



CMYFCC



2026 FLEX RULE BOOK

ROSTER CONSTRUCTION

Players

- Players are assigned to rosters by League Age (their age on July 1, 2026)
- Players that are 5yo or 6yo on that date are eligible to play 6U Flex
- Players that are 7yo or 8yo on that date are eligible to play 8U Flex
- It is an association's discretion to place a League Age 5yo or 6yo on an 8U Flex team, but it is not recommended
- Flex players cannot dual rosters; examples: a League Age 6yo cannot play 6U Flex & 8U Flex. Additionally, a player that is on an 8U Flex roster CANNOT also play 8U Tackle
- All Flex players need to complete the AYF paperwork and be apart of a team's certified book and roster to be eligible to play. Players are not allowed to "guest play" on other teams other than their own.
- It is recommended that the minimum roster for 6U Flex is 11 players and the minimum roster for 8U Flex is 13 players.
- It is recommended that the maximum roster for 8U Flex not exceed the low 20s – this will allow players to receive ample playing time in games

Coaches

- It is recommended that each Flex team, regardless of level, has at least three coaches on their certified roster
- There is a maximum of six coaches on a certified Flex roster
- All certified coaches must complete the AYF coaching certifications
- There needs to be at least one CPR certified coach on each Flex roster
- Coaches are not allowed to stand on the field or the sideline and record the Flex game – all recording must be in accordance with the CMYFCC technology policy

PLAYER EQUIPMENT

- All players must wear a Flex football style helmet and set of shoulder pads
- All player must have a mouthguard and cleats to participate in games
- Players need to have three flags during the game; left side, right side, and back
- All players must wear matching jerseys
- All jerseys need to be tucked in and cannot be used to cover flags

GAME FORMAT

- 6U Flex is 7 vs 7
- 8U Flex is 9 vs 9
- 2 - 25 minute halves; 5 minute halftime
- The ball will start play on the 40 yard line (start of game/after a score/after a turnover)
- Teams get 3 downs to make a 10 yard first down outside of the 'Redzone' (10 yard line and in)
- Teams get 4 downs to score a touchdown if a new set of downs started inside the 10- yard-line.

COACHES ON THE FIELD

- It is recommended to have 2 coaches on the field for offense at both 6U Flex & 8U Flex; 1 coach to call plays and the other to ensure players are lined up correctly – this ensures that plays are snapped in timely manner
- 6U & 8U defenses can have a maximum of 2 coaches on the field
- Teams are required to have 1 roster certified adult on the sideline at all times
- Coaches (on offense & defense) need to be out of the way prior to the snap; defense behind the deepest player – offense behind the Quarterback
- Once the Quarterback is in position to take a snap; shotgun or under center, all coach communication between the offense and defense is required to stop – coaches that continually violate this rule will be sent to the sideline by a referee
- Each team is entitled to 1 - 1 minute timeout per half
- All coaches should meet pre-game to discuss rules/expectations and any specific items that need to be addressed
- Free substitution shall always be in effect
- If the offense subs, the defense has a chance to sub
- During games, coaches should be discussing issues/concerns with other coaches and referees in a calm, respectful manner and correcting players
- A Head Coaches that is ejected from a Flex game receives a 2 week suspension with no appeal – An Assistant Coach that is ejected from a Flex games receives a 2 week suspension with no appeal AND the Head Coach also receives a 2 week suspension
 - The penalties for Flex coaching ejections are severe due to the age of the players and the level of role modeling that these coaches should be exhibiting for the players. Flex football is an instructional division and there is no official score. There is no reason to yell at referees. If there are concerns, speak to the referee in a calm, respectful manner or find your site administrator.

SCORING

Touchdowns

- Offense scores a touchdown (7 points) via running or passing play
- Defense scores a touchdown (7 points) by returning an interception to the 40-yard-line prior to the intercepting defender's flag being pulled
- There are no PAT conversions
- There are no fumble recovery touchdowns or safeties

OFFENSIVE PRE-SNAP ALIGNMENT/RULES

6U Flex

- There must be 4 players on the line of scrimmage at all times; 3 linemen and 1 eligible receiver

8U Flex

- There must be 5 players on the line of scrimmage at all times; 3 linemen and 1 eligible receiver on each side of the formation

Receiver Alignment

- Eligible receivers on the LOS must be at least 5 yards from the Guard
- An Eligible receiver who is off the LOS can be aligned next to the Guard

Linemen Alignment

- All offensive linemen, except for the Center, must be in a 2-point-stance
- In 6U Flex, the Center must snap the ball between their legs starting in Week 3. A "Side Snap" is allowed in Weeks 1 & 2 only. The snap must be continuous; meaning it must pass directly and immediately from the center to another player on offense.
- In 8U Flex, the Center must snap the ball between their legs starting in Week 1. The snap must be continuous; meaning it must pass directly and immediately from the center to another player on offense.
- The Center must have both feet on the LOS
- The Center can double team block, but must initiate block with hands
- Guards must be able to touch the center with their outstretched hand – this is the maximum distance for offensive line splits

BLOCKING

- When engaging a block, the blocker (linemen or skill position) must break down and engage the defender with hands first
- Initiating blocks with your shoulder will be considered an Unnecessary Roughness Penalty

- Players should be taught appropriate blocking skills; using hands, creating angles, and moving their feet, and not just simply throw or push players to the ground

QUARTERBACK PLAY

- Quarterbacks can take the snap either under center or in shotgun
- 6U Flex - If the Quarterback muffs the snap and the ball hits the ground, the play is dead and the team replays the down. Teams received 1 'redo' per series before a loss of down is incurred.
- 8U Flex - If the Quarterback muffs the snap and the ball hits the ground, the play continues if the Quarterback immediately picks the ball up. If the Quarterback does not immediately pick the ball up, the play is dead, and the team replays the down. Teams received 1 'redo' per series before a loss of down is incurred.
- Quarterbacks are able to run the ball but cannot run directly between the tackles at any time or any reason.

