

FLAG FOOTBALL



International
Federation
of American
Football

An Introduction to Youth Flag Football

5 vs 5



**Basics of Coaching • Basic Rules
Fundamental Skills • Strategies • Drills**

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An Introduction to Youth Flag Football – 5 vs. 5

This manual has been developed to help new coaches and teachers who will be coaching youngsters at the introductory or initiation level in community and school based programs.

The objective of this manual is to ensure that new coaches and teachers have the necessary information to provide their players with a rewarding and enjoyable experience when playing Flag Football.





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Getting Started

What is Flag Football?

Why play Flag Football?

Who plays Flag Football?

Keep It In Perspective

Pre-season Considerations

Recruiting Volunteers



Getting Started

Kids participate in sports for all kinds of reasons. They enjoy learning new skills, and testing these skills against others. They like the challenge and excitement. Winning and pleasing others are part of it, too, but they are not nearly as important as the simple pleasure kids get from being active, being with friends – being part of a team!

This manual reflect those desires of **fun**, **fitness**, and **fundamentals**.

- **Fun** – Make it a great experience for the whole family – for Players, coaches, officials, and fans!
- **Fitness** – Aim for active participation for every Player. In this way, sport will contribute to the mental and physical development of all participants.
- **Fundamentals** – Focus on the basics. As Players develop their skills, their enjoyment of the sport will grow.

The material in this manual covers all these:

- It explains the basics of coaching.
- It gives hints on recruiting volunteers and on keeping everyone involved.
- It discusses fair play, rules and regulations, and safety and emergency concerns.
- It offers tips for teaching skills.
- It includes sample practice plans and guidelines for game day.
- And it provides a checklist to help you assess and improve your skills as a coach.

This chapter also stresses the importance of equal opportunity for all youngsters, and keeping sport in a healthy perspective.

What is Flag Football?

Flag is a modified version of tackle football and provides participants with the opportunity to develop many of the same skills, tactics and strategies of regular football without the body contact.

Why play Flag Football?

- Fun!
- Fast!
- Safe!
- Social!
- Requires skill, agility and finesse!
- **Easy to organize!**
- **High participation!**
- Exciting!
- Inexpensive!
- Enjoyable!
- Co-Educational!



- Excellent form of **physical activity!**
- Promotes “sport for life” opportunities!
- Develops **life skills** through sport; teaches cooperation, self-discipline *and*
- Sportsmanlike conduct builds self-confidence and improves self-image!

Who plays Flag Football?

Anyone can play Flag Football!

Men, women and children of all ages play flag. People can play recreationally in parks, as part of school intramural programs and on a more competitive level within organized leagues. Flag Football is a sport easily adapted for athletes with a disability.

Keep It In perspective



Flag Football is a game worth playing, but it must be kept in perspective. Players should participate in a variety of sports and to take part in other activities. Youth players should simply “get out and play” every chance they have.

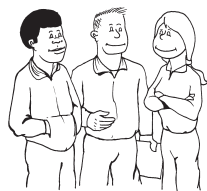
Pre-Season Considerations



Things a coach and teacher should consider before their season starts:

- The age range of their Players.
- Do both boys and girls participate.
- The level of play (house league, competitive, etc.).
- The length of the season.
- The number of practices and games scheduled.
- Location(s) and length of practices and games.
- Tournaments/travel involved.
- Equipment required for the Players.
- Availability of equipment.
- Insurance/liability considerations.
- Any special rules, regulations and procedures.

Recruiting Volunteers



The head coach is ultimately responsible for all team activities. This role will be easier and more enjoyable, if others are recruited to help out. Friends, acquaintances, and parents or guardians of the Players can be called upon to serve as “assistant coaches” or “managers.” Here are suggested roles and responsibilities for these positions.

Assistant Coaches (helpers)

- Review practice plans with head coach before each session.
- Assist head coach in practices and games.
- Do a safety check of area of play.
- Assist the Team Manager in the care and maintenance of Players’ equipment.
- Maintain the first-aid kit.

Team Manager(s)

- Handle Player registration.
- Look after team jerseys and equipment.
- Distribute practice and game schedules.
- Make any necessary telephone calls to Players and parents.
- Take responsibility for team funds.
- Arrange for statistics and video taping (optional).

Tips for *finding* volunteers:

- Ask your league coordinator or club president for names of people who could assist you.
- Spread the word to neighbours and friends. Can they help? Or can they suggest others who enjoy kids and have a background in the sport?
- Call your local school and speak to the physical education teachers. Explain your needs, and see if they can give you names of student-athletes who might be interested in helping out.
- Talk to parents of all your Players to solicit their involvement.

Tips for *keeping* volunteers:

Once you have found volunteers, it is important to keep them motivated and involved. Here are some ways you can do it:

- Involve them in planning wherever possible.
- Have them do things they will find enjoyable and satisfying.
- Acknowledge their contributions.





Coaching with Care

Your Role as Coach

What is Coaching?

Communication with Players and Parents

Player Medical Forms

Team (Contact) Directory

Fair Play & Ethics

Playing It Safe

Plan for Every Situation

Person in Charge

Call Person

First-Aid Kit Inventory List



Coaching with Care

Your Role as Coach

Coaching is for anyone who enjoys sport and cares about kids. What does it take to coach? It takes people who are sensitive and caring. People who are organized, who want to work with others, and who will teach from the heart.

Being a coach means you are a teacher, a leader, and a counsellor.

As a **teacher**, you

- Provide simple teaching points to help your Players learn.
- Encourage skill development through well selected drills and games.
- Provide lots of activity to help contribute to the skill development and physical fitness of your Players.

As a **leader**, you

- Set goals that are challenging but realistic.
- Offer encouragement and support to help your Players be the best they can be.
- Instill the importance of being a good sport and playing fair.
- Instill the concept of self-discipline and team play.
- Ensure safety.

As a **counsellor**, you

- Listen to your Players' concerns and deal with them as best you can by being supportive.
- Make sport a positive, fun place to be!

Coaching with care means communicating effectively and keeping everyone involved. It requires knowing your Players and having them play fair. And it means attending to fitness and safety.

What is Coaching?

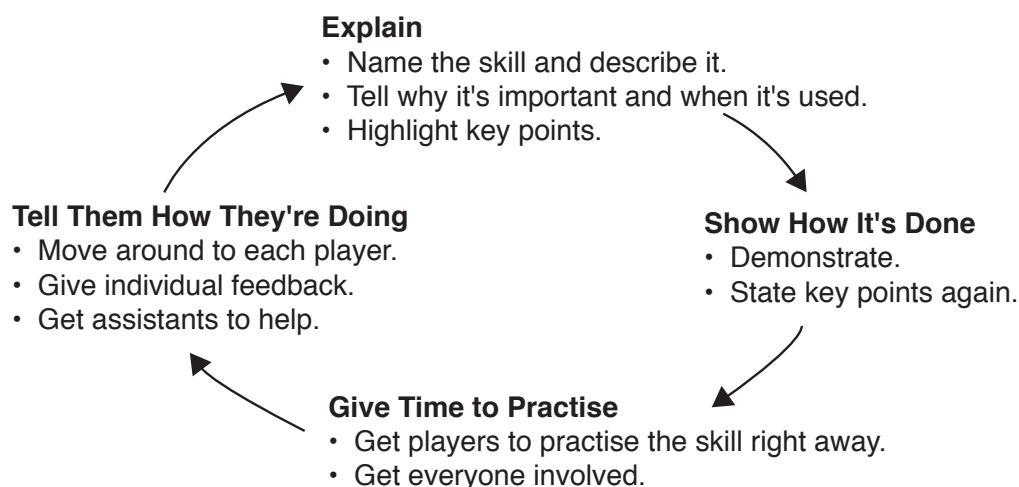
Teaching Skills and Progressions

When introducing new skills:

- Teach one thing at a time.
- Keep teaching time short and to the point.
- Progress from simple to more difficult skills or situations.
- Use fun activities and games as much as possible.
- Allow for different rates of progress.



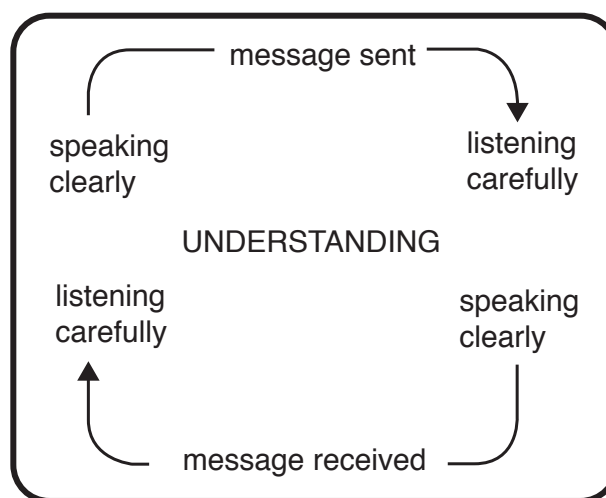
Here is a good teaching sequence to follow:



Communication with Players and Parents

Communication is a two-way process. Good communication *leads to understanding*.

Meetings with Players & Parents



Meetings with Players and parents will encourage communication and help build a positive relationship. Many coaches like to hold three meetings each season: one at the beginning, one at mid-season, and one at the end.

Some coaches have meetings with Players and parents together; others like to hold a separate meeting for each group.

Make it clear from the start, what your plans are and how you will operate the team.

The age range of your Players and the approach you like to take will determine how you handle meetings and how many you hold. Remember, much can



be accomplished in brief sessions before and after practices or games. And sometimes it may be preferable to speak to Players or parents individually.

A **parents meeting** at the beginning of the season can be helpful in a number of ways. It provides an opportunity to get to know parents and to discuss plans for the season. It is also a good time to recruit volunteers!

Here are some items you could cover at the meeting:

- Welcome and Introductions.
- Team Objectives.
- Your Coaching Philosophy.
- Parents' Expectations.
- Ways parents can assist and be involved.
- Schedule for practices and games.
- Arrangements for car pooling.
- Equipment costs, other expenses, fund-raising activities.
- Provide, as a handout, names of contacts and their telephone numbers.
- Goals and Roles.
- Questions and Answers.



You can use this meeting to hand out schedules and circulate your team (contact) directory. Do not forget to have parents complete a Player Medical Information card for their child (see page 10).

Communicating with Your Players

Ongoing communication with your Players will be easier if you have taken the time at the beginning of the season to talk about goals, outline your approach, and answer questions.

Here are a few simple tips to help you communicate effectively with your Players during practice and games:

- Give them an opportunity to speak.
- Listen to what they say and how they say it.
- Speak to them using words they understand. Always keep it simple.
- Bend down (or crouch or kneel) so you can talk to them at their level.
- Speak to every Player at every session.



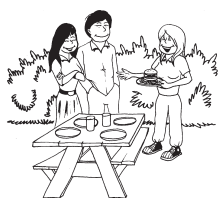
Helping Your Players to Feel Good About Themselves

As a coach, you can help your Players to develop confidence and self-esteem. Here are some ways you can do it:

- Greet them individually when they arrive for each session. Make them feel good about being there.
- Show confidence in their ability to learn.
- Offer activities that suit their level of development.
- Encourage effort without always focusing on results.
- Avoid elimination games and other activities that may add undue pressure.
- Create situations where there are lots of “successes.”
- Be specific when telling them what you like about their effort or performance.
- Use a smile or a nod to acknowledge them.
- Praise them for special things they have done. A “pat on the back” means a lot.
- Give them responsibilities. Involve them in making decisions and give each of them a chance to be a “leader.”
- Ask for their input and invite their questions.

In spite of all your efforts, some Players may still not respond. If any of them are uninterested, difficult, or unhappy, talk to them about it.

Communicating with Parents



A pre-season meeting (or individual discussion) with parents will set the stage for open and effective communication throughout the year. It will give you a chance to explain your coaching philosophy and approach, and provide an opportunity to deal with any questions or concerns they may have.

It is important to listen to parents whenever they want to talk to you about their child. But as a coach you should do more. It is also your role to guide parents in their involvement in the sport. You can do this in a number of ways:

- Encourage them to acquire an understanding and appreciation of the game through knowledge of basic rules, skills, and strategies.
- Demand the same respect for fair play from them as you do from your Players, (See Code of Ethics on page 12).
- Discourage those who want to “coach” from the sidelines. Getting messages from others will only confuse your Players.

Parents should guide their children’s involvement in sports, but they should be encouraged to let them make their own final decisions.

From time to time, some parents may have to be reminded that *it is just a game ... for the kids!*



Player Medical Forms

Blank Player Medical Information Forms are provided on the next page. Ask the parents to complete one for their child at the beginning of the season. In addition to the Medical Information Form, you should have each parent submit a physical examination certificate, completed by their family physician, for their child.

Review all the forms when parents return them to you and ask for any additional information you may need. Knowing these details will help you prevent problems and deal more effectively with injuries or accidents if they do occur.

Team (Contact) Directory

A blank Team Contact Directory Sheet is shown on page 11. Ask your coaches, club officials, Players and parents to provide the necessary information.



Player Medical Information

Name	Date of Birth:	D	M	Y
Person to be Contacted in Case of Emergency	Phone:	Day	Evening	
Alternative Contact	Phone:	Day	Evening	
Family Doctor	Phone	Health Insurance Number		
Medications	Allergies			
Relevant Medical History	Previous injuries or surgeries			
Does the Player carry and know how to administer his or her own medications? ☐ yes ☐ no				
Other conditions (braces, contact lenses, etc.)				

Note: Medical information is confidential. Only authorized individuals should have access to this card. Keep this card with the team at all times.

Player Medical Information

Name	Date of Birth:	D	M	Y
Person to be Contacted in Case of Emergency	Phone:	Day	Evening	
Alternative Contact	Phone:	Day	Evening	
Family Doctor	Phone	Health Insurance Number		
Medications	Allergies			
Relevant Medical History	Previous injuries or surgeries			
Does the Player carry and know how to administer his or her own medications? ☐ yes ☐ no				
Other conditions (braces, contact lenses, etc.)				

Note: Medical information is confidential. Only authorized individuals should have access to this card. Keep this card with the team at all times.



Team Contact Directory

Name of Player (and Parent(s))	Jersey #	Address	Telephone #
()			
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Head Coach:			
Assistant Coaches:			
Manager:			
Equipment Manager:			
Trainer:			

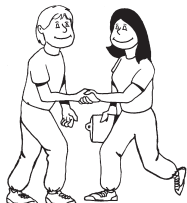


Fair Play & Ethics

Sport challenges everyone involved — Players, coaches, officials, and parents — to do their best honestly and fairly. Your conduct as a coach will serve as an example to others. The following Code of Ethics should be a guide.

Coaching Code of Ethics

- Act with integrity in performing all duties with your Players, their parents, and association.
- Strive to be well-prepared so that your coaching duties are carried out with competence.
- Act at all times in the best interest of the development of Players as whole persons.
- Maintain the highest standards of personal conduct by respecting the rights and dignity of your Players.
- Accept both the letter and the spirit of the rules of the game.
- Accept and support the role of the officials in providing judgment to ensure that games are conducted fairly and according to the established rules.
- Treat your fellow coaches with courtesy, good faith, and respect.



Fair Play

Flag Football gives your Players a chance to experience fair play in action. Here are some things you can do to encourage it:

- Recognize and respect individual differences in Players.
- Provide equal opportunity for all to participate.
- Learn and follow the rules of the game.
- Encourage Players to always do their best.
- Instill in Players a positive attitude toward competition.
- Encourage Players to be modest in victory and to be “good sports” in defeat.

Playing It Safe

Nature of the Game

Flag Football is a non contact sport, as tackling and blocking is not allowed. This provides a safe sport activity for Players regardless of size, gender and physical ability. The rules of the game are designed to ensure a safe environment for all those who participate, it is important to realize that incidental contact occurs in all sports and injuries do occur. Teaching proper techniques and playing according to the rules, dramatically reduce the risk of major injury. In all teaching and competitive situations, safety to the participants is paramount.



There are many things you can do to prevent injuries. For starters, you should:

- Do a proper warm-up at the beginning of each session.
- Be aware of your Players' capabilities.
- Watch them after they have been sick or injured.
- Inspect the practice and playing surfaces for safety hazards (holes, sharp objects, etc.) before each session.
- Plan and organize practices with safety in mind. Be sure to space Players far enough apart.
- Check that no one is wearing anything (watches, bracelets, necklaces, etc.) that may be dangerous to themselves or to other Players. (i.e. shorts with pockets, peaked hats)
- Make sure you have adequate supervision. Strive for a 1:10 coach/player ratio.
- Recommended that all Players wear a protective mouth guard.

You should also maintain a complete first-aid kit (in a solid container) to help you deal with minor injuries when they occur. (See page 14 for a suggested inventory.) Always ensure that your Players have safe transportation home.

Plan for Every Situation

Although serious injuries or accidents are rare, you must be ready to deal with them if and when they occur. As a first-step, formal training in first-aid and CPR for all team staff will give you the confidence and knowledge you need to deal with emergencies effectively. Have at least one qualified first-aid and CPR team staff member at all practices and games.

Develop an Emergency Action Plan in consultation with a sport medicine expert and write it down so everyone involved is clear on their responsibilities. (You can use page 15 to do this.) Keep this important record in your first-aid kit.

Two key individuals to carry out the plan are the person in charge, and the call person.

Person in Charge

The person in charge should be the one who is most qualified in first-aid and emergency procedures. This individual will:

- Know what emergency equipment is available at your facility.
- Secure a controlled and calm environment.
- Assess — and tend to — the injured Player.
- Direct others involved until medical personnel arrive.



Call Person

This individual will:

- Keep a record of emergency phone numbers and know the location of telephones at the facility.
- Make the telephone call for assistance.
- Guide the ambulance (if required) in and out of the facility.

First-Aid Kit Inventory List

Here is a suggested inventory for your first-aid kit. Check the items included in your kit and remember to restock them when they are used up.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ adhesive bandages | ☐ safety pins |
| ☐ antibiotic ointment | ☐ scissors |
| ☐ athletic tape | ☐ soap |
| ☐ blanket | ☐ small mirror |
| ☐ change for telephone (<i>tape to lid</i>) | ☐ splint material |
| ☐ cotton swabs | ☐ sten-strips |
| ☐ Emergency Action Plan sheet | ☐ tape |
| ☐ gauze pads | ☐ towel |
| ☐ hydrogen peroxide/betadyne | ☐ triangular bandage |
| ☐ ice (use a cooler) | ☐ tweezers |
| ☐ latex gloves | ☐ underwrap (for taping) |
| ☐ note pad & pen | ☐ wraps (elastic & non) |
| ☐ plastic bags | |
| ☐ player medical information cards | |



Emergency Action Plan

Telephone Numbers

Team/Event _____ Emergency _____

Site _____ Ambulance _____

Person in Charge _____ Police _____

Call Person _____ Fire Department _____

Hospital _____

Facility _____

Details of Location _____
 (to be read over
 the telephone
 to emergency
 dispatcher) _____

Diagram of Home Facility

Use the space below to draw a detailed diagram of the home facility. Mark on it the location of the telephones, first-aid room, desired routes for attending medical personnel, and anything else that might be helpful.





