



JFL SCRIMMAGE RULE BOOK

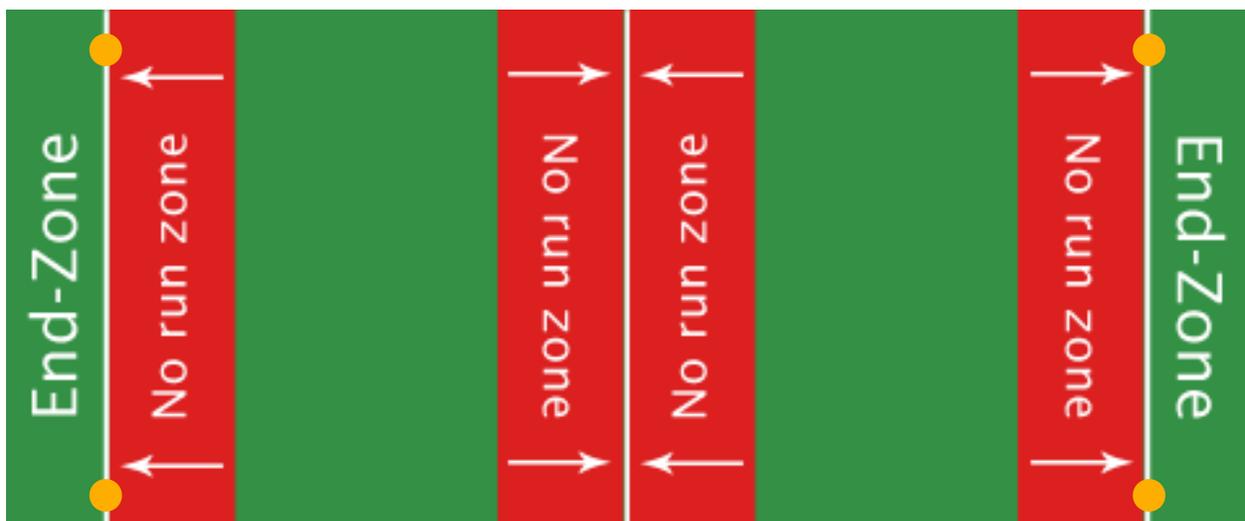
Welcome to the JFL,

The JFL 2020 Scrimmage season will be a bit different but we have the same intention of flag-tactic fun. The JFL scrimmage season is a recreational activity designed to promote physical health and fun for our youth. Please read and understand the rules so your child has the opportunity to have the best experience possible.

JFL Founder/Commissioner - Kyle White

JFL Co-Commissioner - Kris White

- **No-run Zones** are in place to prevent power run plays. While in the no-run zones (a 5-yard zone before midfield and before the end zone), players cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays.
- Each offensive drive approaches **TWO NO-RUN ZONES** in each drive (one zone at 5 yard from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
- Pylons (orange circle in diagram below) represent the front of the end-zone.



Playing Equipment

- The official JFL jersey must be worn during scrimmage play, this includes coaches and players.
- Jerseys must be tucked into the players' shorts or pants so that the players' flags do not get covered by the jersey.
- Players must be wearing belt with three flags when on the playing field.
- Flags must be on the outside of the players' clothing and easily accessible by the opposition. Thus, 2 flags must be on the sides of the players' body and 1 on the backside of player.
- No cleats are allowed. Rubber sole running, cross trainer or basketball shoes are recommended.
- No hats with brims or bills are to be worn by players during play.
- No jewelry may be worn during play.

Playing Rules

- At the initial start of each scrimmage the Field Monitor, Coaches and a designated player from both units meet at midfield for the coin toss or plays papers, rocks, scissors to determine who gets ball first.
- The winner of the coin toss may choose to either start with the ball at the beginning of the first half or second half.
- The loser of the coin toss chooses which end zone to defend at the beginning of the first half.