WIDE RECEIVER PLAY

- Players need to get one foot down in bounds for a completion
- A simultaneous catch between a receiver and defender is awarded to the offense and dead at the spot of the catch.

Pre-Snap Alignment

- No defender can align directly over the center
- The Defensive Ends need to line up on the outside shoulder of the Offensive Guard, and their first step must be to the outside of the Offensive Guard

6U Flex Specifics

- All defenders must be 5 yards off the LOS when the offense has the ball outside of the 10-yard-line except the Defensive Ends
- All defenders can be 3 yards off the LOS when the offense has the ball inside the 10-yard-line except the Defensive Ends
- Mandatory Defensive alignment: 2-4-1

8U Flex Specifics

- All defenders must be 5 yards off the LOS when the offense has the ball outside of the 10-yard-line except the Defensive Ends and Defensive Backs who are in press coverage on a Wide Receiver that is on the LOS
- All defenders can be 3 yards off the LOS when the offense has the ball inside the 10-yard-line except the Defensive Ends and Defensive Backs who are in press coverage on a Wide Receiver that is on the LOS
- Defensive alignment: 2-6-1

Press Coverage

- There is no press coverage in 6U Flex
- Press coverage is allowed in 8U Flex
- Defensive Backs can only press Wide Receivers who are on the LOS
- Wide Receivers, who are off the LOS, cannot be pressed and the players covering them must be 5 yards off the LOS outside of the 10-yard-line, or 3 yards off the LOS inside the 10-yard-line.

Blitzing

- Blitzing is defined as adding a single rusher beyond the allowed 2 Defensive Ends
- There is no blitzing in 6U Flex and defenders (other than the Defensive Ends) cannot cross the LOS until the ball is handed or thrown to an eligible receiver/running back
- 8U Flex is allowed 1 blitz per set downs – only 1 player is allowed to blitz at a time
 - The player blitzing must start 5 yards off the LOS when the ball is outside of the 10-yard-line, or 3 yards off the LOS when the ball is inside the 10-yard line
- In 8U Flex, defenders (other than the Defensive Ends and the blitzing player) cannot cross the LOS until the ball is handed or thrown to an eligible receiver/running back

FUMBLES, DEAD BALLS, & INTERCEPTIONS

- All fumbles are dead balls at the spot of the fumble
- All interceptions can be returned for a touchdown by the defensive team by crossing the 40-yard-line
- If the intercepting team scores a touchdown, they are awarded 7 points, and the team that threw the interception gets the ball back at the 40-yard-line.
- If the intercepting team cannot return the interception for a touchdown, they receive the ball at the 40-yard-line.
- Defenders cannot intentionally attempt to force a fumble (needs to be corrected by coaches in real time)

A-GAP RULES (APPLIES TO 6U & 8U FLEX)

- The A-Gap is considered the gaps on either side of the Center
- The defense cannot line up directly over the Center
- The defense cannot immediately engage the Center
- Defensive Ends must make their first step/move outside of the Guard. Once making that first move outside, that Defensive End can then move towards the A-Gap
- Linebackers/Defensive Backs are allowed to blitz the A-Gap when starting 5 yards off the LOS (outside the 10-yard-line) or from 3 yards off the LOS (inside the 10-yard-line)

MISC. RULES & PROCEDURES

Referees

- All Flex games will have a minimum of 1 referee
- Referees are responsible for ensuring the game goes smoothly. Referees are not present to throw flags at every play or keep score
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring players are adhering to Flex rules and need to work together to ensure the game is being played the correct way
- If players are not playing the game correctly, it is your responsibility as the coach to address and correct the issues.

Team Equipment

- No player backpacks or duffle bags are allowed on the sideline and must be kept off the sideline per CMYFCC rules
- Teams are allowed to have 1 team bag and 1 cooler on the sideline
- Coaches are not allowed to wear backpacks on the field or on the sideline
- There are no electronic devices allowed on the sideline; i.e. cell phone, tablet, headphones, etc.
- Coaches should keep a copy of the rules in their team bag for game reference

DEFENSIVE MERCY RULE

- If a defense records 5 Quarterback sacks in a game, they are no longer allowed to go past the LOS either on a run or pass play for the remainder of the game, and cannot cross the LOS until the ball crosses the LOS

PENALTIES

- All penalties will be enforced using NFHS guidelines (same rules used in Massachusetts tackle games)
- Penalties against the offense, when the ball is snapped from the 40-yard-line, result in a loss of downs
- Flagrant fouls are a one-strike warning and then the committing player is ejected from the game upon the second flagrant foul. They result in a 15-yard penalty.
 - Intentional Tackling
 - Unnecessary Roughness
 - Charging (leading with your shoulder to block downfield or when running with the ball)
- Stiff Arming by an offensive player with the ball IS allowed – all stiff arms need to be a direct strike to the defender's shoulder/chest.
- Stiff Arms to a defender's face will result in a Flagrant Foul – Unnecessary Roughness Penalty
- Stiff Arms where the offensive player winds up and makes contact to any part of the defender's body will result in a Flagrant Foul – Unnecessary Roughness Penalty

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