

WHY AMERICAN FOOTBALL?

SCHOOL
GAMES



What are the benefits of playing my sport?

Tag-based American Football is a fast, fun and inclusive invasion game that engages the core skills of throwing, catching, movement and agility in a non-contact version of one of the most fascinating and popular sports in the world. It develops both physical and intellectual skills and rewards teams based on all the School Games Values.

With different formats to choose from the sport offers opportunities for everyone, regardless of age, ability or experience. The sport also requires very little equipment beyond a suitable ball, cones and tag belt.



YOUTH
SPORT
TRUST

Spirit of the Games: Excellence through competition.

How does your sport exemplify these values?



Passion: With its thoughtful preparation of plays and its explosive action, this sport requires a passionate approach and can touch even the most disaffected youngsters. Players should be encouraged to celebrate together every time they score.



Respect: The sport demands players follow instructions from both coaches and officials – players need to respect each other and be very disciplined to do well.



Honesty: Fair play and sportsmanship is held in high regard in American Football. For example, teams should wear different colour tag belts from their shorts and all tops/jerseys should be tucked in.



Self-belief: The game lends itself perfectly in building confidence and self-belief even in the least confident individual due to the set play nature of the sport providing multiple opportunities to progress and improve.



Teamwork: American Football can only work if it is played by a team working together – every player can make a difference to the result!



Determination: In American Football since every play is a set play, players have to show determination and grit to make enough yards to earn a first down or touchdown even if at first they don't succeed!

Priority competitions:

Name of the competition: Flag football festival (suitable to Y3-Y6 & Y7-9) 5v5 (primary & secondary).

Age group: Year 3-6, Y5/6, Y7/8 and Y9/10 (mixed or single-gender) Intra School Competition, Inter School Competition.

Who runs it: Run by School Games Organisers or teachers with Young Leader support

How to enter: Contact your local SGO who will co-ordinate school games competitions in your area. Alternatively you can contact schools@britishamericanfootball.org to be put in touch with your nearest national league team.

When: American Football can be played all year around, however is particularly suited to Spring and Summer terms.

Next steps: National and regional competition opportunities are in the development stage. – Please visit the BAFA website www.britishamericanfootball.org/schools for further details.

Young leader/Officials courses/ qualifications available

Flag Leaders Award. A practical award for 14-18 year olds.

Flag Football for Teachers award.

There is also a self-guided school-based young leaders course for 11-14 year olds to teach the fundamentals of team management and officiating.

For more information visit:

<http://www.britishamericanfootball.org/coach-and-teach/the-qualification-structure#.XOb12U1LIU>

Where do young people go next (from school to club/community)?

Students can further their playing experience by joining one of the many National League Clubs that currently exist. This could be to continue playing flag football or it might be to transition into full-contact youth or junior football playing in the BAFA Competitions held between April - August.

For more information about your local cadet (U13), youth (U16) or junior (U19) team please use 'teams' page at: www.britishamericanfootball.org

Signposted competitions:

National League under 13s (Cadet) competitions

Under 13s (there is no minimum age), mixed gender. Local, regional and national competitions. BAFA through national league clubs.

To find their local club, schools should direct students to: www.britishamericanfootball.org/

BAFA are currently looking to establish regional events in the summer term that will cater for all age groups with both festival & competitive elements. Schools must have participated in a local event & be registered with BAFA via the link at: www.britishamericanfootball.org/schools

Further competition opportunities also exist through the NFL Schools UK Flag programme & the Jacksonville Jaguars JagTag schools programme. For more information about the NFL programme please visit:

<https://www.nfl.com/uk/flagfootball>

and to find out more about JagTag please visit:

<https://www.jaguars.co.uk/jagtag>

Relevant web links:

www.britishamericanfootball.org/schools

<https://www.nflflag.com/>



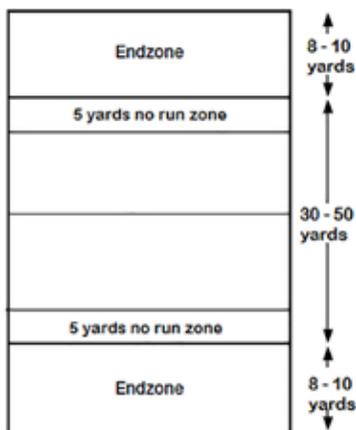
Primary or Secondary:
Primary & Secondary

Name of competition:
5v5 competition

Age Group:
Y5/6, Y7/8, Y9/10

How to enter:
Via SGO

Tournament format:
Central venue with a round-robin and knockout round format



Think Inclusively!

Flag American Football is a simple, fun and accessible team sport that develops the core skills of throwing, catching, movement and agility. It can also progress into a very tactical game that develops organisational, analytical, quick-thinking and concentration skills.

Simple rules:

5-a-side Flag Football is a mixed non-contact game played with flag/tag belts (same belts as tag rugby). It is best played with a junior/youth American Football. Blocking, contact and kicking are not allowed.

Mouth guards are recommended for all competitive play.