- The offensive players takes possession of the ball at the 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield for a first down. Once the offensive players crosses midfield, they only have four more plays to score a touchdown.
- If the offense fails to score, the defensive unit takes possession and they starts a new offensive drive from its own 5-yard line.
- If the offense fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
- **PLEASE NOTE: *The only time a change of possession takes place from the spot of the ball is after an interception.*** Otherwise if the defensive unit stops the offensive unit by way of exhausted downs the new drive must start at the previous defense now on offenses own 5 yard line.
- Change directions in the second half. Possession changes to whomever started the scrimmage on defense.
- Coaches are allowed to be on the field pre-snap for 6U & 8U age divisions. All other age groups the coach must be off the field when the ball is snapped to avoid **penalty and loss of down.**
- **6u and 8u play with five players on the field** with a coach QB on offense. If a side cannot field five players, the coaches may agree to play four vs four.
- **10u-14u play with six players on the field**, but may agree to play with five only if one side is unable to field 6 players.
- Play begins with an offensive player snapping the ball between their legs to a coach or player quarterback. The quarterback may either be behind the snapping player or in the shotgun formation. **6u age groups may forgo this procedure, thus allowing each possession to start with the ball in the coach quarterback's hands or side hike.**

- Balls snapped improperly will result in a dead ball at all ages and result in a loss of down. **6U Players are the only group allowed to snap the ball from the side.**

- After a play ends, the offense has 30 seconds after the referee spots the ball to run the next play. One warning will be given before a delay-of-play penalty is enforced. These scrimmages will go fast so please keep the pace of play moving along, we strongly discourage stalling especially in the younger age groups.

- A play is considered dead when:

- o The ball carrier's flag is pulled or falls off;

- o The ball carrier steps out of bounds;

- o The ball carrier's knee, back or shoulder touches the ground whether it be during the normal flow of play or via a penalty;

- o The ball is fumbled;

- o A touchdown or safety is scored;

Clear path rule : In the event that a player is tackled, tripped or pushed down from behind and the player has a "clear path" to the end zone (meaning there were no other defenders in front of the runner) that player will be awarded a touchdown no matter where the infraction occurred on the field. This call is at the discretion of the referee or field monitor.

COVID-19 UPDATE at conclusion of scrimmage each unit will go to their respective sidelines and face each other socially distanced and simultaneously waive and say good job.

Scrimmage Time

- **Running Clock:** Each scrimmage consists of two 20 minute halves with a 1-2 minute halftime.
- The play clock stops only for timeouts or injuries.
- **Two timeouts** per half allowed. One 30 second and one 1 minute, **which do not carry over from the first half to the second.**
- **NO OVERTIME DURING SCRIMMAGE SEASON**

Score keeping (optional during scrimmage season)

- If scoring keep score by ones, this includes safeties and touchdowns.
- A touchdown is scored when the body of a player possessing the ball crosses the goal line.
- If a scoring player is considered to have been wearing illegal flags, the touchdown will be taken away and re-do down and player is deemed an ineligible target the next play.
- A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone.
- After a safety there is no change of possession and the offense restarts at the five yard line.

Offensive Rules

- The 6u and 8u divisions have five receivers and a coach quarterback.
- The 10u - 14u division has a player quarterback and five receivers.
- Running and passing plays are allowed, but the offense may not use a running play when the line of scrimmage is within a no-run zone.
- In the 10u, 12u & 14u divisions the QB is allowed to run the ball past the line of scrimmage once within every set of 4 downs. Therefore the QB could potentially run the ball two times during a drive if the offensive unit gains a first down.
- Players are not allowed to be targeted, passed to or hand-offed to on two consecutive plays, even if the player drops or fumbles the ball. This includes 10u, 12u and 14u quarterbacks.
- We recommend that coaches sub out the targeted player since that player is an ineligible target the next play so technically the defense could opt to not guard that player and double-up on another eligible target. This rule also promotes consistent substitutions and helps provide as equal as possible playing time distribution.
- If a substitution is not possible due to not having the standard amount of players on the field, the coaches may agree to forgo this rule at the time of the lapse but it will same rules for each side.
- Offensive players may go in motion before the play is run, but the player may not be moving towards the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped;
- After the ball is snapped, quarterbacks have an allotted amount of time to throw the ball, hand the ball off, or run the ball themselves. Field monitor will be counting out load.