Understanding the Game

How do you play Flag Football?

Safety Considerations

Field Use – Grid System

Diagram of Grid Structure

Advantages of Grid System

Flag Football Playing Field Diagram



Understanding the Game

How do you play Flag Football?

Objective of the Game

- Two teams of five Players each compete against each other.
- To outscore your opponents by scoring touchdowns and converts.
- One team, “the offense”, has possession of the ball and attempts to move the ball across their opponent’s goal line.
- They do so by passing and running the ball towards their opponent’s goal line.
- The opposition, the “defense” attempts to stop them from accomplishing the task.
- Players attempt to stop the ball carrier by grabbing and removing one of the flags worn on each Player’s hips; this is referred to as “flagging” or non-contact tackling.

What equipment is required?

Flag Football requires very little equipment other than comfortable clothes and a good pair of sports shoes for participants, and of course, a football. Below is a list of equipment that will assist you in conducting a Flag Football program:

- Pylons or plastic disks. (Used for field boundary and end zone markers.)
- Pinnies or jerseys. (To identify teams.)
- Proper size footballs appropriate to the age of the participants.
- Flags and flag belts.
- Bean bags for the officials. (Used to mark line of scrimmage and 7 yard/ metre rush zone.)
- Mouth guards are recommended.

Safety Considerations

To ensure that the activities, which will take place during the program, occur in a safe environment, here are some points to consider:

Fields

Fields have been checked for and cleared of any debris (glass, rocks, uneven spots, etc) to a depth of at least 10 yards/metres outside of the playing area.

Goal Posts

While not required to play Flag Football, goalposts, if they are present, have been covered and/or activities do not take place in their vicinity

Clothing

Ensure that Players are wearing comfortable fitting clothing, running shoes (appropriate for the playing surface), and have removed all jewellery. It is recommended that people with glasses utilize a band to keep them in place and shorts should be without pockets.

Field Use – Grid System

To ensure maximum activity, proper and imaginative field use simplifies the organization of large numbers into small working groups. One of the systems that have been found to be most effective in maximizing field use is the grid system.

Diagram of Grid Structure

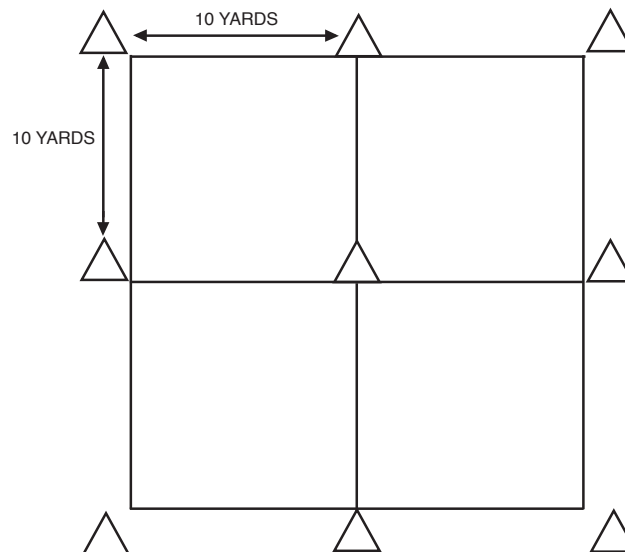


Fig01FF

A grid can be described as a predetermined space that an individual or individuals will operate from. For example, it may be 2 yards by 2 yards (2 metres by 2 metres) with 2 children throwing a football or 20 yards by 20 yards (20 metres by 20 metres) with a 4 on 4 game of Flag Football being played. The actual size of a grid will depend on ability, age, sex, size, type of drills being used, etc.

Advantages of Grid System

Facilitates competition

Depending on the number of participants, the confinements of the grid can facilitate the introduction of the competitive elements of the game. For example, 1 on 1 drills matching up Receivers and Defensive Backs.

Maximizes participation

Since a grid is occupied with a small number of participants, maximum participation is achieved.



Facilitates variety

Allows for a variety of activities through the numbers of participants, size of field and opposition.

Increases mobility

Due to the limitation of the confined grid area, the children are forced to move in certain directions.

Defines the practice /drill area

Defines the practice /drill area for Players and reduces the risks of collisions and interference from other participants.

Enhances safety

Enhances safety by restricting students' movements to a given space.

Teaches Spacial Awareness

Students learn to become aware of the space they are in and how to move and react within that space.

Flag Football Playing Field Diagram

Field dimensions and markings

Length: 60 (or 80) yards/metres

Width: 25 (or 30) yards/metres

End Zones: Maximum 10 yards/metres deep
Minimum 7 yards/metres deep

No-running Zones: must be marked 5 yards/metres from each end zone

First Down Marker: at midfield

Field Marker:

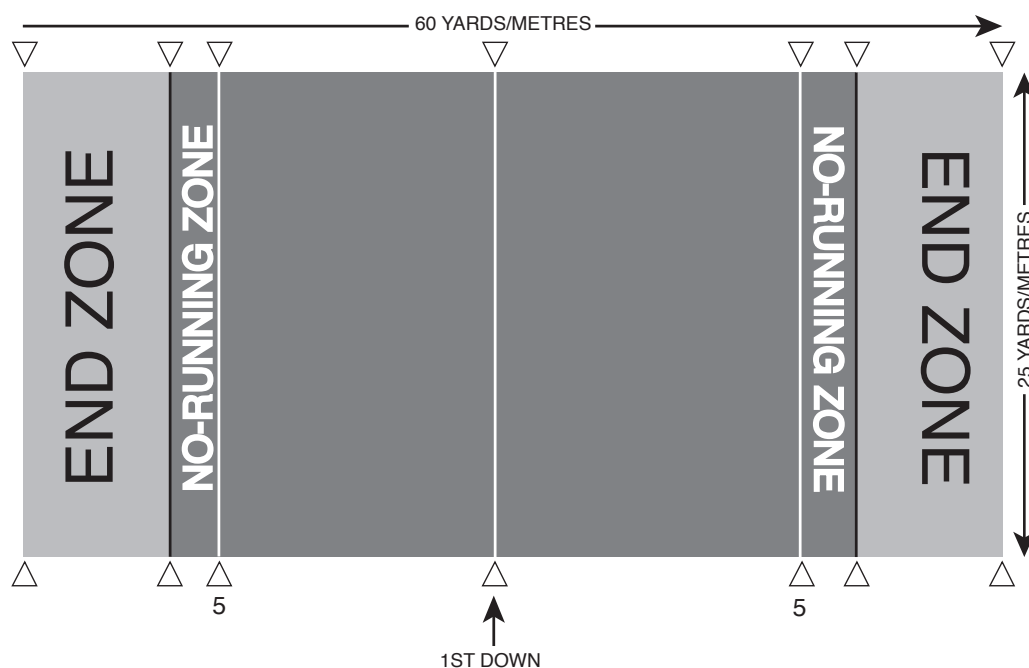


Fig02IFAF





Flag Football Rules & Position Descriptions

Position Descriptions

Tackling and Blocking are not Allowed

Penalties

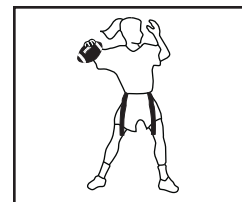
Terminology

Flag Football Rules and Position Descriptions

Position Descriptions

Quarterback (QB)

- The QB is the captain on offense.
- The QB calls the offensive plays and is the leader.
- The QB always stands behind the Center (C) and receives the football in what is called a “snap”.
- The QB has the option to either hand off the football or pass the football to a teammate on offense.

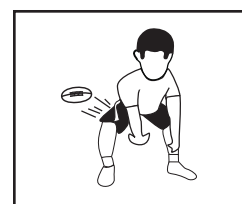


Quarterback

Fig108FF

Center (C)

- The Center snaps the football to the QB. A snap is when the Center tosses the football between his or her legs.
- After the snap, the Center can run out for a pass.

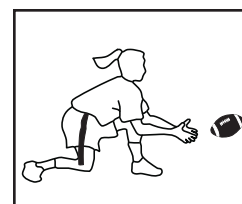


Center

Fig109FF

Wide Receiver (WR)

- The Wide Receiver is responsible for catching passes from the QB and running with the ball.
- The WR also can take a handoff.
- There are up to three WR's on offense.

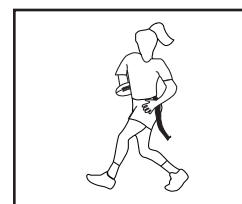


Wide Receiver

Fig110FF

Running Back (RB)

- The Running Back stands behind the QB or next to the QB and is responsible for receiving handoffs from the QB and running with the ball. RBs also catch passes from the QB.

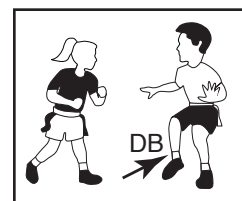


Running Back

Fig111FF

Defensive Backs (DB)

- All defensive positions in Flag Football are called Defensive Backs.
- The DB is responsible for stopping the Players on offense and trying to intercept or gain possession of the football.
- The DB tries to pull the flag of the Player with the football.
- One or more Defensive Backs (DB) can be designated as the Rusher.



Defensive Backs

Fig112FF

A coach should train each Player at every position.



Tackling and Blocking are Not Allowed

1. Attire

Cleats are allowed, but must be rubber. Shorts are to be of one color with no pockets. Peaked hats are banned. It is recommended that all Players wear a protective mouthpiece.

2. Field Dimensions and Markings

Length: 60 (or 80) yards/metres

Width: 25 (or 30) yards/metres

End Zones: Maximum 10 yards/metres deep, minimum 7 yards/metres deep

No-running zones: Must be marked 5 yards/metres from each end zone.
First Down marker at midfield.

3. Possession

A coin is flipped to determine which team will get possession of the football first. A representative from each team meets before the game in the centre of the field with the Referee. The visiting team will call heads or tails before the Referee flips the coin in the air. If they choose correctly, they will have first possession of the ball in the first half or to choose the end zone they will defend in the first half.

4. There are no kickoffs

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard/metre line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard/metre line. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding four plays to make either a first down or score. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard/metre line.

All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard/metre line.

Teams change sides at half time.

5. Number of Players

- Teams consist of 6 Players (5 on the field at a time).
- Teams may play with a minimum of four (4) Players (due to injuries).
- If less than 4 Players are available, the game is cancelled.

6. Timing/Overtime

- Game length is 20-50 minutes running time (two halves, 10-25 minutes each).
- If the score is tied at the end of regulation time, teams move directly into overtime. A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. The team



that wins the coin toss starts with the ball on its own 5-yard/metre line. Play continues as in regulation until one team scores. There will be no timeouts granted during the overtime period.

- Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
- Each team has 2 x 60-second time outs per half. These cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- The teams will be warned when there are two minutes left to play in the second half.
- There will be a halftime period of 2 minutes between the first and second half.

7. Scoring

Touchdown: 6 points

Extra point: 1 point (played from 5-yard/metre line)

2 points (played from 12-yard/metre line)

Safety: 2 points

Note: An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra-point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus gaining possession for the next series at its own 5-yard/metre line.

8. Running

- To start the play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the Center.
- The Center is the Player who gives the ball to the Quarterback via a snap. The Center cannot take a direct handoff back from the Quarterback (no Center sneak play).
- The Quarterback is the Player who receives the ball directly from the Center.
- The Quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage (LOS), unless the Q.B. has released the ball and it has been returned to the quarterback.
- An offence may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage. Only backward or lateral handoffs are allowed and must be behind the LOS.
- Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are considered running plays.
- "No-running zones" are located 5 yards/metres from each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard/metre line going towards the opponent's end zone, the offense cannot run.
- The Player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- All defensive Players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake (appears to be running play,



but is actually a pass play) or fake handoff.

- Spinning is allowed, but Players cannot leave their feet to avoid a Defensive Player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled. Forward progress is where the flag is pulled.
- The Center and Quarterback are eligible Receivers.
- One forward pass is permitted for each down and the passer must be behind the line of Scrimmage.

9. Receiving

- All Players are eligible to receive passes (including the Quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one Player may be in motion, but not in motion towards the opponent's end zone at the snap.
- A Player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. (They cannot return on to the playing field from an out of bounds position.)

10. Passing

- Only Players starting 7 yards/metres behind the line of scrimmage can rush the passer.
- The Quarterback has seven seconds to throw the ball. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down and the ball is spotted at the previous line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake or fake handoff, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball.
- The defence can return interceptions.
- On interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its 5-yard/metre line. Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leave the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead. However, should the ball carrier return to the end zone and be flagged, or the ball be ruled dead the result would be a safety for the other team.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Once a Player crosses the line of scrimmage with the ball he/she is no longer allowed to lateral the ball. This applies to Receivers as well. (i.e. hook and laterals are not permitted)



11. Dead Balls

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - Official blows the whistle.
 - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled or becomes illegal.
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - When any part of the ball carrier’s body, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground.
- If the ball carrier’s flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off.
- Players are ineligible to catch a pass if their flag has fallen off.
Note: There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were when the fumble was made. (i.e. A bad snap will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted at the Center’s feet.) There is no stripping of the ball.

12. Rushing the Quarterback

All Players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards/metres from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of Players can rush the Quarterback. Players not rushing the Quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play-action fake (appears to be a running play, but is actually a pass play) or fake handoff, the seven-yard/metre rule no longer is in effect and all Defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the Referee, will designate seven yards/metres from the line of scrimmage.

Blocking or Tackling are Not Allowed.

13. Sportsmanship/Roughing

- If the Referee witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the Player will be ejected from the tournament. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- Trash talking is illegal. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing Players, teams, or spectators.) Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the Referee will give one warning. If it continues, the Player or Players will be ejected from the game.



14. Penalties

- All penalties are 5 yards/metres (except for Pass Interference - 15 yards/metres). The down will be repeated, and will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, unless otherwise noted.
- All penalties can be declined.
- Penalties will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team captain may ask the Referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

15. Defensive Penalties

- **Offside** – 5 yards/metres and automatic first down
- **Pass Interference** – 15 yards/metres and automatic first down
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) – 5 yards/metres and automatic first down.
- **Illegal flag pull** (before Receiver has ball) – 5 yards/metres and automatic first down
- **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard/metre marker) – 5 yards/metres and automatic first down.
- **Substitution fouls** (Player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. To deceive opponents, or 6 Players on the field).
- **Disconcerting signals** (signals to distract opponent or simulate offensive signals prior to snap).
- **Interference with opponent or ball at the snap.**

16. Offensive Penalties

- **Delay of game.**
- **Substitution fouls.**
- **Illegal motion** (when the snap starts, one player maybe in motion but not in motion toward the opponent's end zone) – 5 yards/metres and loss of down.
- **False Start.**
- **Illegal Snap.**
- **Offensive Holding.**
- **Illegal shift or failure to pause for one second.** All players of the offensive team must come to an absolute stop and remain stationary in their position for at least one full second before the ball is snapped or a

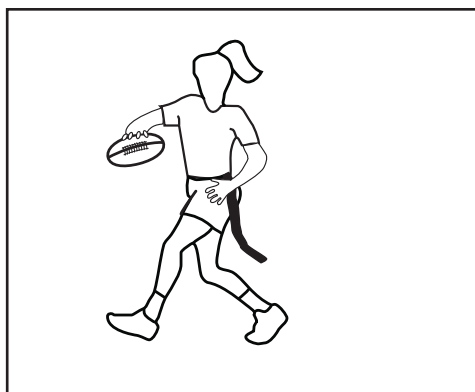


motion starts.

- **Player out of bounds.** (If Player goes out of bounds, Player cannot return to the field and catch ball).
- **Illegal forward pass** (pass received behind line of scrimmage) – 5 yards/metres and loss of down.
- **Offensive pass interference** (illegal pick play, pushing off/away Defender) – 5 yards/metres and loss of down.
- **Flag guarding** – 5 yards/metres from the point of foul (NEW!) and loss of down.

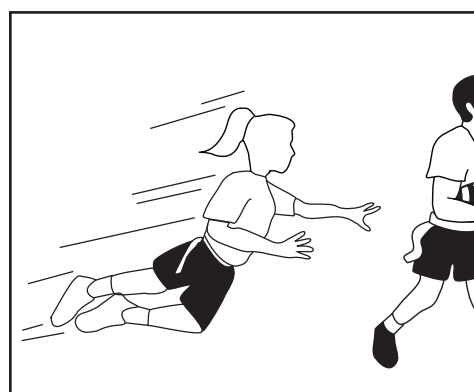
The most important rule of all ... HAVE FUN!!!

Penalties



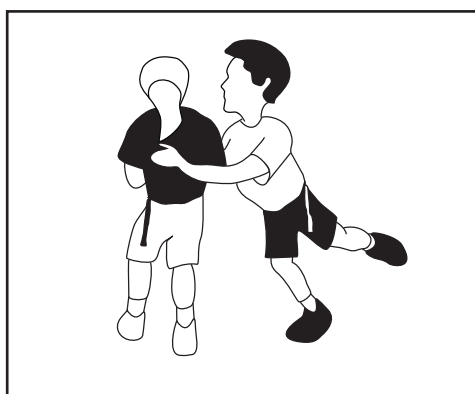
No shielding your flag

Fig102FF



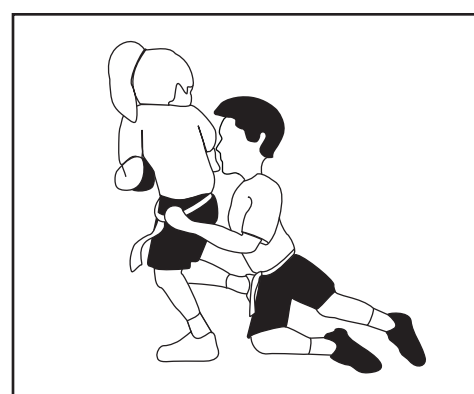
No diving

Fig103FF



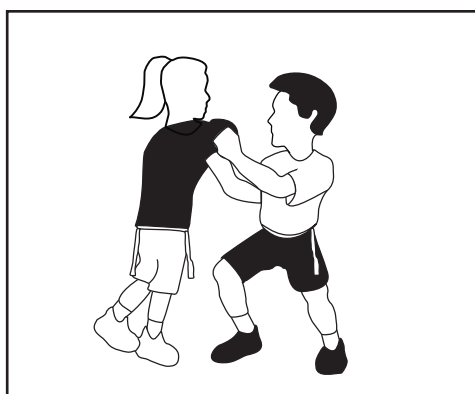
No blocking

Fig104FF



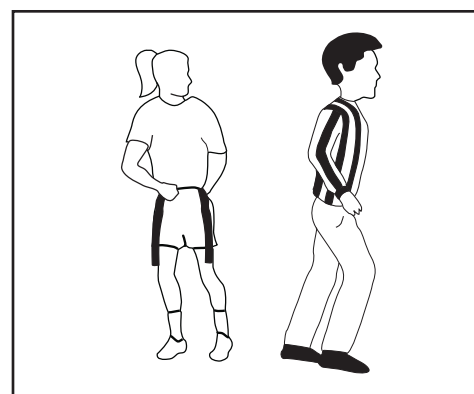
No grabbing flag belt

Fig105FF



No holding your opponent's jersey

Fig106FF



No arguing with game official

Fig107FF



Terminology

Blitz

When a Defensive player or players (DB) run from 7 yards/metres behind the line of scrimmage towards the QB in an attempt to pull the QB's flag and stop the play. Can be modified for youth play restricting the number of players blitzing.

