



"ELEVATE THE GAME"

PARENT & ATHLETE HANDBOOK

WELCOME

LEAGUE OVERVIEW:

Flag football is taking the country by storm. It is one of America's fastest growing youth sports, giving more kids a faster, safer, and more inclusive way to experience football. From backyard games to the Olympic stage, the sport is creating new opportunities to build skills, confidence, friendships, and a lifelong love of competition.

Summit FLAG brings that excitement to Summit County as an official NFL FLAG program built to be fun, organized, development focused, and family friendly. Through intentional coaching, balanced competition, and plenty of opportunities to play, athletes can learn the game without the experience becoming overwhelming.

ECHO's mission is to empower the next generation through Exploration, Education, and Recreation. Through football, we help kids explore their abilities, learn new skills, enjoy competition, and grow as athletes, teammates, and people.

Our League Mission, Values, and Philosophy are simple:

- **Fun matters.** Kids should look forward to showing up each week.
- **Development matters.** Athletes should leave more skilled, confident, and knowledgeable.
- **Safety matters.** Physical and emotional safety, plus respectful adult behavior, are non-negotiable.
- **Character matters.** Effort, responsibility, teamwork, and respect are bigger than the scoreboard.
- **Balance matters.** Groups and games are organized to create fair competition and meaningful opportunities for every athlete.

Our goal is simple: create an experience where kids feel seen, supported, challenged, and excited to keep playing.



FALL SEASON 2026

FALL LEAGUE OVERVIEW

Season Dates

- August 18 through September 22

Location

- Summit Middle School,
- 158 School Rd, Frisco, CO 80443
- Activities will use the main football field and adjacent auxiliary and soccer fields.

Ages/Divisions

- Summit FLAG is designed primarily for athletes ages 7-11.
- Confident 6 year olds who are ready for group instruction and competitive play may participate with league approval.
 - **Rookie Division:** Generally ages 6-8
 - **Junior Division:** Generally ages 9-11

Final divisions and placements will consider enrollment, age, experience, skill, size, confidence, and safety. An additional division may be created to provide smaller groups and more balanced competition.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

OPENING WEEK

- Tuesday, August 18 and Thursday, August 20
- All Divisions Practice, 5:30 to 7:00 PM
- Opening practices introduce the program, evaluate athletes, and establish balanced development groups.

REGULAR SCHEDULE

- Tuesday Game Nights
 - Rookie Division: 5:30 to 6:30 PM
 - Junior Division: 6:30 to 7:30 PM
- Thursday Development Practices
 - All Divisions: 5:30 to 7:00 PM

The season concludes with games on

Tuesday, September 22.

If an additional division is created,
Wednesday game nights may be added.

Schedules may change because of enrollment, weather, or field conditions. Final division assignments and important updates will be shared by email or text.



LEAGUE STRUCTURE

OUR ACADEMY FORMAT

Summit FLAG uses an academy style format centered on player development, balanced competition, and flexibility.

Rather than assigning every athlete to one permanent team and coach, players train within larger divisions and work with multiple coaches. This allows athletes to receive broader instruction while gaining experience with different positions, teammates, and styles of play.

DEVELOPMENT GROUPS:

Coaches organize athletes using:

- Age
- Experience
- Current skill level
- Size and physical readiness
- Confidence
- Safety
- Individual development needs

Groups remain flexible. Athletes may move between coaching groups or divisions when an adjustment creates a safer or more productive experience.

GAME FORMATION

Balanced teams are created within each division for scheduled game nights. Teams may change throughout the season based on attendance, development, and competitive balance.

This format allows Summit FLAG to:

- Create closer games
- Adjust for weekly absences
- Provide meaningful playing opportunities
- Match athletes with appropriate competition
- Introduce athletes to different positions
- Help players work with different teammates and coaches

Families should not expect the same team, coach, teammates, or position every week. Final decisions about divisions, coaching groups, and game assignments belong to Summit FLAG leadership.



DEVELOPMENT & PARTICIPATION

DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

Practices are designed to keep athletes active while building individual skills and team understanding.

- Coaching may include:
- Throwing and catching
- Routes, spacing, and field awareness
- Handoffs and ball security
- Flag pulling and defensive positioning
- Offensive and defensive concepts
- Speed, agility, and movement
- Communication and teamwork
- Small group competitions
- Controlled scrimmages

Athletes may rotate through different stations, positions, coaches, and development groups.



GAME NIGHTS

Games allow athletes to apply what they have learned in a positive and competitive environment.

Game nights may include coach led warmups, divisional games, multiple short games, rotating teams, and instruction between plays. Coaches may adjust teams or matchups when necessary to improve safety, participation, or competitive balance.

PLAYING TIME AND POSITIONS

Summit FLAG is a development focused program.

