



Football League of Bowie

CO-ED FOOTBALL RULES

Check the website (www.footballbowie.com) for team schedules and field locations/directions. Rules may be updated by management as needed.

SEASON

- The regular season consists of 8 games.
- Playoffs will follow the regular season. The management will determine play-off structure and number of eligible teams. Not all teams will make it to the playoffs. Playoffs are based on win/loss record.
- *First Season Only: Regular Season will consist of 6 games. All teams will make the Play-Offs and play two additional games, for a total of 8 games.*

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Please check the rain-out line for field closings: 301-262-6200 (Options 5, 2)
- All games cancelled due to inclement weather will be rescheduled for the end of the season.
- In the event of game cancellations, sponsors will still offer food and drink specials to league members.

GAMES

- Games will consist of two 20-minute halves and will last approximately one hour.
- All games will be played on Saturdays at Fox Hill Park in Bowie.

TEAMS

- MINIMUM OF 12 PLAYERS PER TEAM. (NO MAXIMUM)
- During the game each team will field 8 players (5 men and 3 women).
- There must be at least 6 players present at game time. A team may play 4 men and 2 women. There is no maximum number of female players allowed. (8)
- If a team does not have eight players present, the opposing team can still play with eight.
- If a team does not have enough players to play the game, they may recruit from other league teams, if approved by the opposing Captain before the start of the game. *No one outside of the league can fill in if teams are short players.*
- To prevent a FORFEIT, teams must have at least 6 players

Eligible Players

- Must be at least 21 years old
- Must be on a team roster
- Must be on only one league team
- Must have signed the release waiver
- Must wear their league-issued jersey

If your team uses an ineligible player you will forfeit all games that were affected by his or her play.

CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND SPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- Captains are responsible for their teams; please make sure all of your team members have read and understand the rules and agree to abide by them.
- Please make sure all trash is disposed of properly and cleared off the field after your game.
- Only Captains and Co-Captains are allowed to talk to the officials regarding game rules or calls.
- Captains are responsible for their team's actions on the field.
 - Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated in the league and will be dealt with swiftly.
 - The team player will be given a warning for unsportsmanlike behavior.
 - After the first warning, any player on the team that the Referees deem to be unsportsmanlike or conducting a flagrant foul will be ejected for that game.
 - Excessive Unsportsmanlike conduct will result in players being disqualified from the league for the remainder of the season. NO REFUNDS.
 - Fighting will not be tolerated.

Unsportsmanlike conduct examples:

- Intentionally kicking the ball at any opposing player.
- Intentionally swinging an arm, hand, or fist at any player.
- Disrespectfully addressing an official, line judge, or other player.
- Using profanity, taunting, insulting, or vulgar language/gestures.
- Physically contacting a game official, before, during, or after the game.
- Fighting an opponent.
- Punching, striking, stealing, or attempting to steal the ball from player in possession.
- Tripping an opponent.
- Contacting an opponent on the ground.
- Throwing the runner to the ground.
- Deliberately running into a defensive player.
- Clipping an opponent.
- Tackling the runner.

FORFEITS

There is a **\$50 FINE** for forfeited games. You must give us 24-hour advance notice or the fine will be enforced. You must pay this fine before your team will be allowed to play your next game. This is to prevent scheduling problems for the league with refs and other teams.

OFFICIAL PLAYING FIELD (SEE ATTACHED FIELD DIAGRAM)

The official playing field is 100 yards long and 40 yards wide

- 10-Yard End Zones
- 80-Yard Playing Field
- Yard Lines are marked at the 10-Yard Lines and then in 20-Yard Increments through midfield.
- The ball will start on the 10-Yard Line at the start of a half or after a score.
 - No Kick-Offs

RULES OF THE GAME

CAPTAINS MEETING AND COIN TOSS

- The captains will meet with the refs before the start of the game for the Coin Toss.
- The Visiting Team calls the Coin Toss.
- The winner of the pre-game toss shall have the first choice of options:
 - Offense or Defense
 - (i.e., whether you'd like to start with the ball first or second half)
 - Which Goal to Defend
- Teams switch sides at the half.

START OF GAME

- The clock starts at the predetermined game time.
- If any team is not ready by game time, the forfeit rules come into effect.
- Teams must have a minimum of 6 players to start the game or a forfeit is declared.
- The ball will start on the 10-Yard Line.