Cadence

Is the command from the QB "Set Go". This will signal to the offense that Players can begin the down or play after the snap.

Coin Flip

A coin is flipped to determine which team will get possession of the football first. A representative from each team meets before the game in the centre of the field with the Referee. The visiting team will call heads or tails before the Referee flips the coin in the air. If they choose correctly, they will have first possession of the ball in the first half or to choose the end zone they will defend in the first half.

Defense

The team without the football, which protects its scoring area (end zone). (The same as in basketball, soccer or rugby.)

Down

1. The offense has four attempts (downs) to cross midfield and, if successful, receives four additional downs to score.
2. After the ball carrier is stopped, he/she is called "down".

End Zone

The area at both ends of the field 7-10 yards/metres deep x 25-30 yards/metres wide. The defense protects this area.

Extra Point

After a touchdown, the offense has a chance to score more points with one play from either the 5 yard/metre line (1 point) or 12 yard/metre line (2 points).

First Down

When the offense crosses midfield with the football it earns a first down. An official can also award a first down on a penalty.



Flagging

To stop the Player running with the football, the defense must pull the flag of the Player with the football. When the ball carrier's flag is pulled, play is stopped and the down is over.

Flat

The area closest to each sideline directly on or behind the line of scrimmage.

Fumble/Down Ball

When the football is dropped (or "fumbled") or touches the ground at any time, the play is stopped and the down is over. This prevents Players from diving on the ground after the football.

Goal Line

The line that must be crossed to get into the end zone for a touchdown or extra point.

Halftime

There are two 10-25 minute halves during the 20-50 minute game. Between the halves, play is stopped for two minutes. This time can be used as a water break and to discuss strategy. Teams will switch field direction when they return from halftime, and the team that lost the coin toss in the first half, starts the second half with the ball on its own 5 yard/metre line.

Handoff

A direct exchange of the football from one Offensive Player to another.

Huddle

A huddle is when the offense and/or defense gather separately on the field, between plays to call plays or discuss strategy. Coaches are allowed in the huddle with younger Players.

Interception

When a Defensive Player catches a pass intended for an Offensive Player. The interception can be run back by the Defensive Player toward the opponent's end zone.

Line of Scrimmage (LOS)

The imaginary line showing the offensive position on the field. The ball is snapped and each play begins from the line of scrimmage.



Midfield

A line across the centre of the field that the team on offense must cross to earn a first down.

Mirror

When a Defensive Player closely follows an Offensive Player by copying (mirroring) his/her moves and direction.

Motion

When one Wide Receiver (WR) or Running Back (RB) switches his/her location before the ball is snapped. The RB or WR may run in either direction toward the sidelines but not toward the line of scrimmage.

No Running Zone

The area five yards/metres from each goal line where running plays are not allowed. Handoffs, tosses, and pitches are also not allowed in this area.

Offense

The team with possession of the football.

Offside

When either team crosses the line of scrimmage before the football is snapped. This is a penalty.

Pass

When the QB throws the football to a teammate.

Safety

When an Offensive Player is caught in his/her own endzone with the football and a Defensive Player captures his/her flag, the play is stopped and the defense is awarded 2 points. The defensive team also is awarded possession of the football at its 5-yard/metre line.

Screen

A pass to the WR or RB in the flat. The QB usually fakes a pass to a WR or RB in the opposite direction before passing to the intended WR.

Shotgun

The formation in which the QB stands away from the Center, usually 3-5 yards/metres, to take the snap. This will allow the QB more time to look for the WRs and watch for a blitz.



Snap

When the Center passes the football between his/her legs to a QB.

Substitution

Exchanging Players on the field. This is done at the end of a play, during time outs, and after touchdowns or turnovers.

Touchdown (TD)

A touchdown is scored when the offense runs or passes the football into the end zone and is awarded 6 points.

Time Outs

Each team is allowed two 60-second time outs per half. This time is used to stop the game clock and discuss strategy.

Toss

When the QB pitches the football to a teammate.

Turnover

A loss of possession of the football. When the offense fails to score or get a first down, or the football is intercepted, the defense gains possession of the ball.



Fundamental Skills

Introduction to Offensive Fundamental Skills

The Center's Skills

The Quarterback's Skills

The Centre

Types of Pivots

Dropback Action and Setting up to Pass

Sprint Out

The Quarterback: Running Back Ball Exchange

Running Back Techniques

Carrying the Ball

Throwing the Ball

Receiver Skills

Pass Pattern Fundamentals

Pass Receiving Fundamentals

After the Catch

Carrying and Running with the Ball

Introduction to Defensive Fundamental Skills

The Rusher (Blitzer)

Defensive Backs

Introduction to Offensive Fundamental Skills

Flag Football emphasizes the use of the pass as the primary offensive strategy. The most common formation employed by the offense from which to execute a pass play is called the “shotgun” formation. This means that the Quarterback sets up a number of yards/metres back from the line of scrimmage behind the Center and the other Players are aligned as Receivers. The ball is passed back from the Center to the Quarterback by a long snap rather than being placed in the Quarterback’s hands as in a direct snap. The “shotgun” is essentially a passing formation and emphasizes a medium to long-range passing attack. The direct snap or under the centre snap is recommended for same gender teams.

The Center's Skills

The Center plays a very significant role in football. Essentially, without the Center, a scrimmage play cannot begin. A smooth exchange of the ball, from the Center to the Quarterback, is required. The faster and more efficient the exchange, the quicker the offensive play may be put into effect.

Center’s Stance and Grip

To deliver the ball effectively to the Quarterback, the Center must assume a proper “three-point” stance:

- Place the feet parallel or with a slight stagger, but not greater than shoulder width apart.
- Have the weight slightly forward on the balls of the feet, with the back parallel to the ground, knees bent, and the head up.
- Place the ball on the ground, directly below or slightly forward of the head.

and

- Grip the ball with the “throwing” hand as if to throw a forward pass. The free arm can provide additional balance after the throwing motion.
- Rest the free arm either on the knee or thigh.

Experiment, if necessary, with the placement of the hands on the ball to ensure an efficient, powerful “snap”. For example, rolling the dominant hand under the ball may help. It is important to retain a good grip regardless of hand positioning.



Fig08FF

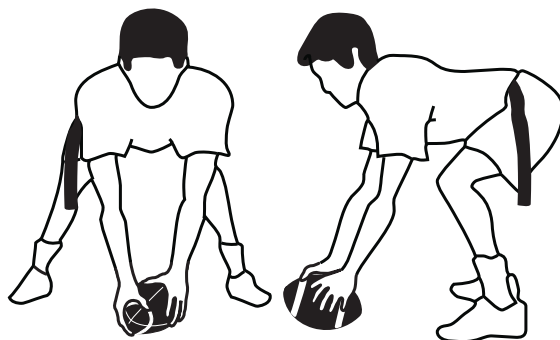


Fig09FF



Center's Snap

The Center passes (snaps), between his/her legs, the ball back to the Quarterback, in the shotgun formation, in a spiralling manner. The technique for throwing a spiral is the same hand action as throwing a spiral on a forward pass. (See Forward Passing Fundamentals for details)

The Quarterback's Skills

The Quarterback's Shotgun Stance

Depending on the ability of the Center to provide an accurate and crisp snap, the Quarterback assumes a comfortable stance at the appropriate depth (3-5 yards/metres) back from the Center. Considering the strength of the Quarterback's throwing arm, and the ability of the Center to snap the ball, younger Quarterback's may have to set up closer to the Line of Scrimmage (LOS). There is a tendency in the shotgun to set up too deep. Depth consistency is important for the Center, so care must be taken to set at the proper depth.

An efficient shotgun stance for the Quarterback is as follows:

- The feet are underneath the armpits, with the right foot staggered to the instep of the left foot (for right handed Quarterbacks – left foot suggested for left handed Quarterbacks).
- The knees are comfortably bent with weight on the balls of the feet, inside edges.
- The back is flat, with shoulders parallel to LOS.
- The head is up "reading" the defensive alignment.
- The hands rest comfortably on thighs.
- The eyes focus on the ball, just before the snap.
- On the snap, look the ball into hands and catch it with both hands.
- Bring the ball into sternum with both hands.

Once the "snap" has occurred, there are three methods to get the ball from the Quarterback to one of his/her teammates. There are handoffs, lateral passes (pitch, toss) and forward passes.

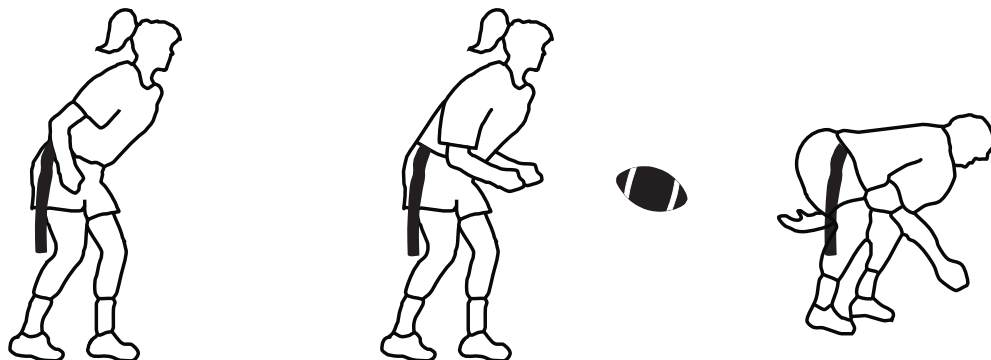


Fig10FF



Setting Up To Pass

Once the Quarterback has received the “snap”, he/she can deliver a pass from that point.

If the ball is to be delivered quickly from the “shotgun” position, or the “under” the centre position the Quarterback must develop the habit of adjusting his/her feet so that the front shoulder and hip are aimed to the intended “reception point” before the football is thrown.

This is accomplished by keeping a narrow base, standing tall, head up, weight on balls of the feet, with the football held at the sternum with both hands, and then essentially bouncing on both feet to the required position while maintaining the correct posture.

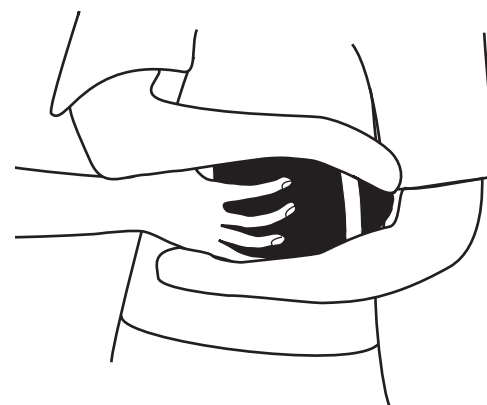
The Hand-Off

The hand-off is a direct exchange from one Player to another. To effectively execute a hand-off, the Player receiving the ball creates a pocket with his/her arms in which the Quarterback will place the ball. The Receiver should lift his/her elbow closest to the Quarterback high so that the Quarterback can easily place the ball in the pocket.

There is a distinct period of time during which the responsibility for the ball is transferred from the Quarterback to the ball carrier.



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Lateral Passing (Toss)

There are various lateral passing techniques, using either one or two hands, but the most effective method to reduce the chance of fumbling is the Two Hand Underhand Lateral Pass.

1. Grasp the ball with both hands.
2. Pivot to the left or right on the appropriate foot (Tossing the ball to the right, pivot on the left foot ... Tossing the ball to the left, pivot on the right foot. This pivot is called the Open Pivot.)
3. Step in the direction of the pass with the other foot.
4. Shovel pass the ball underhanded to the Receiver in a nice, easy motion. This should result with the ball not spinning or flipping allowing for a soft catch.
5. Follow through by extending the arms toward the Receiver and transferring the weight to the forward foot.

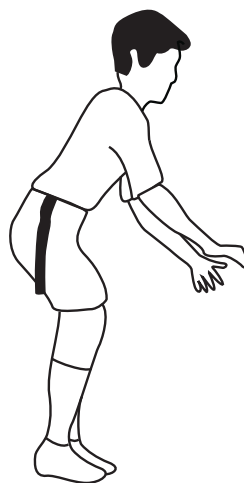
Quarterback – Centre-Quarterback Exchange Under Centre

The Centre-Quarterback exchange with the Quarterback positioned immediately behind the centre normally starts with the offensive centre “snapping” the ball between his/her legs backwards. The Quarterback, who initiates a run or pass play. This exchange is recommended for same gender teams.

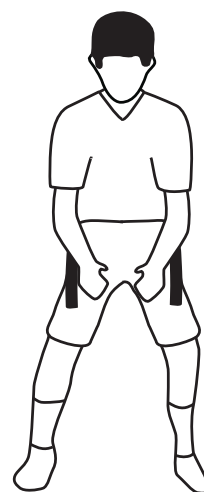
The **Centre-Quarterback Exchange** technique facilitates a quick, smooth transition of the ball from the ground to the hands of the Quarterback.

The Quarterback Stance

- Place feet no wider than armpit to armpit, slightly toed in and parallel to each other.
- Weight on the inside edge of the balls of the feet; the heels have little or no weight on them.
- Bend knees to accommodate the size of the centre, keeping the back fairly erect with head up.



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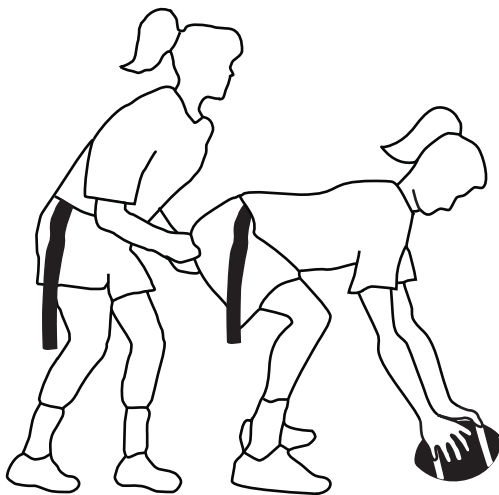


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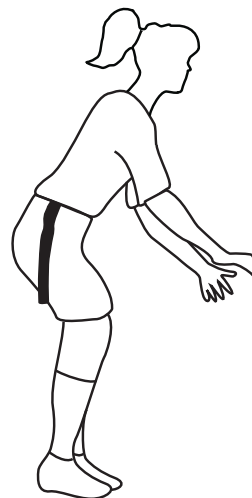


Arm / Hands

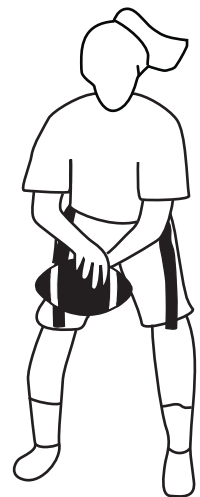
- Place the “throwing” arm, underneath the centre with the palm down and the fingers comfortably spread.
- Fit the bottom or non-throwing hand to the top hand at the base of the palms (see following illustration).
- The thumbs of both hands should align together.
- Apply pressure at the base of the palms to prevent the hands from splitting when receiving the ball.
- Spread the fingers of the bottom hand in a relaxed fashion, towards the ground.
- Cock the wrist of the top hand upwards.
- Once hands are under centre, set feet 8” to 12” behind the heels of the centre.
- Shoulders should be square to the line of scrimmage and eyes up on the opponents, not looking down between the centre’s legs for the ball.



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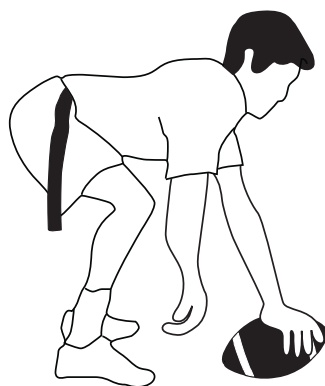


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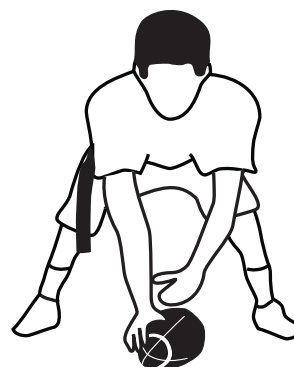
The Centre

Stance and Hand Position

- Place feet parallel or with a very slight stagger, spread a little wider than the hips.
- Knees are bent, head up and back is horizontal.
- Place the ball on the ground directly below the head, laces facing up.
- Place dominant hand at the top and side of the ball; grip the ball as if going to throw a pass with the thumb and index fingers forming the letter “V”.
- The thumb should be on the laces and the fingers at the side of the ball.
- Tilt the nose of the football slightly off the ground.
- Players with small hands or during poor weather conditions may wish to place the non-dominate hand on the other side of the football for additional support, but it does not contribute to the “snapping action” to the Quarterback.



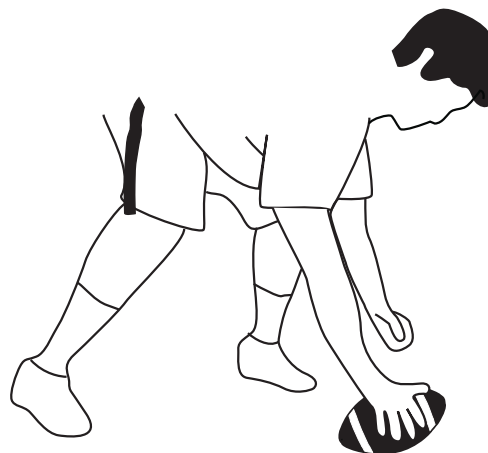
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The Exchange – Centre

- On the snap count, the centre lifts the ball crisply with one-half turn into the quarterback’s top hand position.
- As the ball rotates toward the target, the centre’s elbow flexes and the hand turns so that the palm faces the palm of the quarterback’s top hand (i.e. like shaking hands).
- The snap should be direct to the quarterback’s top hand pressure; arching the ball in a pendulum action is slower and forces the head of the centre down.



