

COACHING 6U NFL FLAG

6U and 7U NFL FLAG is about fun and first skills. Kids can run anywhere, and nobody rushes the passer until a handoff. You can stay on the field during the play. A dropped snap gets 1 do-over. Keep drills short, make them games, and let every kid try every spot.

You don't need to know football. Most new coaches are parents who said yes. This guide gets you through your first practice and your first game.

WHO

Coaches of NFL FLAG 7U and 6U (1st grade and below) teams.

AGES

Ages 5 and 6

LEVEL

7U and 6U, 1st grade and younger

FORMAT

5v5

YOUR FIRST PRACTICE: 60 MINUTES

0:00

10 min

Warm-up: Warm-up games

Two quick games that get legs moving and teach stopping, starting and holding the ball.

Drills: Red light, green light, Flag relay

10:00

20 min

Skill stations: Skill stations

Split into two groups with a coach or parent at each station. Swap after 10 minutes.

Drills: Flag tag, Catch and tuck

30:00

10 min

Team period: Team period: one play

Walk the offense through one play, then jog it, then run it. Practice the snap first.

Drills: Snap and release

40:00

15 min

Scrimmage: Scrimmage

Coaches on the field with both teams. Rotate quarterback and center every two plays so everyone gets a turn.

55:00

5 min

Cooldown: Cooldown and huddle

Easy stretching in a circle, then name one thing each player did well.

Full plan with coaching points: breakawaydata.com/coaching-flag-football/practice-plans/5-6-year-olds/


Game day:

stat it free in the BreakAway app

Scan, or visit breakawaydata.com/stats

POSITIONS IN 5V5

Carry 7 to 10 players so everyone rests and everyone plays. Rotate quarterback and center in practice: every player should know both.

OFFENSE

Center

Snap the ball to the quarterback, then releases into a short route. In most 5v5 rulebooks the center is an eligible receiver, so they are your safety valve.

Quarterback

Calls the play, takes the snap and either hands off, pitches or throws. Teach a quick read and a quick release: the rush is coming.

Running back

Lines up beside or behind the quarterback, takes handoffs and pitches, and runs a short route on pass plays.

Wide receivers (2)

Line up wide, run the deeper routes and stretch the defense. One usually runs a go or post to pull the safety away.

DEFENSE

Rusher

Waits until the ball is handed off behind the line. Then she runs at the ball carrier and reaches for the flag.

Cornerbacks (2)

Cover the wide receivers. Stay between her and the end zone. Pull the flag the moment she catches it.

Linebacker

Plays the middle: watches the center and running back, takes away short throws and fills fast on runs.

Safety

The last line. Stays deep, keeps everything in front of her and is the one who must not miss a flag pull.

WHAT TO TEACH FIRST

1. Flag pulling

Eyes on the hip, not the ball. Grab the flag, lift it high and shout so the official sees it. Pulling is the whole defense at this age.

2. Route basics

Two routes only: run straight (the go) and run to the sideline (the out). Use cones so they know where to turn.

3. Snap and handoff

Slow and steady wins. A clean snap and a handoff to the belly matter more than any play design.

4. No-contact habits

Hands go to flags, never to shirts, arms or backs. If two players are about to bump, both slow down. Praise it every time.



9 RULES THAT CHANGE HOW YOU COACH (1 OF 2)

In our words, with the rulebook section to check. Your league can change some of these, so confirm before the first game.

1. A coach on the field, before and after the snap

You can line players up and stay out during the play. Keep a safe distance from the ball. Point to spots; don't move kids by hand.

NFL FLAG §XVIII.b



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-flag-pull

2. A dropped snap gets one do-over

If the snap hits the ground, the down is replayed once; a second miss in a row uses the down. Snapping is still worth practicing every week.

NFL FLAG §XVIII.b



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-flag-pull

3. Defenders start 5 yards off

Before the snap the defense lines up at least 5 yards back, 3 when the ball is inside the 5. That cushion gives your offense room to complete the handoff.

