

# FLAG FOOTBALL QUICK START GUIDE



Flag football helps athletes discover the fun of the game, without contact, and builds skills that prepare them for tackle and other sports. It's popular – 25% more kids play today than 2015 – and affordable – 62% less costly for parents than the average youth sport. From local organizations to national ones, anyone can easily raise the flag in their community.

## ENROLL WITH USA FOOTBALL

As football's National Governing Body, our staff is committed to supporting you every step of the way.

### What do you get when you enroll?

#### USA Football Support

- Flag Program Operations Manual
- Customer Service
  - Start-Up and League Account Assistance
  - Ordering Equipment
  - Team and Schedule Management
- Marketing Assistance
  - Check out the details in **Step 6**
- Eligibility for USA Football Flag Grants

#### Program Resources

- Non-Contact Implementation Guide
- Football Development Model League, Parent and Coach Resources
- Youth Coach Course
- Playbooks and Practice Planners
- Rulebooks for League and Tournament Play

**► TIP:** USA Football has launched a "Starting a Flag Football Program" webpage that provides all the resources you need in one place. Access the page [here](#).

## 1 CHOOSE A GAME TYPE(S)

There are lots of ways to play flag football! At USA Football, we recommend playing in-line with international competitions.

### 5v5

- USA Football 5's are based on IFAF's official flag rules and designed for age-appropriate league or tournament play in the United States.
- The IFAF 5's Flag rules are recognized as the official rules for international competition.

### 7v7

- USA Football 7's mirrors USA Football 5's with adjustments made for the additional two players.

Click here for more information about the different flag rules. [usafootball.com/national-team/rules](http://usafootball.com/national-team/rules)

## 2 CREATE A BUDGET

Use this checklist of items to consider when creating a budget.

**Tip:** Use the final budget to help determine the registration price to offset these expenses.

- Field rental
- Insurance
- Officials and staff fees
- Coach and official certifications
- Website hosting and program marketing
- USA Football equipment package
- Field equipment

Go to Step 8 for equipment details!

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## 3 OBTAIN INSURANCE

Make sure your organization maintains proper insurance as an initial layer of protection for you and your directors, employees, volunteers, participants, and other constituents.

USA Football requires enrolled organizations to provide and maintain insurance consistent with the Organization Services and Recognition Agreement. This will allow programs to become eligible for the League Excellence Program.

The latest requirements can be found at [usafootball.com/insurance](http://usafootball.com/insurance).

At a high level, insurance categories that organizations may want to evaluate include:

- Commercial General Liability Insurance
- Participant Accident Insurance
- Directors & Officers Insurance
- Inland Marine Insurance
- Crime Insurance
- Sexual Abuse & Molestation Insurance

You know your program best, and insurance professionals will be able to take your knowledge of your program and build an appropriate and comprehensive insurance program to cover your activities and the associated risks.

## 4 SECURE FIELD SPACE

You can run several youth flag fields on one standard football/soccer field (120 x 53-70 yards). Field sizes vary by Game Type.

**\*Note:** Additional fields may be required depending on format and number of teams in your program. (See Step 1 for Game Types.)

## 5 ESTABLISH YOUR BRAND

Making your flag program known around your community is important. This starts with creating your program name and logo.

### Naming Tips:

- For programs affiliated with a national organization: incorporate the type of organization into your program name.
- Example: John Smith YMCA Flag Program.



This helps parents understand who is running the program.

- For independent programs: create a name that differentiates you from other programs.

**\*Tip:** Stay away from generic names such as Flag Football Program. This does not distinguish your program and can confuse parents.

### Logo Tips:

- Make It Unique.
- Research other program logos in the area to make sure yours is different. This way parents easily recognize yours from others.
- Don't make it in Microsoft Word.
- If you can't find a local graphic designer, try a website like **Freelancer** or give it a shot yourself on a website like **Canva**.

**\*Notes** If your flag program offers a coed or girls division, call that out in your marketing with both words and images, so parents know their daughters are welcome to play, too!

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## 6 MARKET YOUR PROGRAM

Create a strategy and use these tools to easily market your league/program to your community. Make sure to have your logo and league/program clearly shown.

- Flyers
- Posters
- Signage
- Social Media
- An Up-to-Date Website
- Web Ads

## 7 BUILD OR UPDATE YOUR WEBSITE

We live in a world where everything is accessible online. Make sure your website is up-to-date and is easy to navigate.

What to include on your website:

- Contact Information
- Registration Forms and Fees
- Schedules
- Coaching Information
  - Who are the coaches?
  - Trained? Through who?
- Team Rosters
- Addresses of Where Games and Practices are Held
- Equipment Information
  - What is provided and what is not
- Information About the League
  - Game Style Offerings
  - Affiliated with anyone?
  - Social Media Links

## 8 PURCHASE EQUIPMENT

Order the items mentioned in **Step 2** according to how many players and teams there are in your league.

Here's a checklist to fill in:

### a. Player equipment

USA Football's Equipment Package includes:

- Jerseys
- Flag Belts
- Footballs

### b. Field equipment

- Pylons
- Cones and Discs
- Penalty Flags\*
- Field Signage\*
- Officials Shirts and Hats\*

*\* Items are not requirements but suggested enhancements*

## 9 EDUCATE AND TRAIN COACHES

Athlete safety is everyone's priority. Having trained coaches tells the community and the players that not only does their safety matter, but also their development.

Check out USA Football's **Youth Coach Course** or become a Coach Training Program **Member** for even more support and resources

USA Football makes offering flag easy whether you need help starting it, selling it or setting it up for growth.

**READY TO ENROLL?**

Have more questions before getting started? Reach out to **support@usafootball.com** to get those answered.