

MOL FLAG FOOTBALL

Quick Reference Guide — Rules & Regulations

A plain-language guide for players, coaches, parents, and referees

Each rule has a color-coded icon to quickly signal whether it's a key rule (blue), something allowed (green), a warning to watch for (amber), or something illegal (red)

1. The Basics

9 **9 players per team** on the field. You need at least 7 to play — otherwise it's a forfeit.

In a forfeit situation, coaches are encouraged to play anyway — MOL is about the kids, not the records.

FLD **80-yard field** with 10-yard end zones. Yard lines are marked at the 20s and midfield.

FLAG **It's flag football — no tackling, ever.** A play ends when a defender pulls the ball carrier's flag, on an incomplete pass, fumble, or the player stepping out of bounds.

10Y **First downs** require advancing 10 yards, measured by chains — just like regular football.

NO K **No kickoffs.** After any score, the other team starts at their own 20-yard line.

MIN **All players must play at least half the game.** Free substitution is allowed.

COIN **Coin toss before the game.** Winner picks offense or defense. Loser picks which direction to attack. Sides switch for the second half.

SPOT **Ball is spotted where the flag is pulled** — not where the ball is when the flag comes off. If players flags fall off during a run, the player is down when touched with one hand by an opposing player on wither the body or the ball.

TD **Scoring at the goal line:** The ball carrier must have one foot on or past the goal line before the flag is pulled. Reaching the ball over the line doesn't count if no foot has crossed.

COACH **One coach per team** may be on the field. Once the ball is snapped, that coach must stay silent until the play ends.

2. Offense

Formation Rules

5+ **At least 5 players on the line of scrimmage.** The rest must be in the backfield — at least one step back.

2 **Two players** must line up within one yard of the center.

HUD **Huddle required** before each play. "Sleeper" plays are illegal. No-huddle offense is fine.

30s **30-second play clock.** Referees give one warning for slow huddles, then call delay of game.

Who Can Catch the Ball?

AFC **AFC & NFC divisions:** Everyone except the two guards next to the center can catch passes.

P12 **PAC12 division:** All players are eligible receivers.

Running the Ball

NO **No charging.** The ball carrier must try to avoid contact — you can't intentionally run through defenders.

NO **No flag guarding** — can't cover your flag with your hand or the ball, or knock a defender's hand away.

A runner is down when: their flag is pulled, the flag falls off and a defender touches them with one hand, they step out of bounds, or any body part other than hands or feet touches the ground.

Passing

LOS **Must throw from behind the line of scrimmage.**

NO **No intentional grounding.** If the QB throws the ball away to avoid a sack — not toward any receiver — penalty is called and the ball is spotted at the point of the throw with a loss of down.

Blocking

OK **Legal block:** Open hands, arms extended, contact only on the front of the defender's body between the waist and neck.

NO	Illegal: Blocking below the waist, in the back, above the shoulders, tripping, holding, or grabbing jerseys.
SCRN	Away from the line of scrimmage: "Screen" blocks only — shield the defender, don't run through them. Overly aggressive blocks or knocking someone off their feet = penalty.
FUM	No fumbles in MOL. Once a player has the ball, if it's dropped or knocked loose, the ball is dead right there — no recoveries.

3. Defense

Alignment Rules

NO	No defender directly over the center.
2YD	Defensive backs must line up at least 2 yards from wide receivers. No "bump and run" coverage.
OFF	Offsides: If a defender crosses the line before the snap, they can get back without penalty — unless they touch an offensive player, do it intentionally, or gain an advantage.

Pulling Flags

OK	"Squaring up" to pull both flags at once is legal — as long as the defender stops first and doesn't tackle.
NO	No shoving out of bounds near the sideline — must still try to pull the flag. Forcing someone out = treated as a tackle.
TD	Intentional tackle to prevent a touchdown = automatic touchdown awarded to the offense.