NFL FLAG §XVIII.b



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-flag-pull

4. Run anywhere, and nobody rushes

No no-run zones, and defenders wait for a handoff before crossing the line. Your quarterback can take her time and look for a receiver.

NFL FLAG §XVIII.b



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-flag-pull

5. Your quarterback does not run

The rule: Handoffs, pitches and laterals only behind the line. One forward pass. It must start behind the line and cross it. The quarterback can't run with the snap. No center sneak.

Practice handoffs every week. The quarterback can't run the ball past the line herself. Every run starts with a handoff or pitch behind the line. You get 1 forward pass a play, thrown from behind the line. On game day, a dropped handoff costs you the play.

NFL FLAG §X.2-3; §XI.1-2



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-rush

6. Four downs to midfield, three to score

The rule: 4 downs to cross midfield. Then 3 downs to score.

Midfield is the first down. Past it, the offense has three tries to reach the end zone. Call plays by series, and save your best play for the down you cannot waste.

NFL FLAG §I.3



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/move-the-ball



9 RULES THAT CHANGE HOW YOU COACH (2 OF 2)

7. Flag guarding costs a down

The rule: It means blocking a flag pull. That covers a stiff arm, or dropping your shoulder, arm, hand, head or the ball in the way. A jersey over the flags counts too. Penalty: 5 yards and the down.

Teach ball carriers to run with arms free and shirts tucked. Stiff arms are a foul. So is dropping a shoulder or covering a flag. On game day, it costs 5 yards and a down.

NFL FLAG §XIV.7; §XVII.iii



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-penalty

8. Nobody blocks, nobody screens

The rule: No blocking or screening. No holding the ball carrier or running through them.

Receivers clear space with routes, not bodies. Teach them to run past defenders, never to set up in a defender's path.

NFL FLAG §X.8; §XIV.2



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-penalty

9. Ball carriers keep their feet

The rule: No jumping, leaping or hurdling. The ball is spotted where you left the ground. Spins and jump cuts are fine. Defenders may dive to pull a flag or make a catch.

No jumping or hurdling to avoid a pull; spins and jump cuts are fine. Defenders may dive, but at youth ages we still coach them to stay up and pull.

NFL FLAG §IX.6j; §X.6-7; §XIV.2



Watch how to stat it:
breakawaydata.com/breakaway-u/record-a-flag-pull



GAME-DAY CHECKLIST

- ☐ A flag belt and flags for every player, plus spares, in a color that does not match anyone's shorts.
- ☐ Mouth guards, water and a first aid kit.
- ☐ Game balls in the size your ruleset sets for this age.
- ☐ Your roster with jersey numbers, and who starts at quarterback and center.
- ☐ A short play sheet: three or four plays, one for the goal line, one for the try.
- ☐ A quick word with the other coach and the official on the rules you are playing.
- ☐ Someone to stat the game in the BreakAway app. Families follow along, and every player gets a stat card.
- ☐ A list of who plays where, so every kid tries every spot this season.

FOR YOUR LEVEL

Mouth guards and the ball

Every player wears a mouth guard on the field, and the ball should be sized for small hands.

NFL FLAG §III.1

THE OFFICIAL RULEBOOK

NFL FLAG Official Playing Rules (Revised March 24, 2025)

https://cdn.mediavalet.com/usca/rcx/DgBttnoMFUCXWCBQE3YN2w/XMiAtpBTH0er4fUrKeYJAQ/Original/NFL_Flag_Rulebook_21423.pdf

STAT YOUR GAMES FREE IN BREAKAWAY

- Statting is free.
- Pick the NFL FLAG 5v5 preset in the app. Change what your league does differently. Then stat every game.
- 100,000+ ruleset combinations, so your league's rules fit.
- Every game you stat gets a live game center families can follow from anywhere. You also get a box score and a stat card for every athlete. Team leaderboards, season totals and recaps come with it.

