

# GAME RULES

## FOOTBALL INDOOR – MEN’S 6 v 6

### EQUIPMENT

BSSC will provide each player with a team t-shirt of a designated color. Each player is required to wear that shirt or a shirt of the same color to each game. If the opposing team captain does not approve of the color of the shirt then that player must change shirts, or will not be allowed to play. The game official must be involved in this decision. Always bring an extra white T-shirt in case you play a team with a similar shirt color.

BSSC provides one set of flags per team, and Teams should agree on a ball, which must be a properly inflated, regulation size NFL or NCAA ball.

Players may not wear loose or bulky jewelry (e.g. hoop earrings, large rings, watches, loose neck chains and bracelets). Wedding bands are OK.

### PLAYERS, ROSTERS, ELIGIBILITY

**PLAYERS.** There can be any number of players on a team roster. For men’s football, the rosters are open to only players who identify as men (“male players”).

Each team shall have no more than 6 players on the field. A team must have at least 4 rostered players to start a game and avoid a forfeit. To avoid forfeits, see “Picking Up Players Policy” on our website under League Info. Any picked up players **MUST** already be in the BSSC flag football league.

**ROSTER.** There is no limit to the number of players on team roster. Players may be added to the team's roster up until the start of the playoffs. A player must only play with one team per a division for playoffs.

**ELIGIBILITY.** All players must be listed on and have signed their team’s official roster in order to be eligible to play. A player can appear on multiple rosters. In order to be eligible for playoffs, players must have played in at least 1 game during the regular season.

### GAME DURATION

Each game consists of one **40-minute** period. The clock will start running at the scheduled game time unless the previous game is running behind. If a team is late to their game, they will lose that time. The clock will only stop for injury timeouts, timeouts requested by either team, or referee charged timeouts.

### TIMEOUTS:

Each team is allowed two 45-second timeouts **per game**. During the first 39 minutes of play, if a team calls a timeout after a touchdown, prior to the extra point attempt, the clock **WILL START** when the offense snaps the ball to attempt the Point After Try (PAT).

**OFFICIAL GAME:** Once a game passes the halfway point of the second half (10:01 remaining on the clock), a game will be considered official. If a game must be stopped and cannot resume play for any reason after that point and before the final buzzer, the score at the time of interruption will be considered the final score.

### OVERTIME DURING PLAYOFFS ONLY:

- During regular season play, all ties will be scored as a tie
- Playoffs – Four-Downs and Out format applies
- A coin toss with the winning team deciding on first or second possession
- Teams will attempt to score in the same end zone
- Each team will then have 4 downs to score from 20-yard line
- If a team scores, they will have the opportunity to go for 1 or 2 on the PAT. (If the game is still tied after 3 OT rotations, teams must go for 2 on the PAT)
- An interception will result in a team losing its possession – they may not be returned for any points
- The game will be decided when one team scores more points in the rotation

- No 1<sup>st</sup> downs will be awarded expect in the case of a penalty

## PLAYING THE GAME

### PRE-GAME COIN TOSS:

A coin toss will determine starting possession. The winner of the toss will have choice of “offense/defense”, or “direction”. The loser of the toss will have the remaining option. Start of game situation will change at the start of the second half (e.g., team that starts the game on offense will start the second half on defense)

Note: For playoff games, the higher seeded team automatically “wins” the toss.

**START OF PLAY:** Play starts on the 20-yard line.

### TIME:

For the entire game, once the ball has been spotted, the offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. If the referee feels that this is being taken advantage of (delay of game), they can:

- On the first offense - Warn the team
- On subsequent offenses - Penalize the offense 5 paces/yards (the team cannot re-huddle)
- After the penalty is marked off the ball **MUST** be snapped within 5 seconds or it will be loss of down
- Within the last two minutes of each half, the clock will stop on delay of game penalties.

A two-minute warning is given in the second half – *the clock does NOT stop at 2 minutes.*

- If a team is up by 14 points or more, the clock runs continuously during the last two minutes of play

If during the final 2 minutes of the game the score differential is 9pts or less, the referee will stop the clock when...