OBJECTIVES:

- Offensive players try to advance the ball on a series of set plays by either throwing or giving the ball to a player to run with to try to score a touchdown (TD).
- Defensive players try to stop the offense's progress by tackling the ball carrier or stopping passes – either by knocking the ball away mid-flight or catching it themselves.
- The offense has 4 attempts (downs) to move the ball past the half-way line, or score a TD.
- Starting from their own 5 yard line, if the offense get past half-way in 4 downs or less then they get another 4 downs to try to score a TD.
- If the offense fails to achieve the above (halfway line or end zone) possession of the ball passes to the defense and they start from their own 5 yard line as the new offensive team.
- A TD is worth 6 points. Following a TD the offense must decide to go for a 1 or 2 point conversion. A 1 point play starts 5 yards from the end zone. A 2 point play is 10 yards from the end zone.
- Squads are between 5-12 per team with 5 players on the field.
- The offense has a Quarterback (passer) and 4 other players made up of Receivers (catchers) or Running-Backs (runners). Only the Quarterback (QB) is allowed to pass.

PLAYING AREA:

- The ideal playing area should be a rectangle 70 yards long by 25 yards wide (can be reduced). This includes an area at each end known as an 'end zone' which is 10 yards long. Mark area using 50 cones. Designate end zones using different colour cones.
- Mark 5 yards from each end zone with cones.
- A half-way line 25 yards from each end zone should also be marked as well as a 5 and 10 yard line away from each end zone.
- The offense start each play from the "line of scrimmage". This is an imaginary line that extends from sideline to sideline through the ball.

TIMINGS:

- Each game is split into 2 halves. Each half lasts 10 minutes (running-clock).
- The clock stops with 2 minutes left in each half. Players should be informed.
- A play clock of 25 seconds starts when the ball is spotted.

For more information on 'rules' and 'penalties' (including advanced rules for secondary schools) please download the 5v5 schools card from:
www.britishamericanfootball.org/schools

Roles for young people:

A game of flag football requires one **head referee** who typically stands 7 yards behind and 7 yards to the side of the quarterback. This referee is responsible for spotting the ball after each down and indicating the end of each play (normally by use of a whistle). They should also state which down i.e. first down, second down, third down, fourth down. The head referee enforces any penalties (after conferring with field judge).

The game also benefits from a **field judge** who is responsible for timekeeping and ensuring the game is played without contact (see penalties). The **assistant referee** stands 10m forward of the quarterback on the sideline. They should also help the head referee judge where the tag is pulled or where the receiver has run out of bounds.

Team managers could assist by managing substitutions and choosing what to do on each play.

If there are other leaders available they should help by **keeping the score**, and **recording stats** for the players – catches, interceptions (when a defender catches the ball), flags pulled (tackles).

All players should be encouraged to support the quarterback to come up with play ideas – what direction should each player run to evade the defenders?

More information about courses available for young people can be found at:
<http://www.bafca.co.uk/coach-education/>

How can regularity be achieved?

Children should be encouraged to play both offense and defense to better develop their skills.

Encourage children to play without adult supervision – can they come up with their own strategy for offensive plays and defense.

There is a growing youth and cadet local and national league for U13, U16 and U19. For more information please visit:
www.britishamericanfootball.org

The route from here to County Final - Inter School Competition (Level 3)

Additional festival and competition opportunities may be available through links with the NFL Flag and JagTag programmes.

How can depth in competition through extra teams be achieved?

The 5v5 competition game should complement use of the flag football festival. The festival can also work extremely well alongside a round-robin element to suit children of different abilities.



Primary or Secondary:
Primary & Secondary

Name of competition:
Flag football festival

Age Group:
Y3/4, Y5/6 & Y7/8, Y9/10

How to enter:
Via SGO, your local club or community provider

Tournament format:
Skill station-based format

Simple rules:

Introducing American Football in a fun team based format

- Teams of between 5-10 players (up-to 20 players per station).
- Exciting range of different skill based activities, with progressive level of challenge built-in.
- Every child takes part in all activities each developing different abilities.
- Full resources including competition format, running order, scoring support, further activities and comprehensive rules and guidance notes may be found at: www.britishamericanfootball.org/schools

For more information please also *refer to the challenge card activities*.

The flag football festival should be a culmination of skill stations taken from the challenge cards or BAFA recommended activities listed below:

- Quarterback challenge
- Receiver challenge
- Pull the Flag
- Ultimate Football
- RedZone
- Swarm and Corral
- Double Threat
- Run the Gauntlet

A typical festival will include four of these challenges, split into 20 minute periods.

Players should be rewarded based on School Games Values (supported by teachers), and the scoring system which can be found on the website.

Roles for young people:

Young leaders should be used with each skill station challenge activity, both with supporting the players and also scoring.

How can regularity be achieved?

Following participation in the Flag Football Festival schools are encouraged to take part in the challenge activities in their own school environment, before preparing themselves to compete in a 5on5 competition.

The route from here to County Final - Inter School Competition (Level 3)

This festival format lends itself well as an introduction to American Football, and also as a fantastic opportunity for more able children to showcase their skills.

How can depth in competition through extra teams be achieved?

This format is aimed at those that are new and/or inexperienced in the sport. It suits both genders equally and supplements skills developed through the curriculum.

Relevant web links:

www.britishamericanfootball.org/schools

Think Inclusively!

The format is very inclusive. Each skill station can be adapted to cater for a range of different ages and abilities. Some things to think about when making your competition more inclusive:

Space: Alter the distance that children have to travel to demonstrate each skill, less space often is better as it involves more repetitions!

Task: Adapt and vary the roles and speed so all young people have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability.

Equipment: Vary the size of the ball to suit the size of the young people playing (*dependant on availability*).

People: Vary the number of people in the team/group, allow young people to partner up to assist with individual movements and skills.