GAME CLOCK

- The game clock will be kept by the Head Referee.
- The game shall consist of two 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime.
 - Each team is allowed two 1-minute time-outs per game.
 - The game clock will run continuously for the first half (unless it is stopped for a time-out or Referee's time-out).
 - The game clock will run continuously for the second half until the last two minutes (unless it is stopped for a time-out or Referee's time-out).
 - During the final two (2) minutes of the 2nd half the clock will stop for:
 - Incomplete passes.
 - Complete passes or runs where the player with the ball goes out of bounds.
 - Scoring plays, including PAT's.
 - Penalties.
 - First downs (until the ball is set in play by Referees ready to play whistle).
 - Referee's Time-outs/Player Injuries
 - Change of Possession
 - The offensive team must be ready for play 30 seconds after the end of the previous play.

LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

- The line of scrimmage will be marked.
- The ball will start on the 10-Yard Line. (At the start of a half, after scores, and after a touchback)
- The line of scrimmage is reestablished after each play based on the location of the ball carrier when he/she is tagged or goes out of bounds.
- The offense must have at least five players at the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped. The players must be set for at least one full second before the ball is hiked.
 - There may be one player in motion before the ball is snapped. He/she may move parallel to the line of scrimmage only.

SCORING

Scoring is the same as college or pros with a few exceptions.

- Touchdown = 6 points
- PAT's (Conversions)
 - From 10-Yard Line = 2 points
 - From 5-Yard Line = 1 point
 - If the defense intercepts a PAT (1- or 2-point attempt), it may be run back to the opposite end zone.
PAT Return = 2 points
- Safety = 2 points
 - When the offensive team is tagged for a loss in its own end zone, the result of the play is a safety.
- There are no field goals.

FIRST DOWNS

- There will be two – first down lines on the field (at the 30-Yard Lines).
- Teams have four downs to earn a first down.
- A player must cross the first down line with the ball and at least one foot to earn a 1st down.
- Once a team crosses the first down line (30 Yard Line) on the opponents' side of the field, they have four downs to score.
 - If a team crosses a first down line and is subsequently penalized, they will not receive another first down for crossing that line.
- Players are not allowed to dive (leave their feet) for forward progress.

RECEPTIONS/ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS

- A player must have one foot in bound or in the end zone to be considered a reception.
- Players may not go out of bounds and then return to make a catch.
- Players must be in the huddle to be considered eligible receivers.
 - A team may not make player substitutions after the huddle has broken.

GENDER RULES

Teams MUST use a female player as an Operative Player within three (3) consecutive plays.

- If a team does not use a female player after three consecutive plays, a penalty will be assessed.
 - The penalty is a loss of down and 5 Yards. The Gender Play must be attempted on the next down.
- The cycle using a female player within 3 consecutive plays DOES NOT stop after a TD.
 - If a team runs 2 male plays in a row and scores a TD on the 2nd male play, a female MUST be used as an Operative Player for the PAT.
- On fourth down, the gender rules do not apply if the offense chooses to punt.
- The Gender count resets after each change of possession.

Examples of Accepted Gender Plays:

- A female receives a forward pass from a male quarterback.
- A female attempts a forward pass behind the line of scrimmage.
- A female receives a hand-off, lateral, or snap behind the line of scrimmage and is used as the primary runner (and advances past the line of scrimmage).
- A female is the intended receiver in the eyes of the Referee.
- A female plays quarterback and is tagged by the defense.
- A female catches a deflected pass.

Examples of NON-Gender Plays:

- A female plays quarterback and laterals or hands off to a guy.
- A female passes to a male behind the line of scrimmage (and he does not advance beyond the line of scrimmage).
- A female plays center and snaps to a male quarterback.
- A female quarterback takes a knee.
- A female quarterback intentionally grounds or spikes the ball.
- A male quarterback runs the ball because female receivers are covered.
- A pass thrown by a male quarterback that is intentionally thrown at the feet or out-of-reach of a female receiver (this is a judgment call by the Referee).
- Any play intended to be a gender play by the offense that fails to comply with the gender rules.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- There is no immediate rushing or “blitzing”.
- The defense cannot rush the quarterback until after a five-second count has been completed.
 - The Line Judge will announce the rush count, and then yell, “GO!”
 - The defense cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the Line Judge yells “GO!”
 - If the quarterback makes a hand-off, lateral, or pass, the rush count stops and the defense is allowed to cross the line of scrimmage.
- The quarterback cannot run the ball unless rushed by the defense.