- 6u quarterbacks have a **seven second clock**.
- 8u, 10u, 12u and 14u quarterbacks have a **five second clock**.
- 11u and 14u quarterbacks may choose to run as the five second clock expires, but only once per set of downs.

- At the expiration of the passing clock in the 6u and 8u divisions, the play is whistled dead and is considered a quarterback sack. The next play occurs at the original line of scrimmage, thus no yardage is lost.
- At the expiration of the passing clock in the 10u, 12u and 14u divisions, all defenders are eligible to rush, thus there is no automatic quarterback sack. The QB can use its' one run within 4 downs, scramble behind the line of scrimmage until flag pull or until play is called dead.
- Coach quarterbacks may not advance the ball past the line of scrimmage or receive a pass or hand-off.
- 10u, 12u and 14u quarterbacks must still follow the "one run per set of downs" rule even when they are rushed by defense.
- 10u, 12u and 14u quarterbacks are not exempt from the rule disallowing a player advancing the ball past the line of scrimmage two plays in a row.
- 10u, 12u and 14u quarterbacks may throw the ball at any time as long as there is an intended targeted player, thus there is a 5 yard penalty for intentional grounding.
- In the event of a sack in the 10u, 12u and 14u division, the next play is spotted where the quarterback's flag was pulled.
- Flea-flicker plays are only allowed in the 10u, 12u and 14u divisions as long as the initial player possessing the ball has not crossed the line of scrimmage.

- All fumbles are considered dead balls and play resumes at the yard marker where the ball was fumbled. There is no change of possession on fumbles.
- If an offensive player fumbles the ball in their own end-zone it is considered a safety.
- The ball is spotted where the offensive players' feet were when their flag was pulled, not where the ball was located. Thus, stretching the ball in front of them will not earn the player extra yards.
- Jumping or diving to advance the ball is illegal and the player is considered down where he/she leaves his feet.
- An offensive player may jump over a defensive player on the ground to avoid a collision.
- Jumping or diving to catch a pass is also allowed.
- Offensive players may utilize spin moves.
- Offensive players may not stiff-arm or guard their flags with their hands.
- Offensive players may not block defensive players at any time. This includes any sort of basketball-style pick.
- On a pass play, the receiver only needs one foot in-bounds for it to be a successful reception.
- Passes may be backwards or forwards; however, backwards passes are considered laterals. Thus if the ball is not caught on a lateral, the next play begins where the ball touches the ground. If the ball lands in the offensive end-zone, it is considered a safety.
- Direct hand-offs, pitches and laterals are only allowed behind the line of scrimmage.
- Players receiving a hand-off/pitch/lateral behind the line of scrimmage are eligible to throw a pass.

- Shovel passes are allowed.
- Direct snaps to running backs are allowed in all divisions.

Defensive Rules

- 6u and 8u defense have five players on the field, while 10u 12u and 14u age group have six players.
- All forms of defensive alignments are allowed, thus any form of zone defense as well as man-to-man are permitted.
- Double coverage of a player is considered legal.
- Defensive players may not cross the line of scrimmage at any time before a play begins.
- When the quarterback distributes the ball to another player behind the line of scrimmage, all defenders are eligible to rush.
- In the 10u, 12u and 14u divisions, all defenders are eligible to rush at the expiration of the 5 second passing clock no matter what the circumstance.
- Defensive players may return interceptions for touchdowns.
- Defensive players may not recover fumbles whether the ball is on the ground or in the air, nor may they strip the ball from the offensive players' hands after the offensive player has gained possession of the ball.
- Defensive players may intercept tipped or bobbled passes as long as the receiver did not have complete possession of the ball.
- Defensive players may not hold on to the offensive players clothing in order to stop their progress and subsequently pull their flag.

- Incidental grabbing of clothes is determined at the discretion of field monitor. If the grabbing was deemed to be purposeful, it is considered a holding infraction and a 5 yard penalty will be assessed.