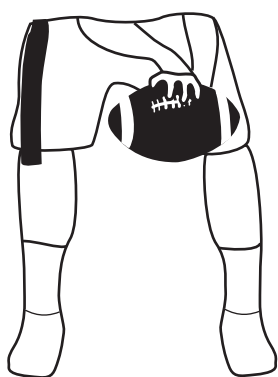
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Initial Movement – Cleaning the Centre

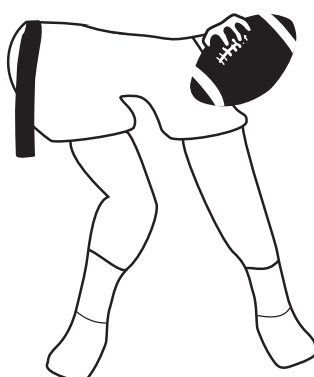
Once the Quarterback has received the ball from the Centre, he/she will typically have to turn his/her body to carry out the next phase of the play. This is done most effectively by pivoting on the ball of the foot either right or left, depending on how the play is to be executed.

Technique

All pivots begin by putting weight on the foot opposite the pivot-foot, pushing hard off that foot, and then rotating about the ball of the pivot-foot which now carries the body's weight. The quarterback must understand exactly where (i.e., on which foot), his/her weight is distributed.



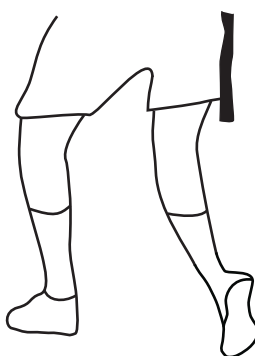
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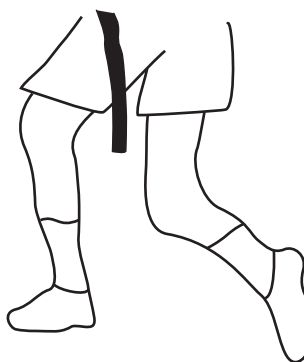
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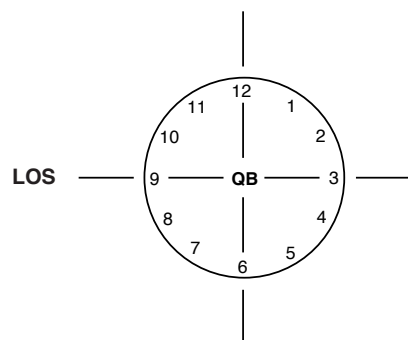
- Elevate heel of pivot-foot – turning is accomplished only on the ball of the foot.
- Head precedes the pivot; “the body follows where the head and eyes lead” is a good principle to teach.
- To pivot effectively keep turning radius to a minimum; keep elbows in during pivot and finish the amount of body turn required (on the pivot-foot) before stepping out of the turn with the non-pivot foot.
- Keep knee of pivot-leg bent throughout the turn; head remains at same level throughout the pivot – it should not rise.

Establishing Direction in Movement Away from the Center

Here is a frame of reference on which the quarterback can base the direction of his/her initial movement away from the center. Not only will this allow the athlete to evaluate the correctness of his/her movement, it guarantees that each quarterback on a team will establish consistency of movement within the offensive scheme.

Clock Reference

An effective teaching tool is to paint a clock on the practice field.



CS059

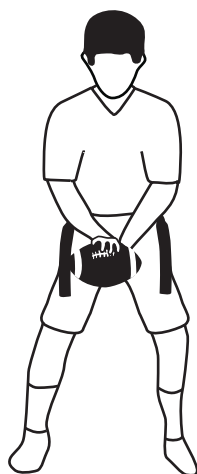
- Quarterback stands in the middle, facing 12 o'clock.
- Quarterback assumes a good stance.
- Quarterback is told to turn to any hour of the clock, using a specific pivot.
- Coach and athlete can now check correctness and consistency of movement away from the center.

Types of Pivots

Open Pivot

This action is defined when the quarterback initiates his/her turn towards, and moves in the direction of, the point of attack and is perhaps the first technique taught in moving away from the center. The first step is taken with the foot closest to the point of attack (i.e., right, going right and left going left). As defined, the quarterback can open pivot from 1 to 6 o'clock going right, and from 11 to 6 o'clock going left.

Open Pivot to 3 O'Clock



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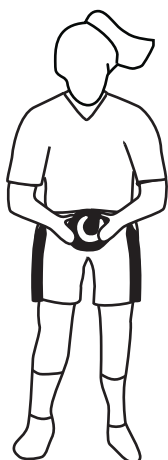


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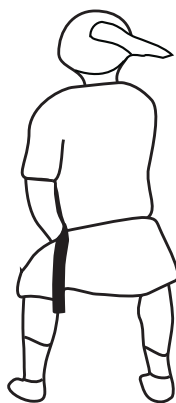


- When open-pivoting to 3 o'clock (going right), turn (pivot) on left foot and take first step with right foot leading to 3 o'clock.
- Take weight on the right foot as the ball is being snapped.
- With knees bent, push off right foot (inside edge, ball of foot) and pivot on left foot to 3 o'clock. Weight is transferred to left foot just as pivot is initiated.
- Keep head at same level as in stance and keep knees bent throughout pivot.
- Keep elbows in, ball in navel, head leads the turn, with eyes focusing concentration on the mesh point with the running back.
- Pivot on left foot is complete when toes point to 3 o'clock; right foot then takes an 8 – 12 cm/in step toward 3 o'clock (lead step) as in diagram above.
- As first step is taken note that the toes of each foot point to 3 o'clock, that is, pivot is completed before stepping out of the turn.
- Keep weight and initial contact point of each step centered on the balls of the feet; avoid heel strike seen in normal walking and keep the knees bent during movement.

Open Pivot and First Step to 3 O'Clock



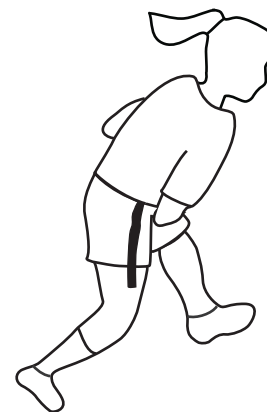
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Dropback Action and Setting up to Pass

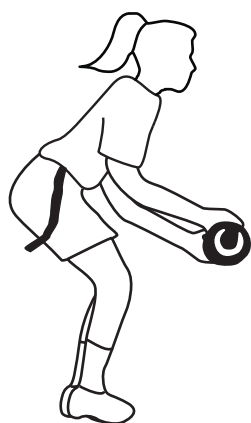
Quarterbacks can set to throw the football at varying depths and locations behind the centre. (Immediate, 3 Step, 5 Step, 7 Step) The common concern is that the time interval between taking the snap and being able to deliver the football with consistent accuracy and selection be as short as possible. It is also critical that the depth at which the quarterback 'sets to throw' be coordinated with the time that receivers require to come open.

The action starts with the quarterback taking the snap and initiating movement away from the centre unless the play calls for a quick release pass which the quarterback would set immediately after receiving the snap and prepare to pass. See previous "Setting up to Pass".

Cross-over Dropback Technique (right-handed passer)

Step One

- Open pivot and get as much depth as possible with the lead step; aim for 6 o'clock with the pivot foot.



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- Turn hips towards 6 o'clock while torso (trunk and shoulders) remains parallel to the sideline.
- Bring the ball, with both hands, through the navel, to the sternum, with long axis of the football perpendicular to the ground; with the step, bring the ball towards the armpit of the throwing arm.
- Lean shoulders over lead foot as much as possible.
- Keep head and eyes focused upfield for coverage keys.
- The primary emphasis of the lead step is to gain depth ("depth step") illustrated by graphic above.



Step Two

- A cross-over step – left leg crosses over mid-line of body; not as much depth can be gained with this step and emphasis is therefore on “quickness” or “speed”.
- Aiming point of this step is 6 o’clock.
- Push off toes with complete leg extension from depth step (step one).



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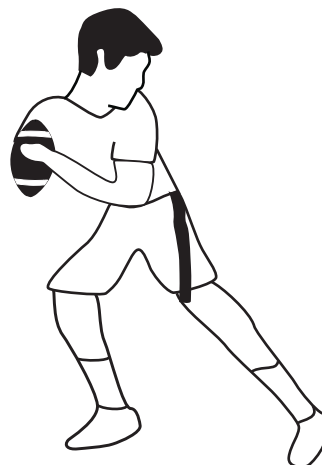


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- Keep hips flexible.
- Move the ball at level of the sternum to the armpit of the non-throwing side.
- Body carriage as in first step.

Step Three

- Basically a repetition of step one – a lead-depth step.
- Aiming point for this step is 6 o’clock.



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- It is important that the ball moves toward the armpit of the throwing arm – i.e., in drop action the ball moves smoothly and rhythmically from armpit to armpit – at level of sternum – 2" to 3" off chest.
- Body carriage as in first step.
- Thereafter, the drop action is a combination of repeated cross-over and lead steps.

Setting Up to Throw (right-handed passer)

This is a difficult technique, particularly for the novice quarterback. The emphasis has been on the quickness and depth of the dropback action. Now the quarterback must stop this movement with equal quickness, establish his/her position as 'set', be under complete control and ready to throw the football under the pressure of a pass rush.

The sixth and seventh steps of the dropback action determine the effectiveness of the quarterback's 'set'. The sixth step is a cross-over step and the seventh is a lead step.

Sixth Step

- Shorten length of step; turn foot parallel to LOS and plant the outside edge of the foot hard into the ground, keeping the knee bent.
- Fight to keep weight and shoulders forward – braking, control action.



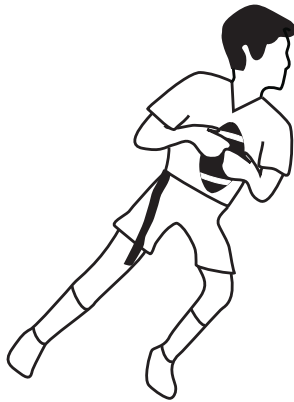
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Seventh Step

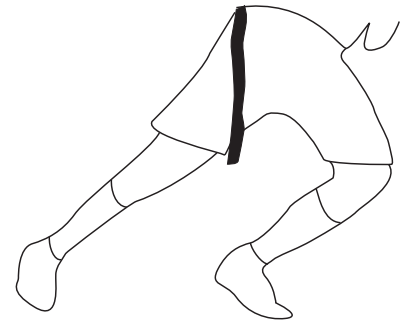
- Take a short, final braking step onto the instep of the right foot over a slightly bent knee.
- Try to keep shoulders forward, don't let hips or shoulders come back over the plant foot.



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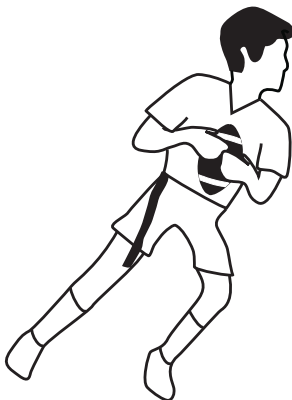
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- The last foot movement (and most important) is to “gather” the body over a very narrow base.

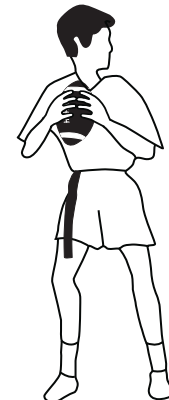
Gather Step of Quarterback



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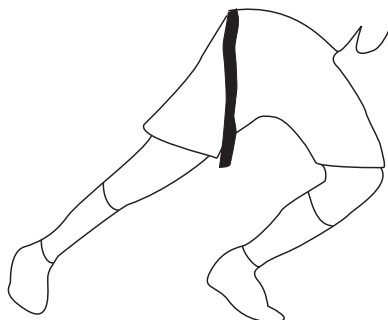


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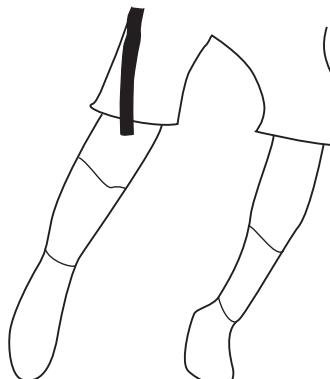


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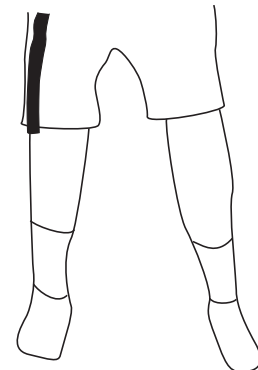
Footwork in Gather Step



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- Pull plant foot (seventh step) forward, up under the body to narrow the base and stand tall; weight on balls of feet.
- A common fault of young quarterbacks is using too wide a base in the set, causing them to overstride when throwing the football.



Sprint Out

The sprint out is designed for the quarterback to clear the center by pivoting to the side of the desired sprint out.

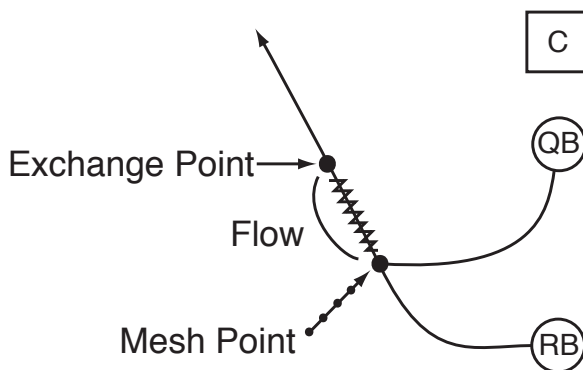
It is designed to move the quarterback away from a quick pass rusher and challenge one side of the field.

- As in the open pivot the quarterback initiates their turn towards the direction of the sprint out then gaining width and depth.
- The head and eyes should lead the quarterback.
- The ball should be held with both hands at sternum level.
- The quarterback will search for a receiver in that part of the field that the sprint out is taken.
- Once finding a receiver the quarterback can turn up field, then squaring up with the hips and shoulders towards the receiver.
- The ball is brought up and prepared to pass.
- The quarterback steps directly at the receiver with the foot opposite the passing arm while moving the hips and shoulders toward the receiver.
- A normal throwing motion (see section on throwing motion) is used coming over the front foot.

The Quarterback: Running Back Ball Exchange

The Quarterback – Running Back exchange is not instantaneous. There is a time element during which the responsibility for the possession of the ball is transferred from the Quarterback to the Running Back. It is useful to think of the exchange as having three phases.

1. **The Mesh Point** – where the Quarterback and the Running Back meet and the Quarterback places the ball in the pocket made by the Running Back.
2. **The Flow** – the period of time (and movement) where possession of the ball is transferred to the Running Back.
3. **The Exchange Point** – where the Quarterback withdraws his/her hand from the ball and the Running Back has control of it.



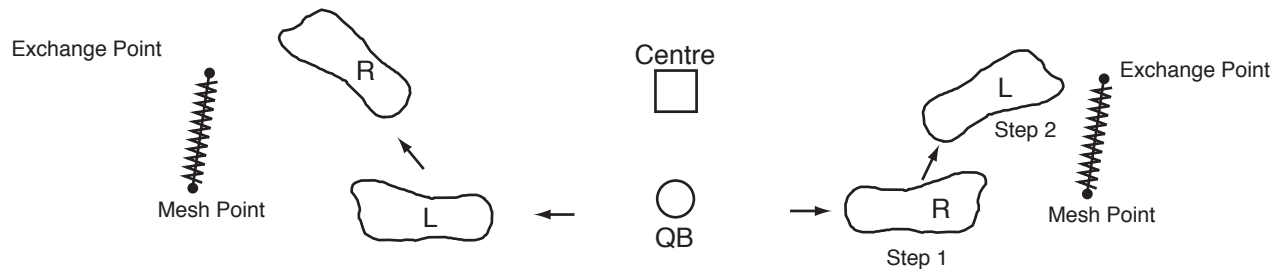
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Responsibilities

- The Quarterback must get to the mesh point first and establish the correct distance between himself/herself and the Running Back (not crowding him/her nor stretching to reach him/her). The Quarterback is responsible for placing the ball in the Running Back's pocket, and moving the ball through the flow phase of the exchange.
- The Running Back must consistently run the correct path to the point of attack. To do this, he/she cannot be looking for the football. He/she makes a pocket in which the ball will be placed, by raising his/her elbow which is closest to the Quarterback.

Quarterback Footwork

- When exchanging the ball to his/her left, the Quarterback will use the right foot and right hand at the exchange point in order to facilitate the flow portion of the exchange. When moving to their right, they will use their left foot and left hand.



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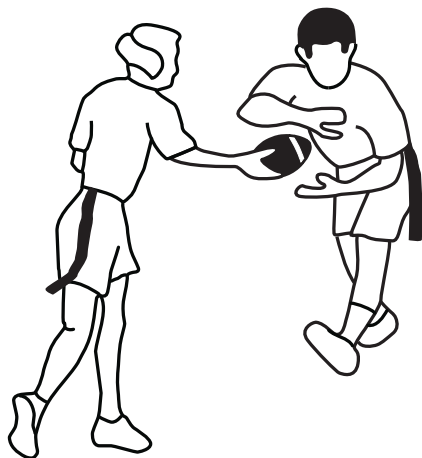
Quarterback Arm / Hand / Ball Techniques

- Carries the ball in both hands to the mesh point.
- As the Quarterback approaches the mesh point he/she removes the hand closest to the Running Back (so that the mesh, flow and exchange are made with the hand closest to the line of scrimmage). This will also facilitate the Quarterback's weight transfer during the flow phase of the exchange.
- Places the ball in pocket, maintains control of the ball in early stages of the flow phase, relinquishes control as the exchange point nears.
- Keeps hand on the football until the hand is even with his/her up-field hip (this is the exchange point).
- Withdraws hand to complete the exchange.



Running Back Techniques

- Runs correct path.
- Makes a pocket for the football as he/she nears the mesh point (keep elbow closed to the Quarterback high).
- Closes over the football and assumes control of it during the flow phase.
- Has possession of the ball at the exchange point.



Mesh Point

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Flow

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Bootleg

The quarterback uses a fake handoff to the running back to confuse the defense and a quick rusher.

- After the fake the ball is hidden on the hip of the quarterback away from the defense.
- As in the sprint out the quarterback focuses down field to select a receiver.
- Turning up field and squaring the hips and chest with the receiver.
- The ball is brought up and prepared to pass.
- The quarterback steps directly at the receiver with the opposite throwing arm, moving the hips and shoulders toward the receiver.
- A normal throwing motion is used coming over the front foot.