Pass Rush Rules

NO	No roughing the passer — running into the QB is always illegal.
NO	No "canning the center" — striking the center while their head is down during a shotgun snap.

Pass Defense

NO	No bumping receivers at the line of scrimmage.
NO	Can't alter a receiver's route while the ball is in the air.

INT **Interceptions in the end zone** can be returned, or if downed there, the ball comes out to the 20-yard line.

4. Scoring & Time

How to Score

Touchdown	6 points
Extra point — 1 pt try (ball spotted 3 yards out)	1 point
2-point conversion (ball spotted 5 yards out)	2 points
Safety	2 points
Defensive interception on PAT attempt	Dead ball — attempt fails

Game Clock

4Q **4 quarters × 12 minutes each.** The clock runs continuously (running time).

STOP **Clock stops in the final 2 minutes of each half** on: plays out of bounds, incomplete passes, first downs (until chains reset), and penalties. Also stops for a 2-minute warning each half.

3 TO **3 timeouts per team per half**, 45 seconds each.

Punts

TELL **Tell the ref first.** A team must declare a punt to the referee before doing it.

FREE **"Free punt" — neither team can cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.** Both teams must have at least 5 players on the line.

5. Equipment

Required Gear

YES **League-issued jersey** — must be worn during games.

YES **League-issued flags** — worn over the jersey.

YES **Mouthguard** — required during games, strongly encouraged at practice.

YES **Shorts with no red** — flags are red, so red clothing causes confusion.

Not Allowed

NO **Screw-in cleats** — rubber molded cleats only.

NO **Hats or jewelry** of any kind.

NO **Casts** — not allowed even if wrapped.

Before every game, players line up for a referee equipment inspection. Make sure your player is ready before game time.

6. Penalties

Penalty Sizes by Division

Division	Minor Penalty	Major Penalty
PAC12	3 yards	5 yards
NFC / AFC	5 yards	10 yards

No MOL penalty causes an automatic first down. A first down only happens if the penalty yardage is enough to cross the 10-yard marker.

Full Penalty Chart

Penalty	Type	Assessed from	Down
Delay of game	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Illegal formation	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Offsides	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Illegal procedure	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Illegal forward pass	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Loss of down
Intentional grounding	Minor	Spot of foul	Loss of down
Ineligible receiver downfield	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Charging	Minor	Spot of foul *	Loss of down
Flag guarding	Minor	Spot of foul *	Loss of down
Offensive pass interference	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Holding / illegal hands / block in back	Minor	Line of scrimmage	Repeat

Block below the waist	Major	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
"Run-through" block	Major	Line of scrimmage *	Repeat
Tackling	Major	Spot of foul	Repeat
Defensive pass interference	Major	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Roughing the passer	Major	Line of scrimmage	Repeat
Personal foul / rough play	Major	Spot of foul *	Repeat

** If the foul occurs behind the line of scrimmage, the penalty is assessed from the line of scrimmage instead.*

Rough Play — Extra Consequences

- 1st** **First offense:** player may be removed for the rest of that offensive or defensive series.
- 2nd** **Second offense or very serious first offense:** player removed from the game and reported to the League Commissioner for possible additional discipline.
- TD!** **Intentional tackle to stop a touchdown =** automatic touchdown awarded to the offense.

7. Overtime & Playoff Tiebreakers

Overtime Rules

- FLIP** **Coin flip before overtime.** Winner picks offense or defense for the first possession.
- 4** **Each team gets 4 plays** starting from the 10-yard line to try to score. After scoring, they choose 1-point or 2-point conversion.
- TIE** **If still tied, play another overtime period.** Teams alternate who goes first. Regular season: max 3 overtime periods. Playoffs: keep going until someone wins.
- INT** **Turnover ends the possession** — the team loses any remaining plays in that overtime period.