- an incomplete pass is thrown
- a player ends play by going out of bounds
- either team scores (the clock remains stopped until the opposing team snaps the ball after the PAT attempt; the clock does not run during extra points)
- a change of possession occurs
- a penalty which must be marked off occurs
- a team declares a punt (the clock will resume for the punt and the ensuing return. It will then be stopped when the returnee is tackled, up until their first snap from the line of scrimmage)
- a team calls a time out

### *THE CLOCK DOES NOT STOP ON FIRST DOWNS OR FUMBLES*

### FLAGS:

It is each player's responsibility to have flags positioned squarely over each hip. If a player begins a play without two flags or if the entire flag is not accessible, and that player takes possession of the ball (i.e. a hand-off, reception, hike to the quarterback, interception, fumble recovery) the play is called dead at the spot that possession was taken.

If an offensive player without both flags accessible takes possession in their own end-zone, it is ruled a safety. If a defensive player takes possession in their own end-zone, it is ruled a touchback. If either team takes possession in the opponent's end-zone, it is a touchdown.

### STARTING PLAY / HIKING THE BALL:

The offense has two options to start each play:

1. The ball can be placed on the ground and hiked through the air to the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is in the air, the play has started and the defense can start counting for their rush.

2. The quarterback can “self-hike” by standing at the scrimmage line with the ball off the ground. There are no silent snaps. The quarterback must use some type of cadence. He or she does not, however, have to move back when they hike the ball. Penalty for a silent snap will be – 5 pace/yard penalty, repeat of down

If the play starts with the ball on the ground, and the offensive player self-hikes the ball, the play will be considered illegal and a loss of down will be assessed. If a team member is to hike the ball, the ball must stay on the ground until hiked.

If the ball is off the ground and the player hikes the ball, it will be considered a change of possession and the defense may rush in immediately. NOTE: It is the center’s responsibility to not interfere with the defensive pass rusher’s right to pursue the quarterback laterally down the line of scrimmage. Any interference will be considered blocking.

No one on the offensive team can be moving forward at the time the play is started.

**On a change of possession, the referee will allow the DEFENSE time to get on the field and get set BEFORE the ball can be hiked.**

### **QUARTERBACK RESTRICTIONS:**

The Quarterback is not eligible to run the ball downfield. The QB must either lateral the ball or throw the ball. Even after the 5-second count has passed and a defender is in the backfield, the quarterback may not run the ball downfield (past the line of scrimmage). Penalty for doing so is a loss of down.

### **LATERALS:**

A lateral is a pitch of the ball (overhand OR underhand) to a fellow team member next to you or behind you. Laterals are legal only behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is lateraled, the player who formerly had possession of the ball may go downfield and be considered a receiver. A lateral CAN be picked off. A dropped lateral is a fumble (see fumbles).

### **PASS RECEPTIONS:**

A legal pass reception requires that the receiver have **one foot** in bounds at the time control is achieved. No part of the body may be touching an area out of bounds.

### **PLAYERS IN MOTION:**

You’re allowed to have one player in motion at the snap.

### **SAFETIES:**

A safety will be scored if a player is:

- Tagged down in their own end zone (except in a punt return)
- Runs out of bounds in their own end zone
- Snaps the ball out of the end zone
- If the offense fumbles the ball in their own end zone

As a result, the team on defense receives 2 points, and gets the ball back on their own 20 yard line.

\*Also, a player having intercepted a pass or received a punt in the end zone cannot be tagged in the end zone for a safety unless he/she has previously crossed the plane of the end zone with the ball.

### **NO BLOCKING:**

Blocking is considered a movement that impedes a defensive player’s pursuit of the ball carrier, unless movement is to avoid personal injury (as interpreted by the referee). The movement needs not be intentional. This also includes the deliberate or unintentional movement of limbs by a stationary player. More leeway may be given to players moving at the time of a reception, but this is up to the referee’s discretion.

A violation of this rule will result in the play being called dead and the ball being spotted at the point of the infraction, or the ball carrier’s position at the time of the infraction, whichever is in favor of the defensive team. If the referee considers the blocking incident excessively aggressive, a 15-yard penalty will be assessed from

the spot of the ball (or to the one-yard line if the offense is less than 15 yards from their own goal line). Depending on the severity of the infraction, the offending player may be ejected from the game and/or league.

### **PASS RUSHING:**

The defense may not pursue the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage until completing a five-second count, at **normal speaking cadence, as determined by the referee**. After the five second count is completed, any number of defensive players may rush behind the line of scrimmage. If the defense rushes prematurely, the offense may either play the down over or decline the penalty.

If the ball changes possession in the backfield (i.e., handed off) the defense may rush in immediately. If the offense fakes a change of possession and the defense advances behind the line of scrimmage, no foul will be called if the defense returns to in front of the line of scrimmage immediately and continues the five-second count.