- Every athlete will receive meaningful opportunities to participate.
- Coaches will work toward fair participation throughout the season.
- Athletes will be encouraged to learn multiple positions.
- Equal touches, passes, carries, or time at a particular position cannot be guaranteed.
- Participation may be affected by attendance, effort, behavior, safety, fatigue, injury, and willingness to follow instructions.

Coaches make final decisions about positions, assignments, substitutions, and playing time.

ATTENDANCE

Athletes should arrive on time and ready to participate. Families should communicate absences as early as possible because attendance affects coaching groups and game formation.

LEAGUE EXPECTATIONS

ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES

Athletes are expected to:

- Arrive ready to listen, learn, compete, and have fun.
- Give honest effort during practices and games.
- Encourage teammates and celebrate others.
- Follow directions from coaches, officials, and staff.
- Play safely and within the rules.
- Respond appropriately to mistakes and challenges.
- Respect teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and families.
- Avoid trash talk, taunting, bullying, profanity, and negative behavior.
- Help create an environment where everyone feels welcome.

PARENT AND GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Review league messages and keep contact information current.
- Ensure athletes arrive on time and prepared.
- Communicate absences as early as possible.
- Model sportsmanship and emotional control.
- Cheer positively for all athletes.
- Allow coaches to coach and officials to officiate.
- Address concerns privately and respectfully.
- Support a program centered on growth, effort, and teamwork.

PLEASE AVOID

- Coaching from the spectator area
- Criticizing young athletes
- Arguing with officials, coaches, players, or families
- Requesting specific touches, positions, or play calls
- Entering an active playing field without permission
- Confronting another child

Concerns involving another athlete should be brought directly to Summit FLAG leadership.

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

Coaches and staff are expected to:

- Complete required screening and training.
- Lead with preparation, positivity, and consistency.
- Prioritize safety, development, and sportsmanship.
- Coach the entire player group.
- Use respectful and encouraging communication.
- Maintain a safe and organized field environment.
- Follow athlete protection and reporting requirements.



EQUIPMENT & GAME BASICS

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Athletes must bring:

- Official NFL FLAG jersey, flag belt and flags, provided by Summit FLAG
- Mouthguard
- Athletic shoes or cleats
- Water bottle

Summit FLAG requires mouthguards during all live drills, scrimmages, and games.



COMPLETE NFL FLAG RULES

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

- Pocketless athletic shorts or pants are strongly recommended; open pockets may need to be taped closed.
- Tuck jerseys in if they cover the flag belt — flags must remain fully visible.
- Gloves, prescription glasses, sunglasses, and approved soft protective gear are allowed.
- Dress in layers and be prepared for changing mountain weather.
- Shorts or pants cannot match the color of the flags.

NOT PERMITTED

- Jewelry
- Metal cleats
- Hard or exposed braces
- Clothing that covers or interferes with flags
- Equipment considered unsafe by coaches or officials

BASIC NFL FLAG RULES

Summit FLAG follows NFL FLAG rules with age-appropriate local modifications.

SCAN QR CODE for complete NFL FLAG Rules

- No tackling, blocking, or screening. Defenders stop the ball carrier by pulling a flag.
- Players may not guard their flags. Ball carriers may spin but cannot dive or leap to avoid a flag pull.
- The player receiving the snap cannot run directly across the line of scrimmage.
- Quarterbacks generally have seven seconds to release the ball, and pass rushers start seven yards behind the line.
- In no-run zones, the offense must complete a forward pass.
- Everyone is an eligible receiver.
- No kickoffs or live fumbles; the ball is dead under NFL FLAG rules.
- Offenses generally have four downs to reach midfield and three downs to score.

Coaches and officials will explain age-appropriate rules throughout the season.

Official NFL FLAG rules and Summit FLAG local modifications govern play.

COMMUNICATION, CONDUCT, & CONCERNS

LEAGUE COMMUNICATION

- League updates are shared through email and text.
- Families are responsible for reviewing schedules, weather notices, division assignments, and program changes.
- Coaches and staff may not be available for lengthy conversations during activities. Nonurgent concerns should be discussed privately after a 24 hour cooling period.

SIDELINE CONDUCT

- Positive cheering is encouraged. Spectators must remain safely outside active playing fields and allow coaches to coach and officials to officiate.
- Profanity, intimidation, negative coaching, arguments, and confrontational behavior are not permitted. Spectator behavior may result in penalties or removal.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- Fighting, intentional tackling, or dangerous play
- Bullying, harassment, hazing, grooming, or discrimination
- Profanity, threats, taunting, intimidation, or retaliation
- Ignoring coaches, officials, or safety instructions
- Online harassment, cyberbullying, or harmful posts
- Possessing alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons, or attending while impaired

DISCIPLINE

- Whenever appropriate, behavior will be addressed through a warning, brief removal to reset, and parent involvement if concerns continue.
- Repeated behavior may result in loss of playing time, suspension, or removal from the league. Serious or unsafe conduct may result in immediate action.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

- Appropriate concerns include safety, bullying, repeated behavior, league procedures, or rule application.
- Routine referee decisions, play calls, positions, touches, and group assignments are generally not formal complaint matters.
- Officials have final authority on the field. Summit FLAG leadership has final authority over placements, schedules, discipline, and league operations.



ATHLETE PROTECTION

OUR COACHING TEAM

- Summit FLAG seeks coaches and referees with substantial youth work experience, along with football, coaching, officiating, or other relevant sports experience.
- Coaches are selected for their ability to teach skills, communicate positively, manage groups, and create a safe and encouraging environment.

SCREENING AND TRAINING

- Coaches, referees, and staff with regular athlete contact must complete required background screening and program training before working with players.
- Training includes NFL FLAG rules, positive coaching, youth development, behavior management, athlete safety, concussion recognition, youth mental health awareness, appropriate interactions, and emergency response.

APPROPRIATE INTERACTIONS

- Interactions between adults and athletes must remain open, observable, and interruptible.
- Adults may not be alone with an unrelated athlete except during an emergency. One on one interactions in homes, restaurants, or vehicles are strongly discouraged.
- Parents or another approved adult must be included in electronic communication with athletes.
- Physical contact must remain limited and appropriate.

ZERO TOLERANCE

- Abuse, bullying, harassment, hazing, grooming, discrimination, neglect, exploitation, threats, and retaliation are prohibited.
- These protections apply to athletes, coaches, referees, staff, volunteers, parents, and spectators.
- Safety concerns should be reported immediately to Summit FLAG leadership. Someone may be temporarily removed while a concern is reviewed. Good faith reporting is protected.
- Call 911 when someone is in immediate danger. Concerns will be reported to the appropriate authorities when required.



HEALTH & WEATHER

INJURY PROCEDURES

Play will stop for an injured athlete.

Coaches and staff will:

- Create space around the athlete.
- Evaluate immediate safety needs.
- Provide basic first aid within their training.
- Contact the parent or guardian.
- Call 911 in a serious or uncertain situation.

Athletes will not return when there is a question about their safety or condition.

CONCUSSION POLICY

- Any athlete with a suspected concussion will be removed immediately and may not return the same day.
- A parent or guardian will be notified and advised to seek evaluation for possible physical, cognitive, or emotional symptoms. Written clearance from a qualified licensed healthcare professional is required before returning to Summit FLAG activities unless the symptoms are clearly explained by another condition.

HEALTH INFORMATION

- Families must provide accurate emergency contacts, allergies, restrictions, and relevant medical information.
- Parents and guardians are responsible for notifying Summit FLAG of any changes during the season.
- Athletes who are injured, ill, or unable to participate safely should not attend or participate.
- Medication cannot be stored or administered without advance written arrangements with Summit FLAG leadership.

WEATHER AND FIELD CONDITIONS

Activities may continue during cold, wind, or light rain when conditions remain safe. Practices and games may be modified, delayed, shortened, relocated, or canceled because of:

- Lightning
- Severe weather
- Unsafe field conditions
- Poor visibility
- Extreme temperatures
- Unhealthy air quality
- Other safety concerns

Lightning requires immediate field clearance. Families should remain reachable and available to retrieve athletes if conditions change.

Makeup activities may be offered when practical but are not guaranteed.



REGISTRATION & POLICIES

REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY

- Athletes register for Summit FLAG as a whole. League leadership then places each athlete in the division and development group that best supports safety, growth, and balanced competition.
- Placement considers age, experience, skill, size, confidence, enrollment, and overall league balance. Divisions and placements may be adjusted during the season when appropriate.
- All registration forms, waivers, emergency contacts, health information, and required acknowledgments must be completed before participation. Proof of age may be requested.
- Late registration may be accepted when space, staffing, equipment, and competitive balance allow. Division, coaching group, position, and teammate requests are not guaranteed.

REFUNDS AND WITHDRAWALS

- Refunds and withdrawals follow the policy accepted during registration.
- Once uniforms, equipment, staffing, fields, and other expenses have been committed, refunds may be limited or unavailable.
- Refunds are generally not provided for missed activities, schedule conflicts, ordinary illness, weather cancellations, placement decisions, or disciplinary removal.
- A documented season ending injury may be considered individually.

PARTICIPATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- By participating in Summit FLAG, athletes and families agree to follow this handbook, league expectations, athlete safety requirements, applicable NFL FLAG rules, and local modifications.
- Summit FLAG leadership may interpret and enforce these policies when necessary to protect safety, sportsmanship, competitive balance, and the overall league experience. Families will be notified of significant policy changes.





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At **Summit FLAG**, our mission is to create a fun, safe, and development focused environment where athletes build skills, confidence, and a love for the game. Through teamwork, sportsmanship, and positive competition, we create a great experience for every player and family.

Thank you for being part of **Summit FLAG** — we're excited for a great season together!