Playoff Tiebreaker Order

1. Most wins
2. Fewest losses
3. Head-to-head record (only if all tied teams played each other)
4. Fewest points allowed in head-to-head games (only if all tied teams played each other)
5. Fewest points allowed against all common opponents
6. Fewest points allowed in all regular season games

7. Coin flip

If more than two teams are tied, once a winner is determined, the tiebreaker logic resets and is applied fresh to the remaining tied teams.

8. Girls Specific Rules — Campolindo 2026 Season

These rules apply only to games played at the Campolindo stadium during the 2026 season, for girls' divisions. All general MOL rules, coaches' code of conduct, and referee expectations described elsewhere in this guide still apply unless modified below. Where a girls' rule differs from the boys' rule, the girls' rule governs for these games.

The Basics

CAMPO	Campolindo Stadium. 2026 games are played here, with two contests going on at the same time.
7	7 players per team on the field. 5 players minimum to play a game.
15/30	First downs are gained when the ball crosses the 15-yard line or the 30-yard line, in either direction.
NO K	No kickoffs. The ball is placed at the 5-yard line or the 40-yard line instead.
FLD	45-yard field with 5-yard end zones, using the high school sidelines (painted).

Offense

4+	At least 4 players must be on the offensive line of scrimmage. No player is required to line up near the center, and the ball must be snapped from the ground.
QB	QB runs: one direct run allowed per 4 downs — unless the defense blitzes, in which case the QB may run unlimited times. <i>A direct handoff to a RB counts as a direct run. A pitched ball counts as a pass, not a run.</i>
OK	All offensive players are eligible receivers.
OK	Intentional grounding is allowed. Ball must be thrown out of bounds or attempt out of bounds. Ball is spotted at the LOS, in the event the ball is thrown in the field of play with no player in the vicinity the ball will be placed at the spot of the throw. This is a referee judgement call.
LOS	Forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

NO	No blocking in MOL girls' football. Any screen must be set by a player who is stationary when near the ball carrier — whether behind the LOS or in the open field.
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Defense

OK	Pass rushers may raise their arms to knock down or intercept a pass.
10YD	Contact with the QB's arm results in a 10-yard penalty.
7YD	One rusher allowed , and they must line up at least 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.
BLZ	Blitzing is unlimited — up to two players at a time — but both blitzers must line up at least 7 yards from the LOS before blitzing.
INT	End zone interceptions may be returned. If not returned, the ball is placed at the 5-yard or 40-yard line.
NO	No bumping or impeding receivers. The defense is not required to have any players line up on the LOS.

Scoring and Time

4Q	4 quarters of 12 minutes each, running clock — except during the last two minutes of each half.
STOP	Clock stops for timeouts, incomplete passes, out-of-bounds plays, and any penalty. It does NOT stop on a first down. Clock also stops at the 2-minute warning.
2TO	2 timeouts per team, per half.
PUNT	No punts. A coach “punting” simply moves the ball to the 5-yard or 40-yard line — the on-field coach must declare it.

Equipment

NO	No midriff cutting of jerseys at the waist. Sleeves may be cut off.
NO	Red shorts are banned , including shorts with red stripes.

Overtime and Playoff Tiebreakers

Identical to the boys' divisions — see Section 7 for the full overtime and tiebreaker rules.

Penalty Sizes by Grade

Grade	Minor Penalty	Major Penalty
5th–6th grade	3 yards	5 yards
7th–8th grade	5 yards	10 yards

How Girls' Penalties Differ from Boys'

Most penalty rules are identical to the boys' game. The differences for girls are below.

Rule	Girls Ruling
Intentional grounding	Not a penalty, if thrown towards or out of bounds
Ineligible receivers	None — all offensive players are eligible
Charging	MAJOR penalty (referee discretion) — ball carrier must try to avoid defenders
Illegal contact with QB's arm	MAJOR penalty
Illegal pass rush (under 7 yards off LOS)	Minor penalty
Snap timing	A legal rush can begin with movement (snap) of the ball