Carrying the Ball

When carrying the ball, the player uses three pressure points:

- Spreads middle finger and index finger over forward tip of ball
- Holds rear point of ball snugly under bicep
- Holds length of ball flat along forearm muscles and snugly against the ribs



Fig30FF

Throwing the Ball

The Grip

- Spread the fingers wide and allow them to rest on the football naturally. The last two (or maybe three) fingers may lie across the laces, about one-third of the way down the ball. The thumb serves as a brace beneath the ball.
- Grip the ball firmly, but do not squeeze it.
- The ball should not rest on the palm of the hand - leave space between the palm and the ball.
- For smaller hands the grip should be towards the end of the ball.

Have each student grip the ball and review his/her grip (work in pairs or groups, if you have a limited number of balls).

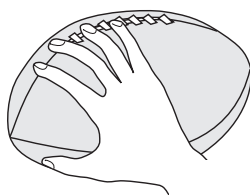


Fig147FF



Fig11FF

The Spiral

A spiral pass is accomplished by having the ball roll off the fingertips as it is released.

With the ball resting on the fingers (widthwise) flick the ball off the finger tips. The ball should roll off the finger tips and create a spiral.

Throwing Motion

1. Hold the ball close to the body at about chest height.
2. Stand tall with the body at right angles to the target, feet slightly staggered.
3. Focus on the target and bring the ball back close to the ear with both hands.
4. Step with the lead foot in the direction of the target.
5. Open the hips and rotate the shoulders square to the target.
6. Throw from an overhand position, with the elbow leading, and release the ball with a good wrist snap.
7. As the ball is released, the hand should finish with the palm facing the ground, which helps impart the proper spiral. The ball should roll off the fingers, leaving the little finger first and the index finger last.
8. A good follow through will provide maximum power to the pass. The throwing arm should come across the body and point toward the target, and the back leg should finish parallel to the front leg.

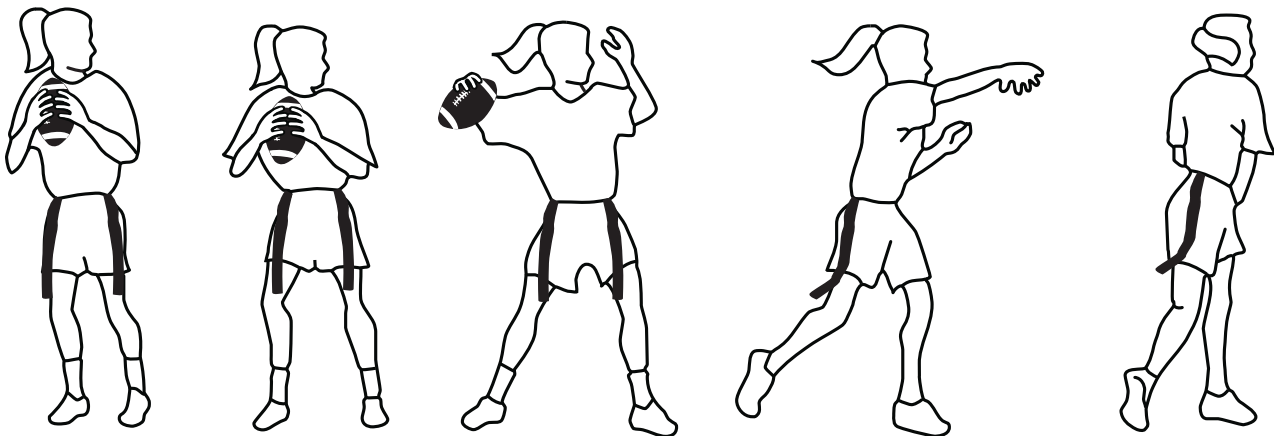


Fig12FF



Throwing to a Moving Target

Reception Point

The point where the ball and Receiver converge to make the catch is called the “reception point”. The Quarterback is taught to throw to a spot, away from the Defender that the Receiver can run to, in order to catch the ball (it is seldom right at the Receiver).

Against Player-to-Player coverage, the Quarterback leads the Receiver into open areas so he can catch the ball in full stride.

Against zone coverage, the Quarterback throws the ball into open areas between Defenders and expects the Receiver to see where the Defenders are located and get into the space between them. This may necessitate the Receiver slowing down or accelerating as he/she comes out of the break, in order to adjust to the reception point.

Correcting Throwing Problems

Do not reconstruct the Quarterback’s throwing motion. Know what causes poor throwing and focus on improving the one or two techniques that are the source of the problem. Performance is the only measure of success; do not change if a Quarterback is getting desired results.

Usually throwing problems are the result of one technique in the sequence of throwing. The key to correction is to analyze the cause and attend to it. Concentrate on coaching only one point at a time.

The Most Common Problems	Technique Problem
Overthrowing	- releasing behind top of arm arc - opening front shoulder too soon - overstriding
Underthrowing	- releasing in front of arm arc - elbow not leading arm - understriding (causes inability to throw with velocity) - no spiral - ensure proper grip - forearm not pronated - no wrist snap and acceleration at release - not pulling down on ball with index finger - upper arm less parallel to ground
Inaccuracy	- guide step not at target (reception point) - front shoulder opening too soon or too late - lack of concentration (reduce size of visual concentration) - repetition brings consistency (with Receivers of routes)
Inability to throw with velocity	- weight not transferred - poor hip and shoulder rotation - ball release – not pulling down on ball - no follow-through



Receiver Skills

Pass Route Technique

Due to the nature of the game, pass receiving is an integral element in Flag Football. As most offensive yardage is gained through the air, the passing attack is essential for success.

The basis of the game is the acquiring of good fundamentals. Elaborate offensive strategy is useless, unless the basic requirements of consistent passing accuracy and reliable pass catching ability can be established. The Quarterback and the Receivers must work together to build a successful relationship.

1. *Stance*

The two-point stance often affords the best manoeuvrability for the Receiver, although some individuals may prefer the three-point stance. Regardless of the type of stance used, the Receiver should make a point of setting up in such a way to take advantage of the basic principles of even weight distribution and proper foot placement. Thus the stance must be the catapult for a quick, explosive release.

Two Point Stance

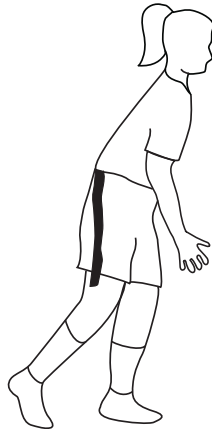
1. Why Use?

- Better vision of field, ball, and defensive alignment.
- Presnap motion or movement.
- Aid opportunity for release from LOS.

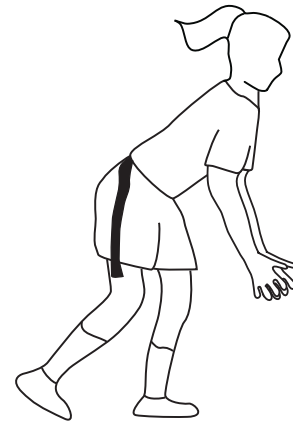
2. Stance Emphasis

- With novice receivers it is recommended that the most comfortable foot position be assumed (usually with the dominant foot back) regardless of which side of the ball the receiver is on. This may change at more elite levels where counting steps in a precise route becomes important.
- Have feet narrowly spaced and with a reasonably long stagger.
- Keep weight mostly on the front foot (on ball of foot with heel just off the ground) with some weight still on the toes of the back foot – heel high off the ground.
- Slightly bend front leg at the knee – lean upper body forward so both arms and shoulders are ahead of the lead foot (hands should hang below the waist at thigh pad level as opposed to thigh pad level).
- Have head up – eyes watching downfield until just prior to the snap then focus inside on the ball (use sight of the ball being snapped to initiate movement since the receiver might not hear or remember the snap count).

Side View

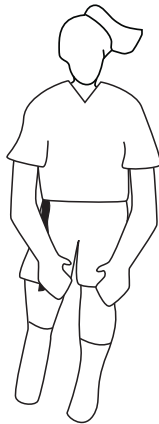


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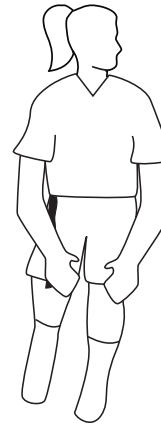


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Front View



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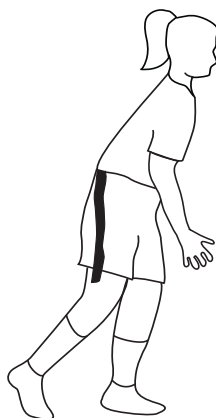
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3. Initial Movement

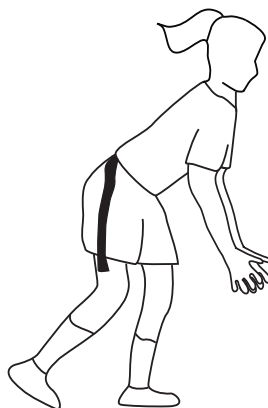
- Explode out of the stance by pushing (extending) hard and quickly with the back leg, while rolling forward over the front leg.
- Take first short step with the back foot as the opposite arm drives forward.
- Avoid taking a false or rocker step back on to the back foot.
- Initial drive out of the stance comes from a strong push and extension from the lead leg – this becomes the second step.
- When rolling forward over the front leg and pushing off it in the stance, keep upper body leaning forward and low, while taking short driving steps to accelerate to full speed.
- Keep head up and eyes alert while using a driving arm action to help acceleration (arm bent at elbow 90 degrees – hand driven from hip to shoulder).



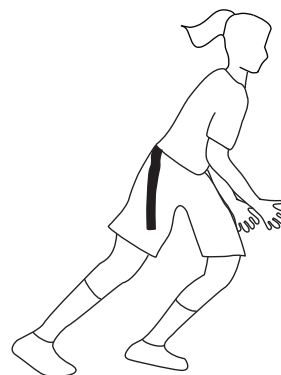
Receiver coming out of Two Point Stance – Side View



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2. The Release

Depending upon the type of defense, which is being played, the Receiver may wish to vary his or her release off the line of scrimmage in a variety of ways:

a) Releasing Against a Zone Defense

If the Receiver comes up against a zone defense, the release off the line of scrimmage should allow the Receiver to follow their designated pass pattern as efficiently as possible. The Receiver should explode off the line of scrimmage in order to get to the reception point as quickly as possible. Unnecessary fakes should be avoided.

b) Releasing Against a Person to Person Defense

i) Loose Person to Person

When a Receiver notes that his/her Defender has lined up over him/her at about 5 to 7 yards/metres in an obvious person-to-person situation, every effort should be made to shake off the Defender through the use of fakes. The fake will hopefully put the Defender in a bad situation from which the Receivers may take advantage. These fakes will give the Receiver that extra time needed to get open.

ii) Tight Person to Person

Often a Defender will line up over the Receiver, a yard/metre off the line of scrimmage. This is a tactic used to break up the timing of the pattern. When faced with this situation the Receiver may use one of two releases. The Receiver can either take a quick step outside and around the Defender or he/she may fake outside and release inside (or vice-versa).



3. *The Pass Pattern*

It should be remembered that any of the Receivers are potential Quarterback targets. Therefore, in order to keep the defense guessing as to who the primary Receiver is, all of the Receivers should be working to get open.

One of the keys for success in the passing game is the consistency of the pass route. The Receiver should practice running pass routes to the point where he/she can run those routes in the same way each time. Running the assigned pattern is essential.

The point at which the Receiver finishes the release and makes the required cut for the designated route is known as the break point. As soon as the Receiver has made the cut at the break point, he/she should immediately look for the ball. The Receiver should actually be prepared to catch the ball at the break point. This requires the utmost concentration on the part of the Receiver.

Catching the ball cleanly is the primary responsibility of the Receiver, it is only after the ball has been caught securely that the Receiver should attempt to gain any additional yardage. The ball should then be tucked away under the arm for safety.

Pass Pattern Fundamentals

The following are pass patterns, which students may run during the course of a Flag Football game. Provided below is a brief description of the patterns. In teaching the patterns, it would be useful to place pylons along the intended path to provide the students with reference points.

When teaching the patterns for the first time, do so without a Quarterback throwing the football. This will allow the Receiver to focus on the proper footwork for the pattern, as opposed to making a catch.

Key Points in Running a Pass Route:

- Run the required distance of the pattern.
- Slow down at the break point and come under control.
- Lower centre of gravity at the break point.
- Plant or cut and push off of the foot opposite the intended direction. (If cutting to the right, plant and push off with the left foot).
- Look for the ball after the break is made in the pattern.

i) Slant

Receiver must explode off the line of scrimmage to give the Defender the impression of going deep. The Receiver must make an angled break off the line of scrimmage and immediately look for the ball.

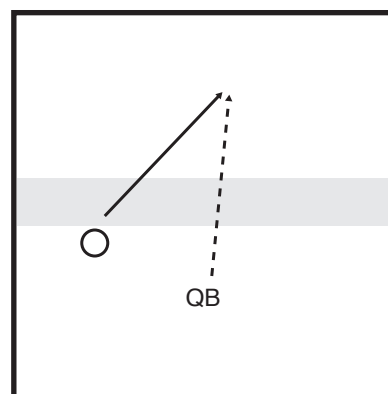


Fig13FF

ii) Hook

Receiver runs out 10-12 yards/metres* and turns back to Quarterback. Receiver continues back to Quarterback (does not wait for ball to come to him/her). Hook is always to the inside (into the Quarterback).

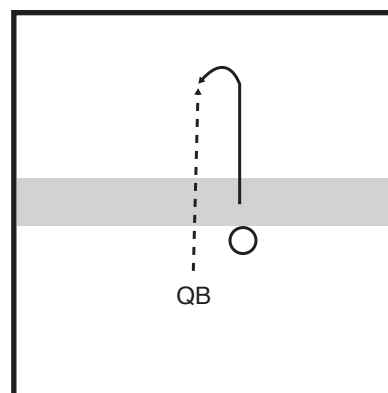


Fig14FF

iii) Square In & Square Out

Receiver runs out 10-12 yards/metres
And breaks at a 90 degree angle in
or out. A Square In is always into the
Quarterback; a Square Out is always a
cut away from the Quarterback.

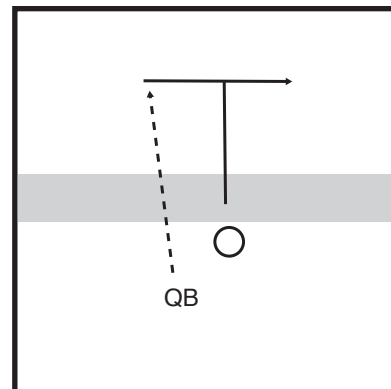


Fig15FF

iv) Fly (Go)

Receiver runs straight down, looking
for the ball over the inside shoulder.

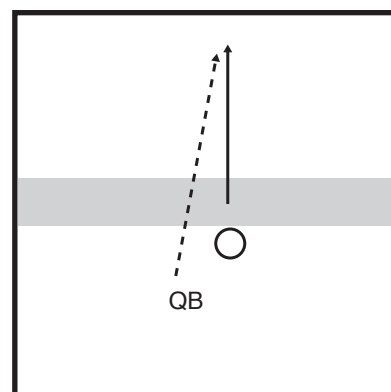


Fig16FF

v) Post & Flag

The Receiver runs out to 12 -15 yards/
metres* and breaks at 45° in (Post) or
45° out (Flag).

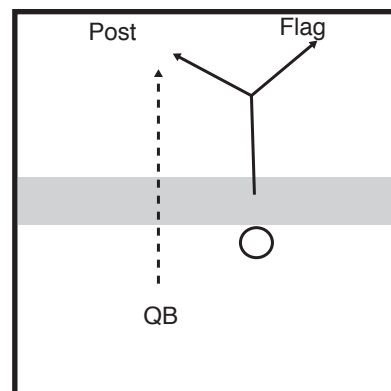


Fig17FF

vi) Curl

The curl route begins much the same
as the post with the same wide split
and hard drive at the Defender. Run
out 12-15 yards/metres*, take three
steps towards the post then work back
towards the Quarterback and the ball.

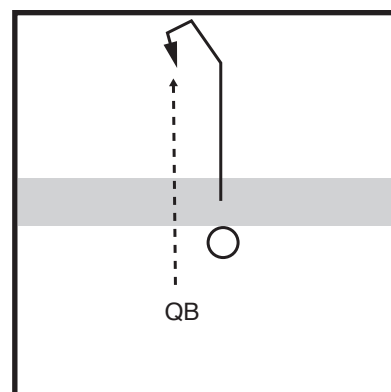


Fig19FF

vii) Fade

Receiver gets outside position on Defender. Runs deep maintaining 5-7 yard/metre space from the sideline. The Quarterback throws the ball into that space over Receiver's outside shoulder. The Receiver stays between the Defender and the ball, and fades to the ball catching it over the outside shoulder.

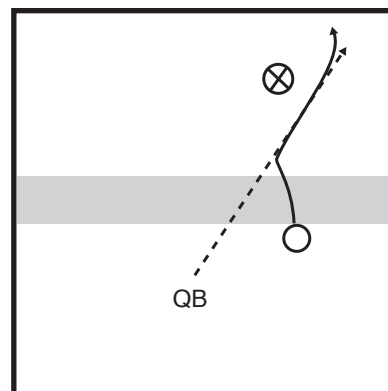


Fig18FF

viii) Post Corner

Start with the typical post move. Glance at the Quarterback on post move to fool Defender. Take three to five steps towards post before making the break towards corner.

Look for the ball over outside shoulder.

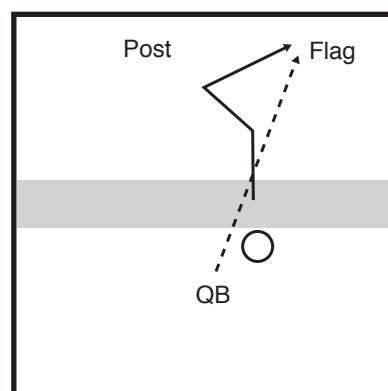


Fig20FF

ix) Down Out & Down

Receiver runs 10-12 yards/metres* and breaks at a 90° angle out. The Receiver takes three to five steps out before turning up field. The Receiver looks for the ball after turning up field.

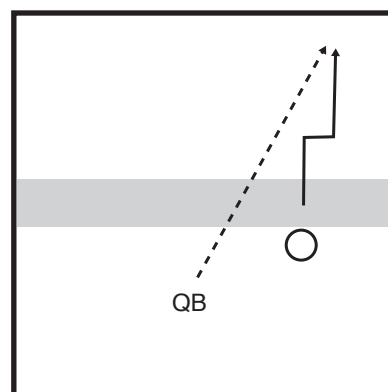


Fig21FF

x) Hook & Go

Run a hook pattern as described. After completing the hook, hold for a second or two to draw the Defender in, and then turn quickly and proceed down field. Check for ball over inside shoulder.