Penalties

Offense “No Run Zone” infraction Loss of down

False start 5 yards from line of scrimmage

Delay of play 5 yards from line of scrimmage

Too many players on the field 5 yards from line of scrimmage

Holding 5 yards from spot of infraction

Flag guarding 5 yards from spot of infraction

Illegal flag placement 5 yards from where the ball was received by the responsible player.

Illegal forward pass Loss of down

Pass interference 5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

Defense Offside/illegal rushing 5 yards from line of scrimmage

Pass interference Ball placed at the spot of the infraction / automatic first down Too many players on the field 5 yards from line of scrimmage

Holding 5 yards from spot of infraction

Tackling/Pushing a player down 15 yards from spot of infraction

Code of Conduct

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR. If field monitor or any JFL staff witness any acts of unsportsmanlike conduct including but not limited to ... Punching, Kicking, Elbowing , Pushing, Spitting, Swearing, or Taunting the play will be stopped a 15 yard penalty enforced and the offending individual may be ejected from the playing field at the discretion of the JFL. If this behavior occurs again the player, coach or parent will be ejected from the premises and may be expelled from the JFL.

Field monitors may also assess 15 yard penalties for any players, coaches or parents interference with or move any of the field markers, end- zone pylons or midfield scoreboards.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: A player dove across the goal line, is this a touchdown? **A:** No. A player is considered down once they leave their feet and the ball is spotted where the player's feet were. Stretching the ball in front of you does not gain the ball carrier extra yards.

Q: Can a player on the ground catch a ball and then get up and run? **A:** No. Once a player's knee, back, butt or shoulder touches the ground, play is considered dead.

Q: Can we run the ball two times in a row? **A:** In most circumstances, yes. You can run the ball as many times as you'd like as long as you're not located within one of the two no-run zones. In the 10u, 12u and 14u, the quarterback can only run the ball once every set of downs, but he/she may hand off as many times as they would like as long as they are not in the no-run zone.

Q: My 10u, 12u or 14u quarterback just ran for a first down, can that same quarterback run the ball again on the very next play? **A:** No. Even though the quarterback run is available on the very next play, individual players may not advance the ball past the line

of scrimmage on two consecutive plays. Thus, a quarterback run would be legal if the runner was a different player altogether.

Q: My player just ran an option style play and lateraled the ball to another player. Is this allowed? **A:** As long as the lateral occurred behind the line of scrimmage, yes. However, if the lateral occurred in front of the line of scrimmage, the play is considered dead where the lateral occurred.

Q: Why does the JFL enforce a clear path rule **A:** When players pursue ball carriers from behind they have the propensity to dive at that players flags. When this occurs there are multiple ways that severe injuries could occur to either player. By enforcing this rule, we hope to curtail the amount of injuries that occur during the season.

Q: The ball carrier ran out of bounds, does this stop the clock? **A:** No, the JFL official clock continues to run unless a coach calls a timeout or the referee deems it necessary in the case of injury or an unusual circumstance.

Q: My receiver dropped the pass, can I pass to him again on the very next play? **A:** No, a player may not be targeted on consecutive plays in all situations. He/she may throw a pass on the next play, but may not advance past the line of scrimmage.

Q: Can my 6u or 8u player receive a snap directly from the center? **A:** Yes, in this situation the player may either run the ball or even act as the QB; however, as soon as the player receives the ball the defense may cross the line of scrimmage.

Q: My defensive player just intercepted the ball and had his flag pulled. Do we start an offensive possession with the ball at its own five yard line? **A:** If the player had his flag pulled in their own end zone or before their own five yard line, yes. However, if the player made progress past their own five yard line the possession begins where that player's flag was pulled.

Q: Can the defense recover a fumble? **A:** No. There are no fumbles in the JFL. If an offensive player drops the ball or tries to lateral it after gaining possession, the ball is considered dead as soon as it leaves his or her hands.

Q: Can the QB receive the snap from center and then immediately hand it right back to the center? **A:** No. The center must come out of his/her stance and turn around to receive some form of pass to be able to advance the ball.

Any questions or concerns contact us at info@thejfl.com