### **TACKLING:**

A player is “tackled” by removing at least one flag from the ball carrier’s belt. If a flag is removed by a defensive player, prior to full possession (as determined by referee), the offense is not considered tackled, and play continues with no infraction charged. **Players may not leave their feet in attempts to "tackle" the ball carrier (leaving one’s feet does not include tripping, stumbling or losing one’s balance, as determined by the referee)**. If a player is determined by the referee to have dived after a flag and succeeded in pulling a player’s flag, such a play will be considered “no tackle” (similar to pulling a flag early). The play shall be allowed to continue with the second flag now having to be pulled in order for a tackle to occur. The purpose of this rule is for the safety of both the offensive and defensive player

### **FLAG GUARDING:**

An offensive player may not avoid a tackle by guarding their flag. Flag guarding consists of the following:

1. pushing an opponent’s hand away from the flag;
2. pushing an opponent or stiff arming;
3. lowering an arm or hand to shield the flag;
4. dipping the shoulder;
5. jumping

If a player is called for flag guarding, the play is dead at the point of the infraction.

**Spinning to avoid a tackle is legal, as long as none of the above listed events occur simultaneously.**

### **FIRST-DOWNS:**

A first down may be achieved by advancing the ball to or past the 50 yd line cone

**No diving over the line will be allowed. A ball spotted on the line shall be considered a first down.**

A first down may also be awarded due to a defensive foul (i.e. interference). A defensive foul is the only way that a team may be awarded more than one first-down.

### **FOURTH DOWN AND PUNTING**

At each fourth down, the offensive team must state whether its plans to “punt” or “go for it”.

If a team decides to “punt”, the defense will get the ball at the defense’s 20-yard line. There is no actual punting taking place.

If a team elects to “go for it” and fails to gain the yardage necessary for a first down, the defense will take possession of the ball at the point of the 4<sup>th</sup> down tackle.

### **TURNOVERS:**

#### **FUMBLES**

If a player fumbles the ball, the play is dead at the spot where the player loss possession. If a player on either team takes possession of the ball, prior to the ball hitting the ground, possession goes to that team and that player may attempt to advance the ball towards their own end zone. There is no stripping of the ball.

### INTERCEPTIONS

Interceptions of forward passes may be advanced. If a defensive and offensive player both appear to have possession or are struggling for possession, the reception is granted to the offense. **On an interception, if a defensive player uses excessive force to tackle the receiver, half the distance of the goal will be awarded.**

### **FORWARD PROGRESS/BREAKAWAY RULE:**

Once, in the referee's judgment, a player has stopped their forward progress, the referee shall whistle the play dead.

Rationale: The purpose of this league isn't to not score or show up the other team. If you have a chance to score and want to, do so. If you don't want to score, step out of bounds. Showing up another team, whether intentionally or unintentionally, by standing still inches from the goal line doesn't look good and could be perceived as poor sportsmanship.

## **SCORING**

### POINT AFTER TRY:

After a touchdown is scored, each team is allowed a PAT for either 1 or 2 points. If a team chooses to try for **1 point**, the ball will be placed **halfway between the goal line and the 20 yd line (orange cone)** from the goal line. If a team chooses to try for **2 points**, the ball will be placed at the 20 yd line\_(at the orange cone). You CANNOT run back a PAT that is for 1 point, but you CAN if it is for 2 points. **On an interception of a 2-point attempt, if a defensive player uses excessive force to tackle the receiver impeding them from scoring, the 2-points will automatically be awarded.**

The clock does not stop during a PAT, except within the last two minutes of a game when the clock is stopping. A PAT is allowed if the touchdown was scored as time ran out to end either half.

### TOUCHDOWNS AND POINT AFTER ATTEMPTS:

The ball and both flags must break the plane of the goal line in order for it to count as a touchdown or extra point. No diving over the line will be allowed.