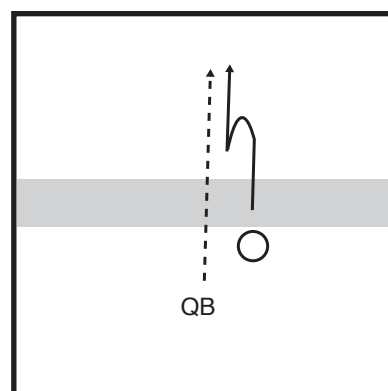


Fig23FF

xi) Hook & Slide

Run a hook pattern as described. After completing the hook slide laterally, turn and run to the sideline with the same technique as an out pattern.

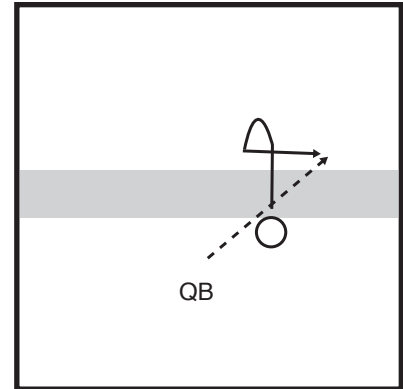


Fig22FF

xii) Quick Out

Receiver must explode off the line of scrimmage to give the Defender the impression of going deep. The Receiver cuts immediately to sideline and looks for the ball.

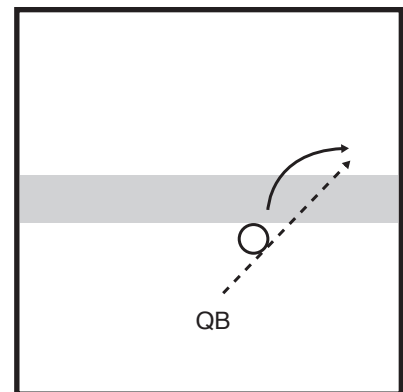


Fig24FF

Once you have covered all the patterns, incorporate a Quarterback into the drill and have them throw the ball to the Receiver. To increase the success, choose Quarterbacks who have more refined throwing skills.

*The length of the patterns can be shortened for those students with weaker throwing skills.



Sample Passing Tree

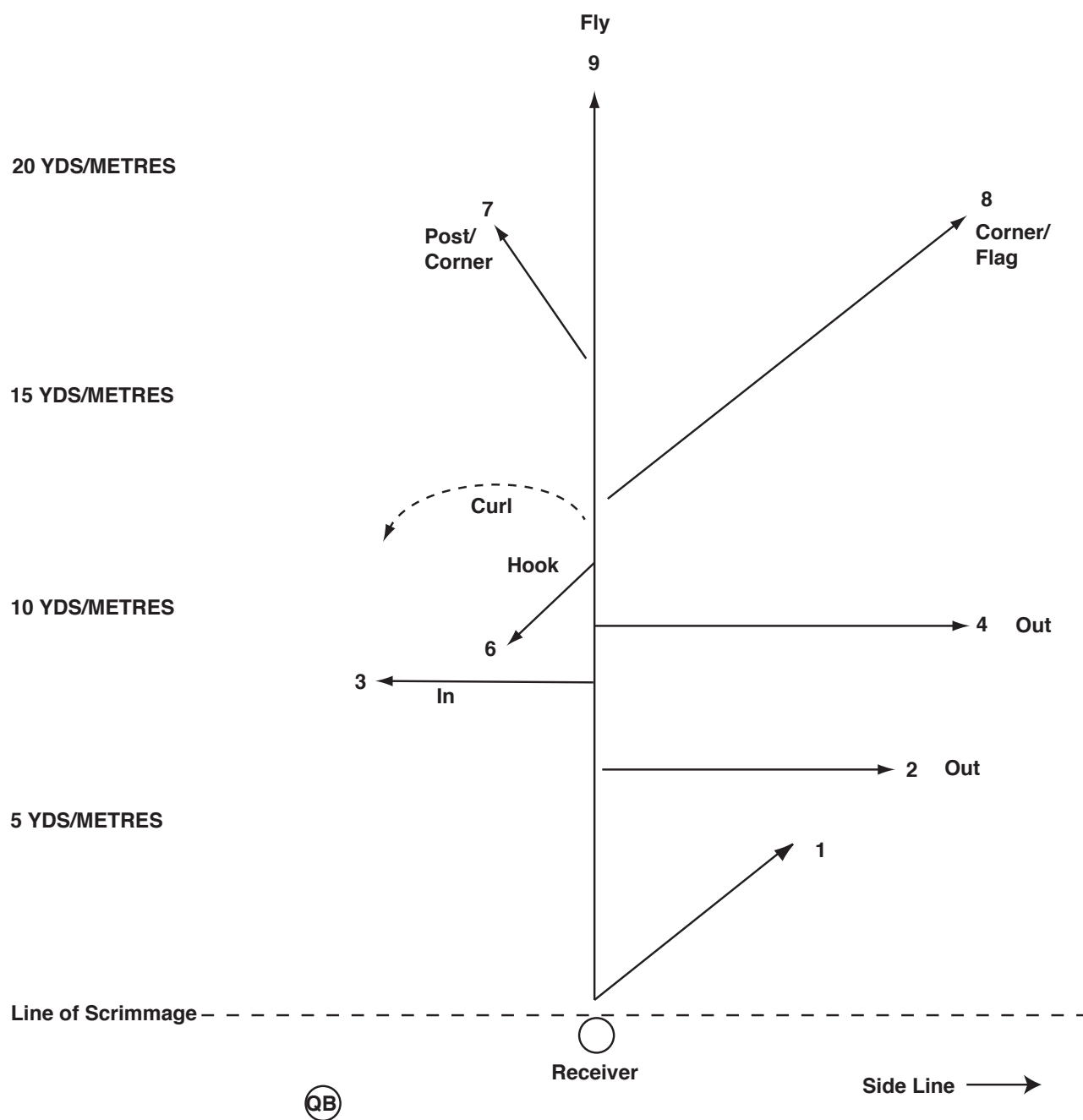


Fig143FF

Pass Receiving Fundamentals

Since Flag Football is primarily a passing game and every Player is an eligible Receiver, the art of catching the ball under a variety of circumstances is extremely important.

Receiving the Pass Above the Waist

1. Shoulders are perpendicular to flight of the ball. Extend arms (but keep elbows slightly flexed) toward the ball. Fingers spread; palms out facing passer; tips of thumbs touching.
2. As the ball touches the hands, allow the fingers and wrists to move back toward forearms to provide a more secure grip on the ball and cushion the catch.
3. Look ball into hands (missed pass result, in large part, by taking the eyes off of ball in the last 2-3 feet of its flight).



Fig25FF

Receiving the Pass Below the Waist

1. Shoulders are perpendicular to the flight of the ball.
2. Extend arms out and down, with elbows flexed and close together. If necessary, lower body by bending at the knees, not the waist. Fingers spread, palms out, facing passer, with the tips of little fingers touching.
3. As the ball contacts the hands, the fingers, wrists and arms give, in order to absorb the impact of the ball.

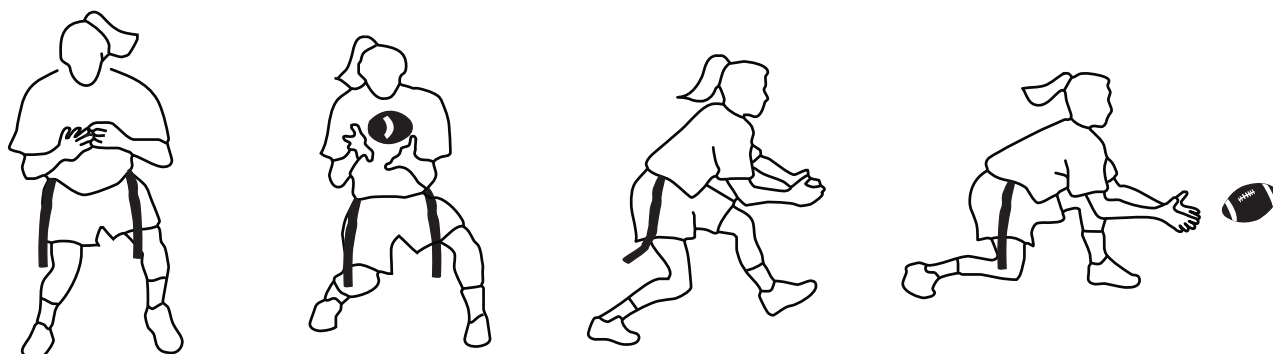


Fig26FF

Receiving the Pass Over the Shoulder

Catching over the shoulder is a skill required when the Receiver is running away from the passer.

Emphasize the following points:

1. Judge the flight of the ball.
2. Run with a natural arm motion until the ball approaches. Extend the arms at the last moment; fingers spread, little fingers touching, thumbs apart, palms facing the flight of the ball.
3. The elbows should be close together to provide a greater surface area for catching the ball.
4. Look the ball into the hands.
5. Give with the ball on contact, and gather the ball in. Arms should be relaxed.
6. Tuck the ball away. Continue the run.

In their groups, or with their partners, have the passer throw the ball over the top of the Receiver. The ball must be arced over the top of the Receiver.

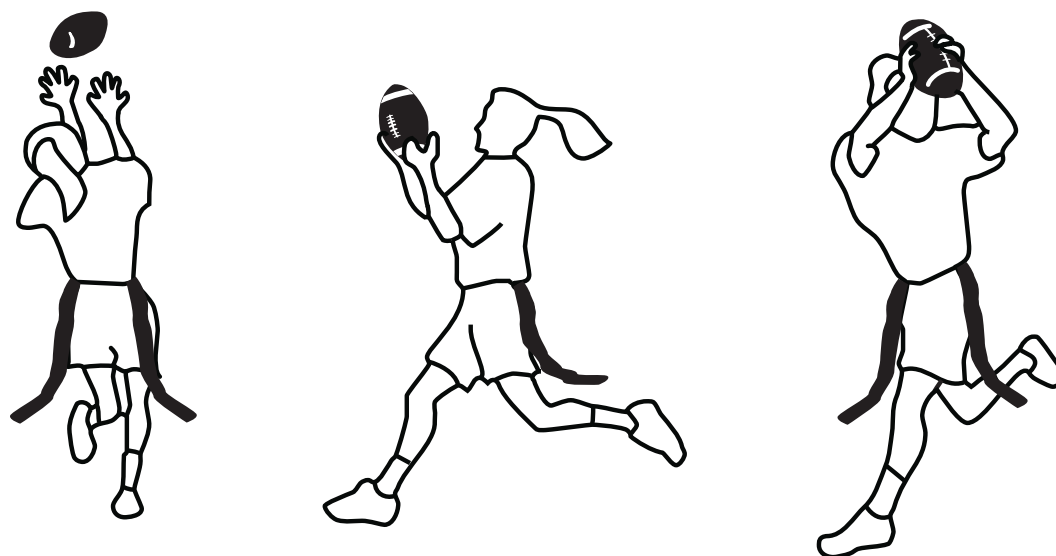


Fig27FF

Receiving the Pass on the Side

While accelerating out of the break, snap the head around to look for the ball, but keep running motion (including arms and shoulders) going in the direction of the reception point (the spot on the field where the ball and the Receiver meet and the reception can be made).

Continue the running motion with the arms until just before the ball arrives then thrust them out in the appropriate manner to make the reception.

Hands and arm position depends on the relationship of the Receiver to the flight of the ball.

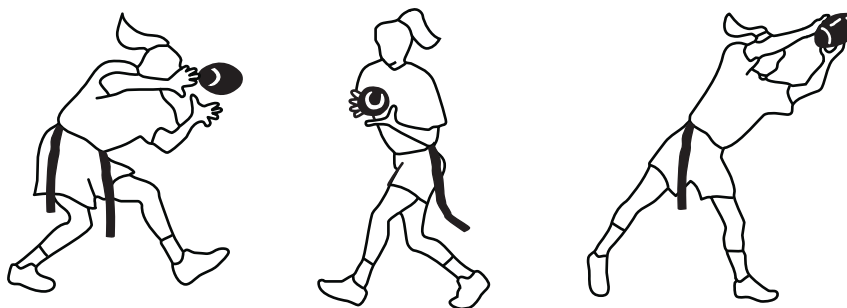


Fig28FF

Open Hand Position

- a) If the ball is in front and within easy reach, use hand position as in facing the passer - above the waist - (thumbs and forefingers together - arm closest to the ball on top - reaching out toward the ball) known as the open position.

This position enables the Receiver to make contact with the ball sooner and more securely than if he/she waits to trap it against his/her body. It is also more difficult for the Defender to knock down or strip the ball, as the Receiver will be shielding the reception point with his/her body.

Low Closed

- b) If the Receiver must reach out for the ball (high or low in front of him) then use the below the waist technique (little fingers together - elbows close - basket the ball) known as the closed position. This is true also for a Running Back receiving a pitch or toss.
- c) If the ball is behind the Receiver, stop and come back to it (catch as facing-above) or drag the hands behind in open or closed position (depends on the location of the ball) - may have to reverse pivot the entire body (a more advanced technique).



After the Catch

Once the reception is made, the Receiver must attempt to gain as much yardage as possible, but first he/she must secure possession of the ball and tuck it into the proper carrying position.



Fig29FF

Carrying and Running with the Ball

The skills of running with the football are introduced.

Points of emphasis in carrying a football:

1. When a Player receives a pass, a lateral, or possession of the ball he/she “tucks it away” in one arm while running with the ball.
2. Hold the ball utilizing the three points of pressure listed below:
 - Spread the fingers (middle or index) to the forward tip of the ball.
 - Hold the rear point of ball snugly under bicep, between the elbow joint and up toward the armpit area.
 - Hold the length of the ball flat along forearm muscles and snug against the ribs.
3. Tuck the ball firmly away.



Fig30FF

Introduction to Defensive Fundamental Skills

The Rusher (Blitzer)

Defensively, the Rusher is a very important Player. He/she is the first Player on his/her team to cross the line of scrimmage and whose assignment is to flag the Quarterback or force him/her to throw in a hurry. In this position speed and agility are essential. Every split second that the Quarterback has to throw just makes it that much more difficult for the Defensive Players to cover their "person".

Rusher Tips

1. Take a stance 7 yards/metres from the ball and to one side of the Offensive Center.
2. The Rusher should watch the ball and begin to rush only when the ball is snapped by the Center and not before to avoid an illegal rush penalty.
3. On the snap, dash straight ahead toward the Quarterback. Do not break stride or change direction.
4. Look at the chest to contain the Quarterback but aim your attack at a point just outside the Quarterback's non-throwing shoulder. Remember the Quarterback cannot run with the ball across the LOS, however the QB will scramble and is an eligible Receiver. The Rushers may be assigned to cover the QB in a passing situation if the ball is handed off to another Player.
5. Do not jump in the air to block a pass unless the Quarterback has committed himself/herself to release the ball, otherwise the Quarterback has an opportunity to beat your rush and gain valuable time to find an open Receiver.

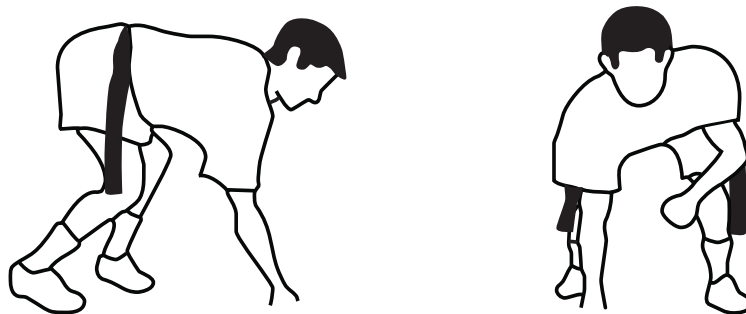


Fig31FF



Defensive Backs

Stance

Assume a parallel or slightly staggered stance, with either the inside or outside foot back. Put weight on the ball of the front foot, with the toe turned in slightly.

Head and eyes are up, focusing on the key.

Front foot is aligned under the nose, not shoulder, bend at the waist, drop the hips and flex the knees.

Keep shoulders over the knees to facilitate the initial movement and reaction to the snap.

Hold hands in front of sternum; arms bent to 90 degrees, ready to assist in the movement.

Tips

- Keep back flat
- Stay low

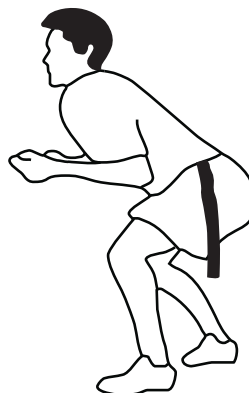


Fig32FF

Back Pedal

To teach back pedal or backward running, have the Players line up, at least arms distance apart, across the field. On your command, have the Players back-pedal for 10-15 yards/metres. Have them move at a slow pace, then progress to a quicker pace as they become more comfortable with the skill.

Key Points:

From a stand-up position, the feet are moved approximately shoulder width apart and staggered slightly; the knees bent.

Bend forward from the waist, keeping the back straight.

Look straight ahead, dropping the fingertips just below the knees.

The shoulders should be over the knees and this position should be maintained in order to move at maximum speed.

Movement is normally a backward shuffle. As movement occurs, the feet should just skim the grass or surface.

Maintain the feet a shoulder width and stay on your toes, keeping the shoulders over the knees.

Allow the arms to work naturally (opposite arm and leg movement) as in forward running, and parallel to the direction of movement.