PLAYING DEFENSE

- Man-to-man and zone defense are both allowed.
 - Man-to-man defense is required for males during forced gender plays.
 - Women may play man-to-man or zone defense during forced gender plays.
- On forced gender plays where the offense uses a female for a quarterback:
 - The play is run as normal and the defense can use man-to-man or zone defense.
- On forced gender plays where the offense uses a male as a quarterback:
 - The men must play man-to-man defense. Zone defense is not allowed.
 - The offensive male receivers may not leave the line of scrimmage.
 - The defensive male players must stay within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage.
 - One male defensive player is allowed to play as a safety, but cannot make a play on the ball until it is touched by a female player. This male defender is not allowed to intercept the ball.
 - Other male defensive players may leave the line of scrimmage as soon as a female receiver touches the ball.
 - Men are not allowed to cover women on a gender play unless the offense has more female players than the defense.
 - Male defenders within their 5-yard zone may put their hands up to block a pass and play the ball, but they may not leave the 5 yard zone until the ball is touched by another offensive player.

BLOCKING AND CONTACT

- For safety purposes, blocking is not allowed at the line of scrimmage, in the backfield, downfield, or elsewhere.
- Aggressive contact is not allowed.
- “Bump-and-Run” is not allowed.
- It is recognized that some contact cannot be avoided, but all players must attempt to avoid contact with other players.
- Moving picks are regarded as illegal blocking.
 - An offensive player without the ball is not allowed to run with the receiver/runner to block defenders. Offensive players without the ball must stand still to avoid blocking or picking.

CHANGE OF POSSESSION

Change of ball possession occurs for the following reasons:

- Scores.
- Interceptions.
- If the offense fails to score or earn another first down.
- If the offense punts the ball on fourth down.
- After a failed fourth down attempt.
 - The opposing team will get the ball at the previous line of scrimmage.
- After a score.
 - The opposing team will get the ball on its own 10-yard line.
- Fumbles cannot be turned over unless the fumble is caught before the ball hits the ground.
 - If the fumbled ball touches the ground, it is dead at that point and the line of scrimmage is moved there.

PUNTS

On fourth down, the Referee will ask the offensive team captain to select if they wish to punt or go for the first down. Once a decision is reached, the Referee will announce the decision to the defense.

- The kicking team must have 4 players on the line of scrimmage during a punt.
- The kicker must catch and kick the ball immediately in one continuous motion.
- The receiving team must have five players on the line of scrimmage during a punt.
- Neither team may advance beyond their respective lines of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
- Punts that have not been touched by a player are NOT dead while bouncing on the ground.
- When a punt touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, it is dead at that spot and belongs to the receiving team.
- If the ball is caught in the air by the receiving team, they may advance the ball.
 - Punts may be returned out of the end zone.
- There are no fair catches. Fair catch signals shall be disregarded.
- Kickers may not punt barefoot.

NO FAKE PUNTS

PLAY STOPPAGE

Play continues until:

- A defensive player tags the ball carrier with 2 hands (the ball is considered part of the body).
 - The ball carrier goes out of bounds.
 - The ball carrier scores a touchdown or PAT.
 - The ball carrier's knee or elbow touches the ground.
 - The defense scores a safety, touchdown or intercepted extra point run back.
 - The ball touches the ground (incomplete pass, fumble, or dropped punt).
 - The Referee sounds a whistle.
 - If an inadvertent whistle is blown after the receiver has caught the ball or is running, the ball is dead at that point.
 - If an inadvertent whistle is blown before the quarterback has thrown or passed the ball, or the ball is in mid-air, the down will be re-played.
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STANDINGS AND PLAY-OFFS

TEAM STANDINGS

- Each team is awarded two points for a win, one point for a tie and zero points for a loss.
- In the event of a tie during the regular season, overtime will not be played.
- The teams with the top point totals during the eight-week regular season will advance to the play-offs.
- In the event of a points tie, strength of schedule will govern standings.
 - If there is still a tie, teams will be randomly drawn from a hat.
 - League management will determine the number of teams that will make the play-offs.

PLAY-OFFS

- Teams that make the play-offs will be seeded according to their regular season standings.
- The highest seed will face the lowest seed.
 - In the event that teams have the same point total during the regular season, teams will be seeded according to a random selection.
- Play-offs will be single elimination. Winners during the playoffs will advance to the next round.
- Regular season rules will apply except for the following:
 - In the event of a tie during a play-off game, each team gets one possession (four downs) to score a TD and then a 1- or 2-point PAT. This possession starts at the 10-Yard Line.
 - The higher seeded team chooses whether they want to play offense first or second.
 - The quarterback cannot run unless rushed.
 - Once that team either scores, turns the ball over, or fails to score after 4 downs, the other team will then have the same opportunity to score.
 - If the score is still tied after the first round, a second round is played. The team that was on offense at the end of the first round will remain on offense for the start of the second round.
 - This format will continue until one of the teams is ahead after an entire round.
 - Penalties will be applied per regular season rules.
 - An intercepted lateral or pass may be returned to the opposite end zone by the defensive team for two points.

PENALTIES DETAILED IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT