Flag Football Unit

History:
American style football evolved from the sports of soccer and rugby. It became popular in the late 1820’s in many colleges, but featured many rugby rules. In the 1880’s Walter Camp, “the father of American football” made many rules changes that formalized the rules to the game we know today. Football is a full-contact sport, involving body contact by means of checking, blocking, and tackling.

The Field:
The field is 100 yards long by 53 yards wide. The end zones sure 10 yards deep with the goal posts at the back of the end zone. Lines parallel to the end zones cross the main body of the field at 5-yard intervals. Hash marks are located 53 feet from the sideline (high school and college), run down the field at 1-yard intervals.

Play:
The game begins with a kick off (40-yard line in high school, 35-yard line in college and 30-yard line in the pros.) The receiving team must be back 10 yards from the kick off line.

The offensive team has 4 downs (plays) to gain 10 yards. Each time a player makes first down the team has another series of 4 downs to gain 10 more yards.

Offensive plays in football are run from a set formation known as a scrimmage. Plays start with a hike from the center. Plays may be running or passing plays. After each play the official places the ball where the ball carrier was tackled. If they were tackled outside of the hash marks, the ball is brought in to the hash marks.

Scoring:
Touchdown – 6 points – When the ball is caught or run into the end zone.
Conversion Kick – 1 point – Taken after a touch down. The ball is kicked through the goal posts form 2 1/2 yards away.
Conversion run/pass – 2 points – A play taken from 2 1/2 yards away. The offensive team must score like a touchdown on one play.
Field Goal – 3 points – The ball is kicked through the uprights from whatever distance the offensive team is from the end zone. Normally done on 4th down.
Safety – 2 points- when the offensive team is tackled in their own end zone.

Player Positions: 11 players from a team on the field at a time.

Offense
Quarterback – Runs offense. Receives the snap – may run, handoff, or pass the ball.
They may also go out for a pass after handing off to a running back.
Center – Hikes the ball. Blocks – Ineligible receiver.
Guards, Tackles – Block, open holes for runners – ineligible receivers
Running backs – run ball, block, and go out for passes. Can be halfbacks, fullbacks
**Wide Receivers** – go out for passes  
**Tight End** – blocks, goes out for passes.

**Defense**  
**Defensive lineman** – depending on scheme – Nose guard, Defensive tackles, and  
Defensive ends – Stop the run, sack the quarterback  
**Linebackers** – stop the run, cover short passes, and sack the quarterback  
**Defensive backs** – safeties, cornerbacks – cover receivers

**Terminology:**

**Block** - Action of offensive lineman and backs in which they use their bodies to ward off defensive players from the ball carrier.

**Fair Catch** - a player may fair catch a kick off or punt by raising their hand clearly above their head before making the catch. He may not be tackled. The offensive team then gets the ball at that spot.

**Forward pass** - an offensive play in which the ball is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

**Fumble** - The ball carrier drops the ball. It is then a live ball and may be picked up by either team.

**Incompletion** - An incomplete pass is when a legal forward pass hits the ground before a player on either team gains possession or a pass that is not caught

**Interception** - Interceptions occur when the opposing defense catches a forward pass thrown by the offense. This results in a turnover, and the intercepting team gains possession of the ball.

**Lateral Pass** - an offensive play in which the ball is passed sideways or backwards. This may be down anywhere on the field of play and be caught by any player.

**Line of Scrimmage** - An imaginary line on the field where the play starts. The defensive teams line of scrimmage is back one yard. The area between the lines is the neutral zone.

**Offside** – 5-yard penalty. Any player of either team is considered offside if they encroach upon the neutral zone before the ball is snapped.

Catching a Football - If the ball is above your waist, make your hands into the shape of a triangle, with your thumbs together. If the ball is below your waist, place the tips of your pinky fingers together (see image above). Your fingers need to be flexible, bent slightly,
and ready to absorb the speed of the ball. Your fingers, hands, wrists, and arms will all act as a shock absorber to slow the ball down, and bring it under control.

Throwing a Football

1.) Hold one close to one end of football a few inches from the end to grip the ball like you are holding a large glass
2.) Turn sideways with the ball behind you, with your arm bent
3.) Have your non-throwing hand pointing slightly up and forward
4.) As you begin to throw think about switching your hands (the back hand that is holding the football goes forward and the forward hand goes back. This will help you use your core and hips to throw the ball