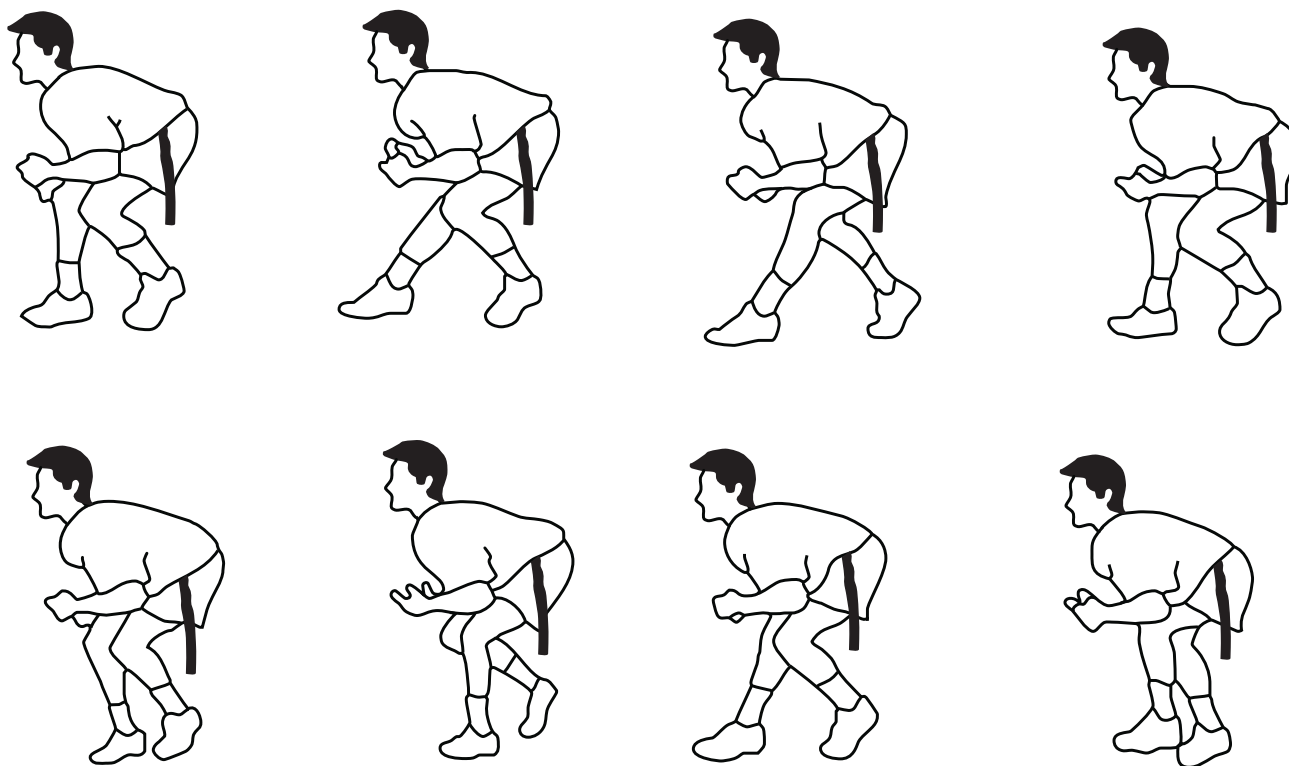


Fig33FF

Footwork

Footwork is a vital skill that every good pass Defender must master. In covering a Receiver, the DB uses every type of footwork he/she can possibly come up with.

Most Defensive Backs will begin each play by backpedaling. By learning to run and move backwards, the Defender will be able to cover a break, in any direction, by the Receiver.

Each Receiver runs a designated route. A Defensive Back must try to keep the Receiver a distance of three yards/metres away (maintain a cushion), until the Receiver makes his/her break. Once the break is made, the Defensive Back must change direction and run with the Receiver. It is important that the Defender avoids crossing his or her feet, stumbling, or taking extra steps when changing direction.

The toes, by controlling the angle of the hips, may be turned during the back-pedal, allowing the Defender to change direction as desired. It is vital to understand at what angle the toes must point in order to plant the ball of the foot and push off, on that foot, to gain ground in the shortest time without loss of motion.

Covering the Out/In

- If the receiver has gone in or to the out the defensive back must turn the toe of his plant foot (foot opposite to the receiver's break) slightly out.

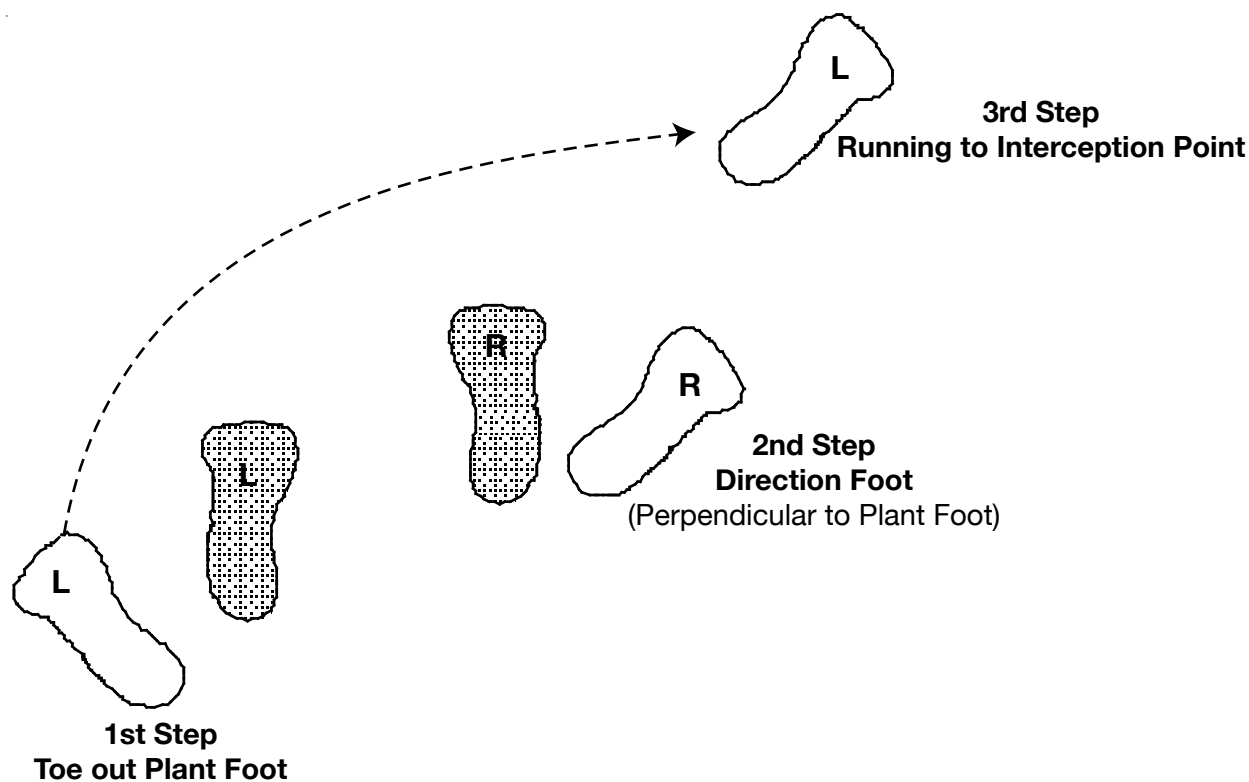


Fig. 1H.11

Coaching Emphasis:

- The same three possibilities occur as in reversing direction.
- Drive hard out of the break.

Note: Some coaches teach leaving the back pedal by leaning the upper body and rolling over the foot in the direction of the receiver and put less emphasis on using a plant foot.

Covering Corner/Post

- If the receiver has gone to the corner or post then the defensive back must turn the toe of the plant foot (foot opposite of receiver's break) slightly in.

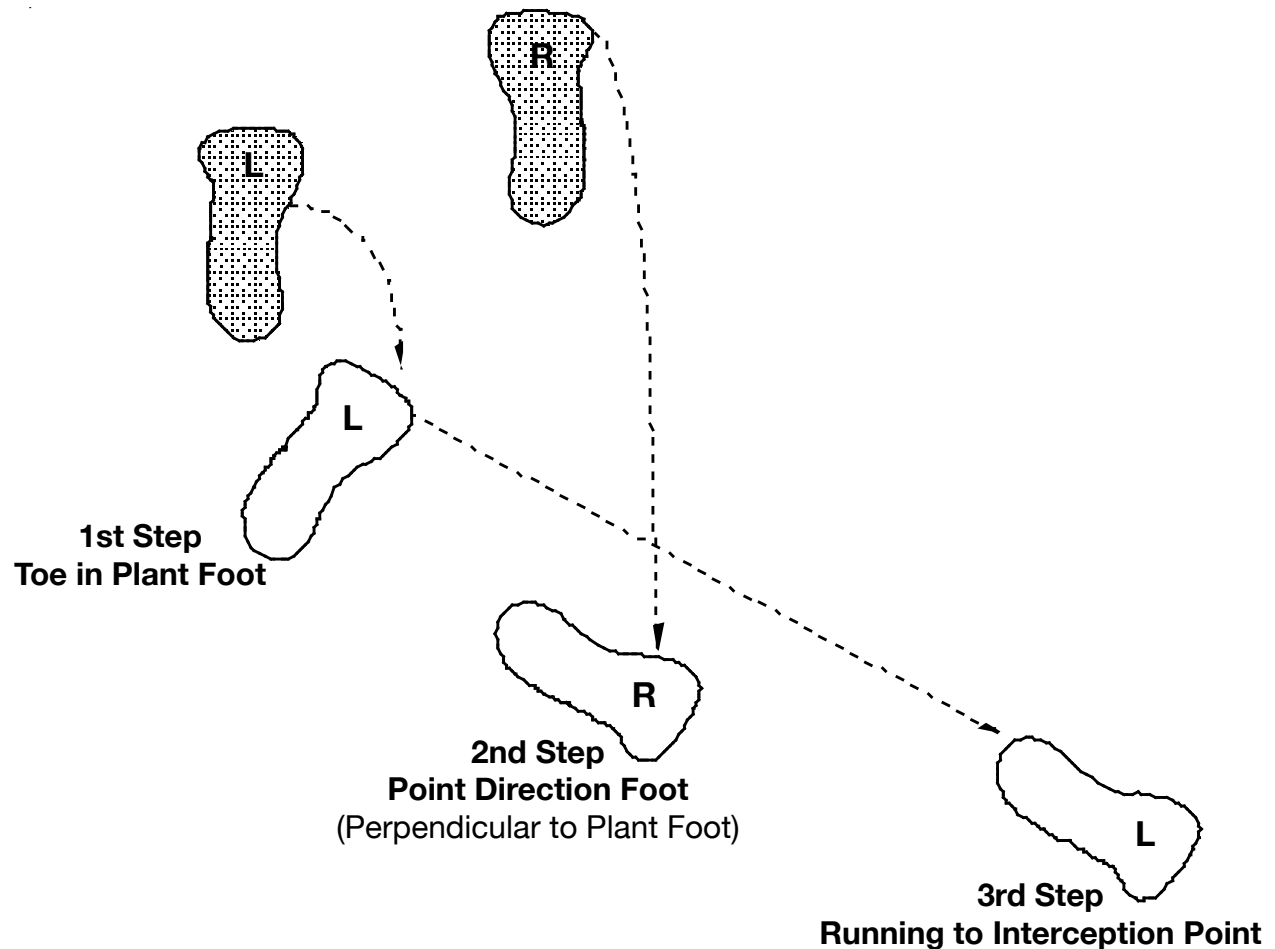


Fig. 1H.12

Coaching Emphasis:

- The most common errors in this break are the following:
 - i) The defensive back takes extra steps and comes out of the break underneath and behind the receiver. This is the result of no toe in at all. It does not allow the hips to open up enough. Therefore, the third step is short and not pointing in the desired direction.

Covering the Seam, Streak, Fly

- If the receiver has gone straight by the defensive back on a deep pattern he must turn the toe of his plant foot (foot opposite the one receiver is passing) deep in.

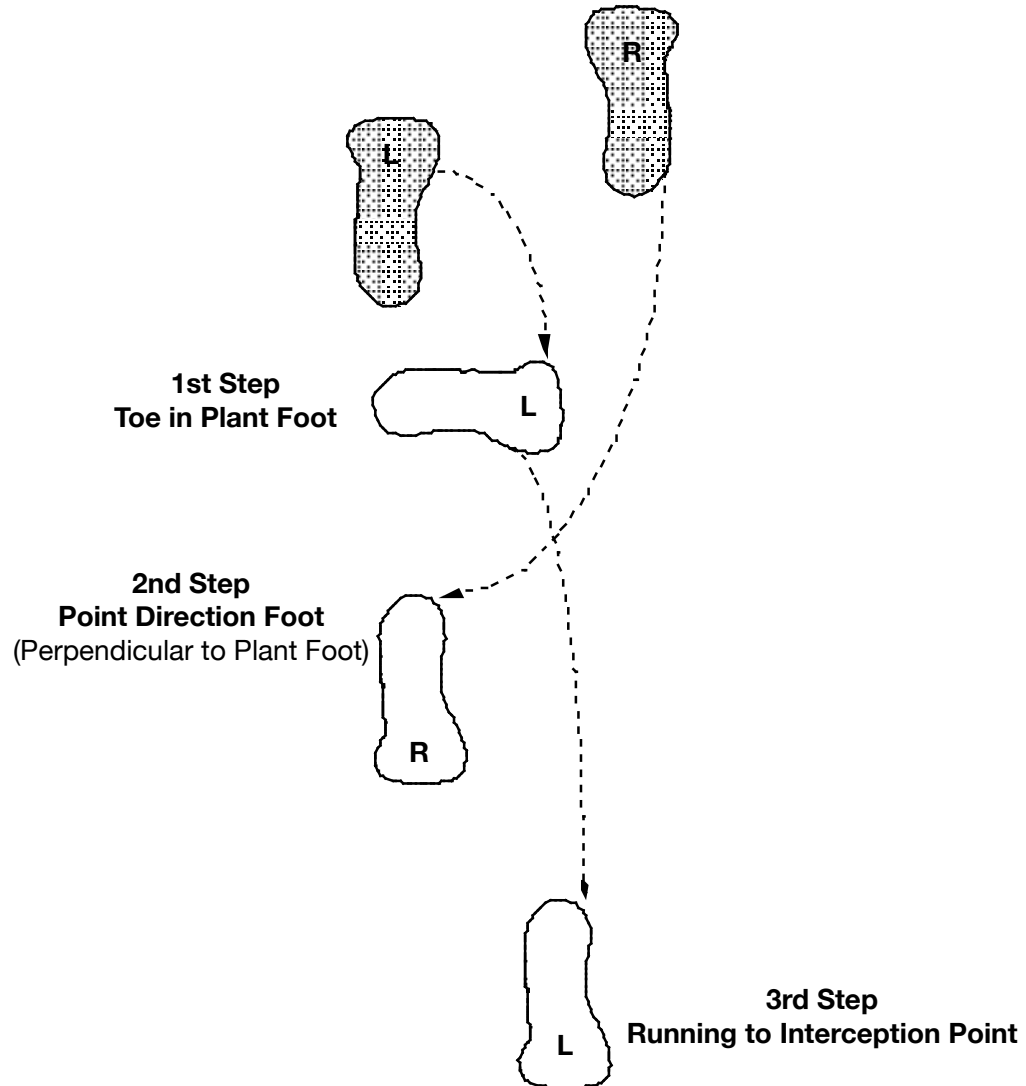


Fig. 1H.14

Coaching Emphasis:

- The most common errors are similar to those of the corner/post break.
- To see if this break is done properly with a good deep toe in, drill the players to backpedal down a yard line across field.
- If the break is done properly they will land the second and third steps right on the line.
- If toe in is not deep enough they will come off the line to the inside.
- Drive hard out of the break.



Intercepting a Pass

Intercepting a pass requires good footwork, coordination of the body and good anticipation by the Defender.

- Employ a burst of speed to get to the ball once it is in the air.
- Play the ball aggressively ... not the Receiver (in other words the ball is the Defender).
- Intercept the ball at its highest point away from the ground and the furthestmost point from the Receiver.
- Catch the ball with the hands, using the same techniques as the Receiver.
- After the ball is caught, protect it by tucking it away in the proper carrying position.

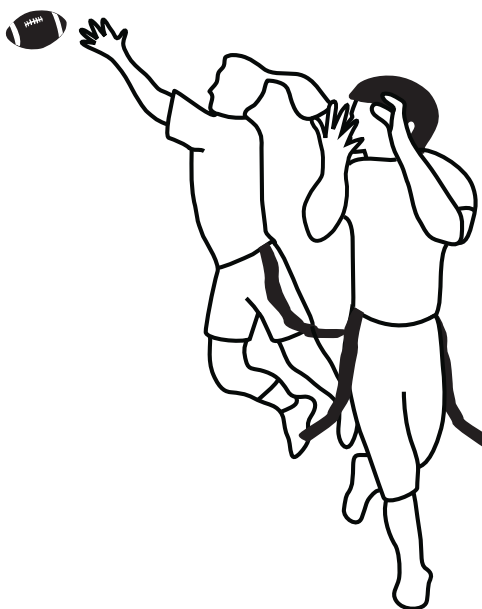


Fig146FF

Flagging

- Watch the Ball Carrier's hips.
- Concentrate on where the flag is fastened to the belt.
- Stay low and keep your feet moving to react quickly to the ball carriers direction.
- Grab the flag as close to the belt as possible (this is where the flag is the most stable not flapping in the breeze).
- After pulling the flag, stop running and hold it up as quickly as possible so the officials can see it and stop the play immediately.
- Learn to use both hands to grab the flag of the ball carrier.





Theory and Strategy

Offensive Theory and Strategy

Introduction

The Huddle

The Cadence

Formations

Offensive Strategy

Defensive Theory and Strategy

Introduction

Defensive Strategy

Playing Types of Defense



Offensive Theory & Strategy

Introduction

To the uninitiated, Flag Football may be a confusing game. The many and varied offensive systems used by teams at all levels of Flag Football demand an understanding of general offensive principles.

When developing a sound offensive system for a team, the coach is faced at once with a number of basic challenges. Five (5) Players must be developed in some order from the huddle to the line of scrimmage having a clear understanding of their alignment, type of play to be run, individual responsibilities, point of attack and the snap count. All this information must be conveyed to the huddled Players within 30 seconds by one person in a concise, logical, computer-like manner.

Therefore, a simple system must be devised that can be easily understood by the Coach, Quarterback and Players.

The Huddle

Although there is many huddle formations possible, two basic huddles are diagrammed. Selection of a specific type is arbitrary and a case for one over the other may be based on personal preference.

Open

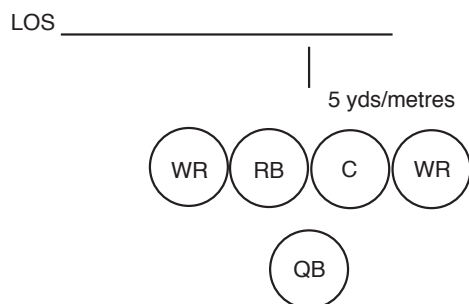


Fig42FF

Closed

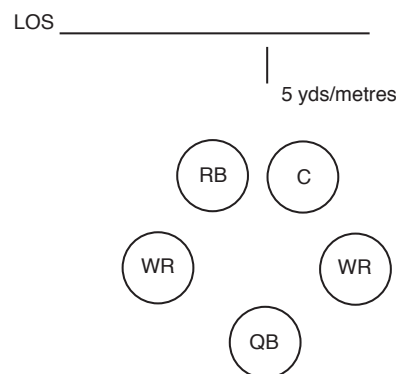


Fig43FF

Offense

C - Center

RB - Running Back

QB - Quarterback

2 WR - Wide Receivers

LOS - Line of Scrimmage

One possible advantage of the Open Huddle, particularly for younger Players is that all the Players other than the Quarterback are facing the line of scrimmage. This provides them immediate right-left orientation to the play called in the huddle.



