-clock violation (outside 25)	Dead at spot	Loss of down
Illegal contact block	10	Loss of down
Illegal screen	10	Repeat down
Offensive pass interference	10	Loss of down
Flag guarding / hurdling / diving to advance	10 from spot	Repeat down
Unsportsmanlike	15	Loss of down
Fumble / ball hits ground	Dead at spot	Offense keeps ball

DEFENSE

FOUL	YARDS	RESULT
Encroachment / offside / neutral zone	5	Repeat down
Illegal rush outside the 25	5	Repeat down
Holding / illegal flag pull (grabbing runner)	10	Repeat down
Defensive pass interference	15	Automatic first down
Roughing the passer / unnecessary roughness	10 or 15	Automatic first down
Illegal participation	5	Repeat down
Unsportsmanlike	15	Automatic first down
Diving to pull a flag	10	Repeat down

13. CONDUCT

- Unsportsmanlike conduct is a 15-yard penalty. A second unsportsmanlike on the same player is an ejection.
- Fighting: the player is ejected from the game and the remainder of the event. A punch is an immediate tournament ejection.
- If a bench clears, both teams forfeit that game. Event staff may remove a team from the event.
- Excessive celebration or clearing the sideline after a score is unsportsmanlike and a loss of down if it occurs before the try, or 15 yards on the opponent's next series if it occurs after.
- Officials' calls stand. Event staff will not overturn a judgment call unless it directly contradicts this rule book.
- Any form of cheating is automatic team disqualification.

14. APPENDIX — OPTIONAL FOUR-QUARTER TIMING

Use this section only when the event is scheduled as a full game rather than a 25-minute circuit game (for example a showcase, camp championship, or dual-header).

- Four 10-minute quarters. One-minute break after the first and third quarters. Halftime 5 minutes.
- 25-second play clock. Three 30-second timeouts per half. Timeouts do not carry from half to half.
- Running clock except the last two minutes of each half, when the clock stops on incomplete passes, a runner out of bounds, scores, first downs, accepted fouls, and timeouts.
- Mercy: if a team leads by 21 or more in the second half, the clock runs except for official and team timeouts.
- All other rules in this book (field, rush, downs, scoring, equipment) stay the same.

15. OFFICIALS' CHEAT SHEET

ALWAYS REMEMBER	NEVER DO THIS
Every new series starts at the 40	Do not start a series at the spot of a turnover
4 downs to 25, 4 to 10, 4 to goal	Do not use 3 downs (that's the boys book)
No rush from the 40 or 25-plus	Do not allow a 'one blitz' from the 40
7-second clock only outside the 25	Do not run a 4-second Pylon throw clock
INT is live toward the 40; reaching 40 = 6	Do not award the boys-book +2 INT and kill the play
Try: 1 from 3 or 2 from 10	Do not use the boys 5-yard / 10-yard try spots
Flag pull downs the runner	Do not use two-hand touch if both flags are on
Screens legal, contact blocking not	Do not call every screen illegal
QB may run on any down	Do not blow a QB run dead
No punts, no safeties, no FGs	Do not award a safety behind the 40

Adopted for circuit girls play. Playing mechanics adapted from CIF / NFHS girls flag football. Field, series start, and tournament clock adapted from the boys 7-on-7 circuit. Confirm any local event exceptions at the coaches' meeting before kickoff.