## **PENALTIES**

Normal rules and penalties of the NCAA apply unless exceptions have been made herein. Some common examples of penalties include:

### Illegal Contact

- In cases where the person(s) acting as the offensive lineman, initiates any contact (at the ref's discretion), it will be ruled a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and we will replay the down.
- If this contact is deemed excessive by the ref, an **"unnecessary roughness"** penalty of 10 paces/yards can be assessed in addition to the "illegal contact". Thus, making the total penalty 15 paces/yards.
- If contact occurs down field, it will be ruled a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and we will replay the down. (penalty may be declined by offense)
- Other forms of illegal contact include: Tripping, Clipping, Contact to the head, Contact with a player already on the ground, Deliberately running into a player, Tackling, & Throwing a player to the ground

### Offsides – (Offensive)

- 5 paces/yards, play is ruled dead immediately, no option to decline, down is replayed

### Defensive Offsides/Illegal or Early Rush

- 5 paces/yards – **Offense has the option to decline the penalty and accept results of play.**
- If offsides is called on a gender play and the offense ACCEPTS the penalty then next play does not have to be a gender.

### Offensive Picking/Interference

- The offensive team may not initiate a pick while in motion. 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage, loss of down (i.e. if it was 1<sup>st</sup> down during the penalty, it is now 2<sup>nd</sup> down).  
*\*A "pick" occurs when an offensive player attempts to block, or "screen", a defensive player away from the man he is guarding, thereby freeing up that offensive player.*
- If a catch is made after a clear pick, it will be ruled "no catch". 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- Remember: some acceptable incidental contact will occur while running routes and within the normal course of play and will not be called.

### Unnecessary Roughness

- This includes any illegal tag such as grabbing jerseys or excessive pushing.
- This will result in a 10 pace/yard penalty from the point of infraction AND automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.
- **Extreme roughness will result in ejection from the game and/or the league if deemed necessary by the referee and league staff.**

### Defensive Pass Interference

- Ball is spotted at the point of the infraction and offense is awarded an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down
- If the pass interference is in the end zone, the ball comes out to the 1 pace/yard line and it will be 1<sup>st</sup> down.
- **Offense has the option to decline the penalty and accept results of play.**

### Defensive Holding

- 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, replay down
- Offense can accept or decline penalty

### Defensive Checking

- 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, replay down
- The "bump and run" will not be allowed
- No player may initiate contact at the line of scrimmage
- There is no 5-yd Bump Zone

### Miscellaneous

- If the player calling the cadence does not receive the snap, the play will not stand and result in a 5 pace/yard penalty and repeat the down
- One person must call the cadence and receive the snap – violation of this will result in a 5 pace/yard penalty and repeat of down
- Silent snaps will not be allowed – 5 pace/yard penalty, repeat of down
- The QB may not be in motion and then receive the snap – this will result in a 5 pace/yard penalty and repeat of down
- If the QB crosses the line of scrimmage and then throws a forward pass it is an illegal forward pass and it will be a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
- If the ball hits the ground on the snap for either a pass or running play, the play is "dead", the ball is spotted where it hit the ground. It is also a loss of down.
- Loss of down penalties which occur on 4<sup>th</sup> down will result in change of possession.

## **TIE BREAKER POLICY TO DETERMINE SEEDING FOR PLAYOFFS:**

1. Any team with a forfeit is automatically seeded lower
2. Head to Head (only if all tied teams played each other and equal number of times)
3. Record against common opponents (only used if all teams do not play each other)
4. Strength of schedule (Total winning percentage of all teams played against, cannot be used if all teams play ALL the same teams).
5. Record against each common opponent starting at the top, one team at a time.
6. Coin Toss

If multiple teams are tied, go through criteria one at a time until one team is determined stronger (or weaker) than the rest, then start at the top again with the “new” tied teams.

#### **Extra Note on Sportsmanship:**

At no time should there be any verbal or physical abuse directed toward an opposing team, an opposing player, or a game official. Such actions will not be tolerated. Teams can and should expect the game official to be impartial and fair. Game officials should expect teams to be respectful of calls. Nothing good will come out of making a scene. If you believe there has been a misinterpretation of a rule or if there has been a lack of enforcement of rules, teams should adhere to the ruling at that moment and then contact me after the game to discuss the matter. Remember, however, that sometimes a player’s perception of what is or of what is not being called can be clouded, as most players believe they are not at fault while others are always at fault. Don’t let the competitive nature of the game get in the way of rationale thinking. If a player takes matters into their own hands and does something foolish, they will have lost their chance to make their case without having to face the consequences.

#### **EJECTIONS:**

An ejection will automatically result in a one game suspension, which must be served during the team’s next scheduled game, unless appealed to and reversed by the League Director. If the individual ejected from the game cannot be identified, the team captain will serve any suspension.

**Boston Ski & Sports Club reserves the right to add, delete or modify any rule at any time.**