Huddle Procedure

Regardless of the type of huddle used, certain procedures are consistent when forming and breaking the huddles.

1. The Center should set up the huddle quickly after each play approximately 5 to 7 yards/metres from the ball or line of scrimmage. This is achieved by the Center aligning himself/herself at this point and calling some word (e.g. "HUDDLE!", "HURRY UP!"), which cues the other Players to enter into the huddle formation around the Center.
2. The uniform shape and appearance of the huddle is important for efficient play calling.
3. The Quarterback runs the huddle and is the only one who talks. Information for the Quarterback should be given before entering the huddle.
4. Players should not leave the huddle unless they are positive of their assignment and the snap count. If the signal is not heard, or understood, the word "CHECK" should be called out.
5. Rather than verbalizing the play in the huddle, the Quarterback may show a play diagram.
6. After giving the play and snap count, the Quarterback should say, "READY" and pause for a check call. When "BREAK" is called, all clap hands in unison and leave the huddle.
7. The huddle should be broken with dispatch and Players should move quickly to their positions at the line of scrimmage. It has been suggested that the manner in which a team forms and breaks a huddle reflects the overall attitude and confidence of the team.

The Cadence

The cadence, or starting count, initiates the offensive play at the line of scrimmage. It is usually a series of words or numbers uttered by the Quarterback in a rhythmical or non-rhythmical manner. The verbal composition of a cadence varies extensively, but for purposes of this text the following rhythmical cadence has been selected.

SET — Followed by a pause. Then a series of short, crisp, one-syllable words called out rhythmically.

GO

HUT

HUT ... etc.

The ball may be snapped by the Center on a given sound or the first sound of the Quarterback's voice (in this case "SET") or on "GO". This is referred to as quick count. If the Quarterback wishes to have the ball snapped on a longer count, this can be indicated in the huddle by saying, "first count (which is the first "HUT") or "second count" (the second "HUT") and so on.



Some teams build an audible system into the cadence. An audible is a method of changing to another play which may be better applied to a particular situation or defensive alignment after the team has left the huddle.

At which level of football audibles should be introduced or whether, in fact, they should comprise a part of the cadence is a controversial question. The method of changing plays at the line of scrimmage would imply a high level of sophistication. It is possible, however, that a cadence have the capability of an audible system so that if its use were needed even in a limited manner, its institution would not require major changes in the fundamental pattern and rhythm of the cadence.

Formations

There are innumerable methods of putting order into an offensive system. The following definition of a “formation” outlines the most commonly used denominator from which an orderly communication system can be developed.

A “Formation” deals with the position of Players relative to each other at the line of scrimmage. The words LEFT or RIGHT are added to give a specific direction to the formation.

For the purposes of illustration the “formations” in this guide are designed by the position of the Running Back (RB).

Balanced Left

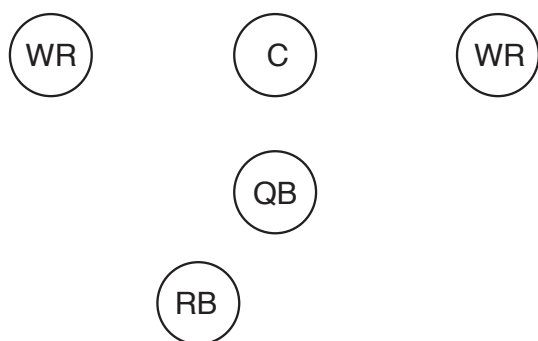


Fig44FF

One receiver each side of the center and the running back is to the left of the centre.

Balanced Right (Mirror Image)

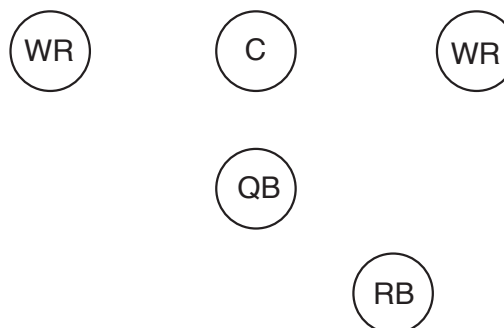


Fig45FF

One receiver each side of the center and the running back is to the right of the centre.



Twins Left

Using RB as a Receiver

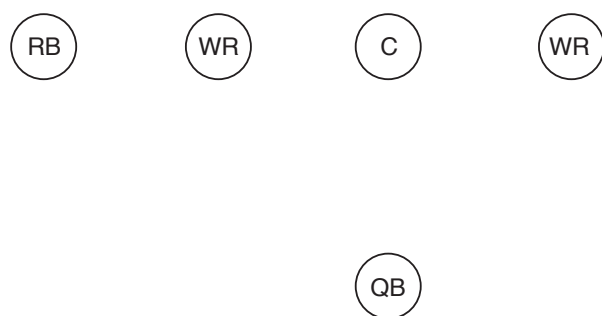


Fig46FF

Two receivers to the left of the centre and one receiver to the right of the centre.

Twins Right (Mirror Image)

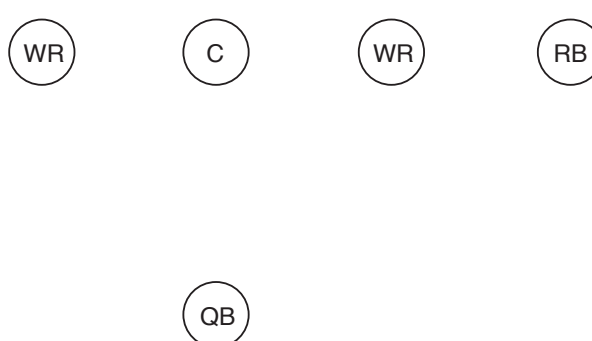


Fig47FF

Two receivers to the right of the centre and one receiver to the left of the centre.

Trips Left

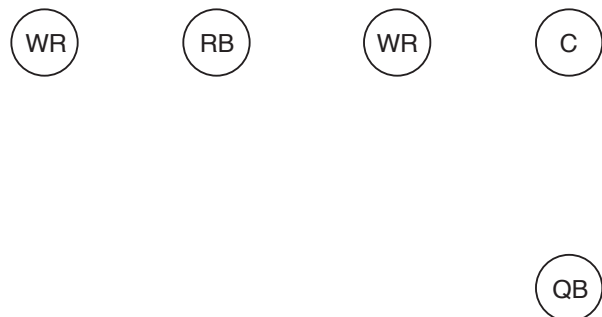


Fig46bFF

Three receivers to the left of the centre.

Trips Right

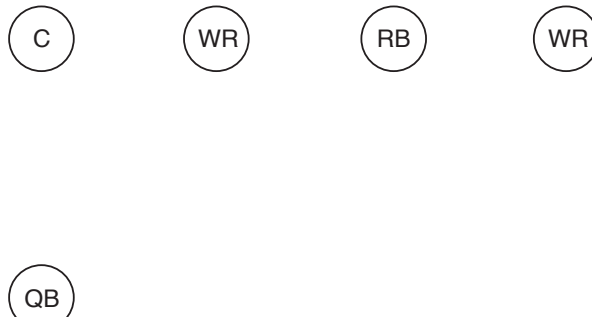


Fig47bFF

Two receivers to the right of the centre.



Offensive Strategy

Introduction

The principal objective of any offensive football system must incorporate the following:

1. Ball control and field position.
2. Consistent yardage gains.
3. Minimum predictability of point of attack, which keeps the defense off balance and guessing.
4. The ability to score.

Offensive formations and the tactics used vary from team to team, however, all systems should evolve from sound, basic and fundamental aspects of football. Simplicity is the key; complex systems breed confusion.

Offensive systems in most cases are built around a number of logically integrated series of complimentary pass patterns. "Series" can be defined as patterns or prescribed routes used to get to a specific point of attack. A team may have one basic series, which can be run to the right and left, or a number of varying series. It is important, though, that the total offensive system is flexible enough to be consistent with the skill of the personnel available to make it function.

The Quarterback

In Flag Football the offensive strategy reflects to a great extent on the abilities of the team's personnel, and in particular, the Quarterback. A Quarterback's ability is the most important because it is this individual who not only selects the plays but also provides the direction and leadership needed for any offense to be successful. However, no matter how much physical talent he or she may possess, the Quarterback is only as good as his or her Receivers. It must be emphasized that teamwork is the single most important factor in the makeup of the offense. Once this attitude is developed the offense is well on its way to perfecting a solid unit.

Quarterback Tips

1. Keep the defense guessing when and where you are going to throw.
2. Throw to where the Receiver is going, not to where the Receiver is.
3. Throw the shorter pass harder. Long passes should be thrown softer and in more of an arc.
4. Be in good balance when you set up to pass.
5. Keep your eyes on the Receiver.



Attacking Types of Defenses

The defenses in Flag Football can be quite sophisticated. There are two generic types of defenses, “Person to Person” defenses and the “Zone” defenses. The three most commonly used Zone defenses are the 2-2, 3-2 and the 2-3 Zone.

Attacking a Zone Defense

Attacking a Two-Two

When an offense is confronted with a 2-2 zone (meaning the defense has elected two Defenders to protect against the “deep” pass routes, two Defenders to cover “short” zones) the two most effective ways to move the ball on them are:

1. To select what is called intermediate pass routes (10 to 15 yards/metres) for your primary Receiver. These intermediate pass routes are run deep enough to elude the short Defenders but not deep enough to be picked up by the deep Defenders. These routes are usually run into what are referred to as the seams (the area between the Defensive Backs). It is in these areas that the offense tries to direct its attack. Running the pass routes effectively, an offense can move the ball with a fair amount of success.
2. To flood the zone and outnumber the Defenders in the area. By flooding one of the zones, a Defensive Player will be forced to choose between the Receivers, usually leaving one Receiver open.

Adjustments

Attacking a 2-3 Zone Defense (Two Short -Three Deep)

When attacking a 3-2 deep defense, an offense must use patience in its attack. This defense is primarily called to protect against the deep pass (3 deep Defenders). In order to be successful the offensive team must keep the ball short and rely on its execution for completing these passes. Also, a Quarterback must keep in mind that because the Defenders are deeper in their zones he/she may elect to run with the ball to pick up the necessary yardage needed to make a first down.

Attacking a 3-2 Zone Defense (Three Short-Two Deep)

The final zone defense “3 Short Coverage and 2 Deep” is basically the reverse of the “3 deep”. It is usually called in short yardage situations to prevent the offense from making a first down. With this in mind the offensive team must attack this zone in a deeper manner. Even though the percentages are lower in completing the pass, the coverage will not be as extensive.

A golden rule for any offense is always to attack the defense at its weakest point and never force the issue with the defense.

A good strategy for any offense is to examine the opponent’s tendencies and personnel with the aim of developing a plan, which attempts to exploit their weaknesses.



Sample Offensive Plays

20 YDS/METRES

10 YDS/METRES

LOS

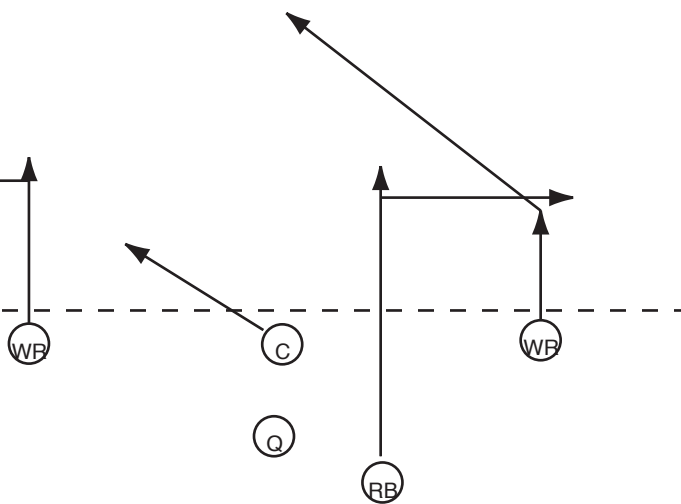


Fig137FF

20 YDS/METRES

10 YDS/METRES

LOS

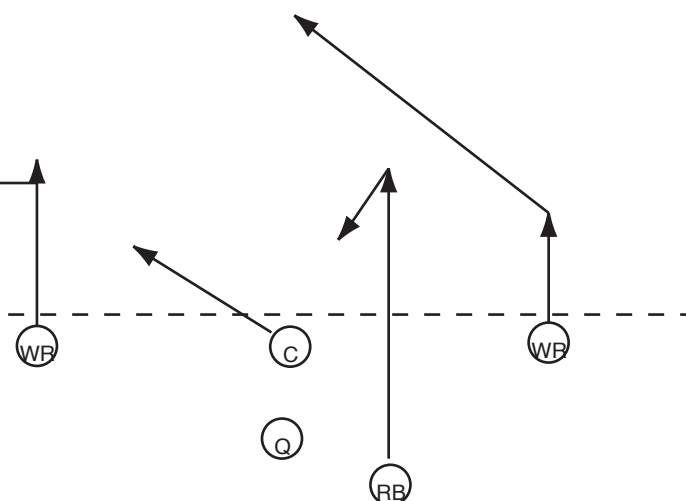


Fig138FF

20 YDS/METRES

10 YDS/METRES

LOS

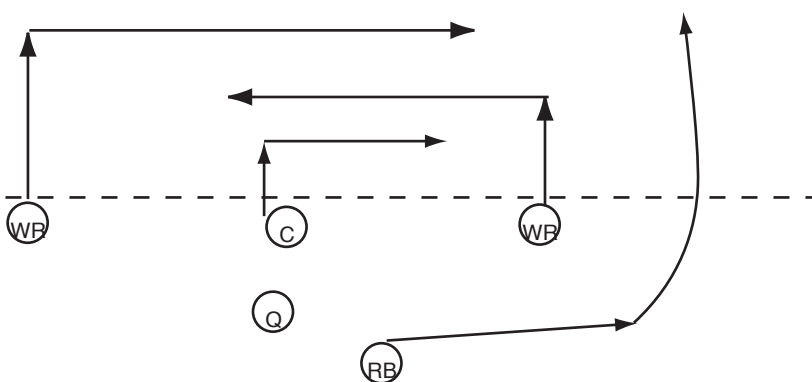


Fig139FF



Sample Offensive Plays

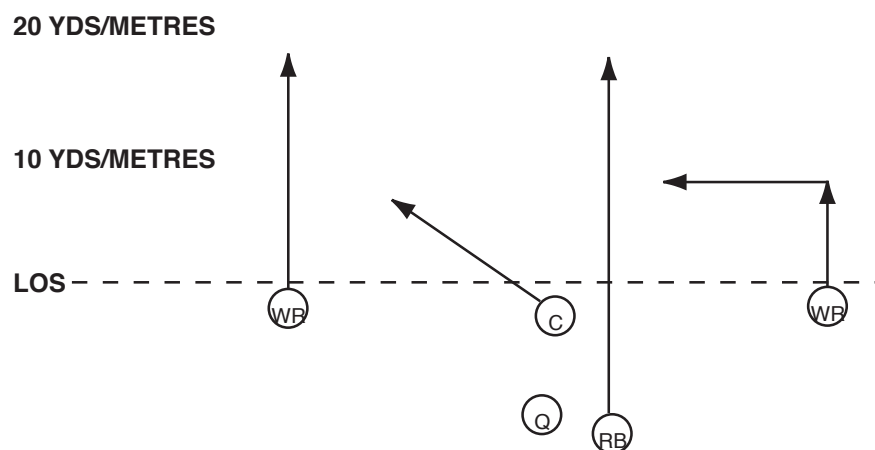


Fig140FF

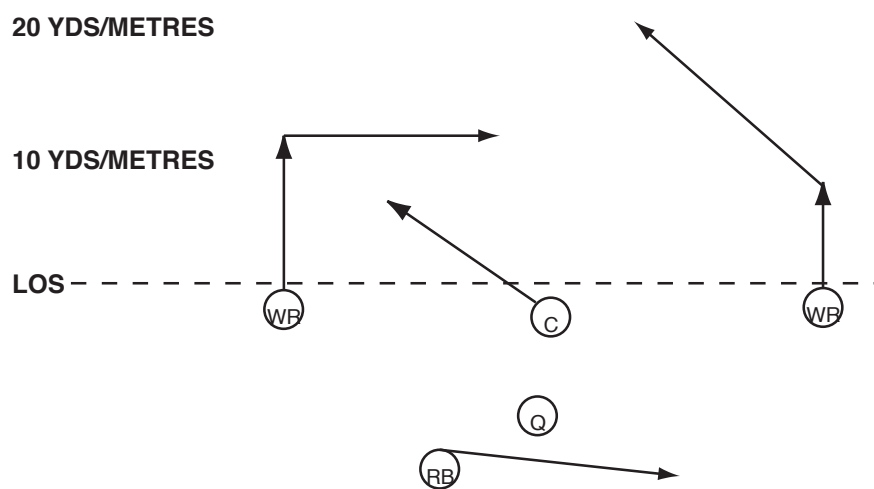


Fig141FF

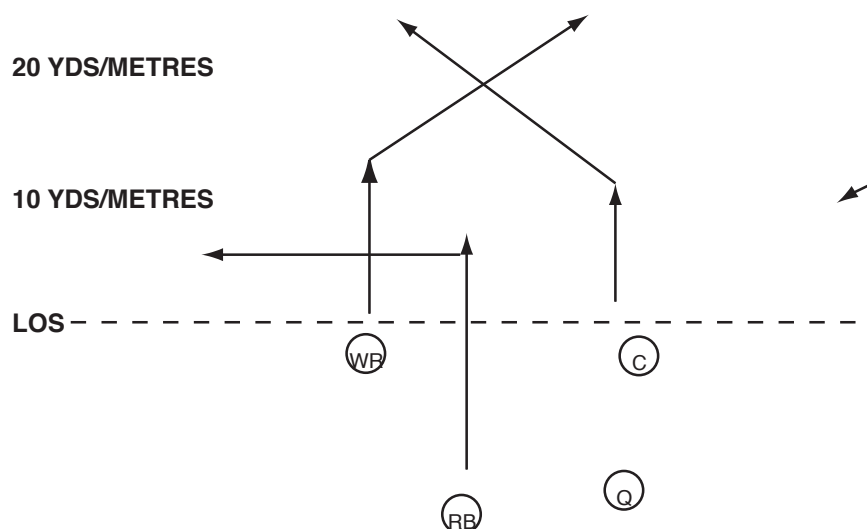


Fig142FF



Sample Offensive Plays

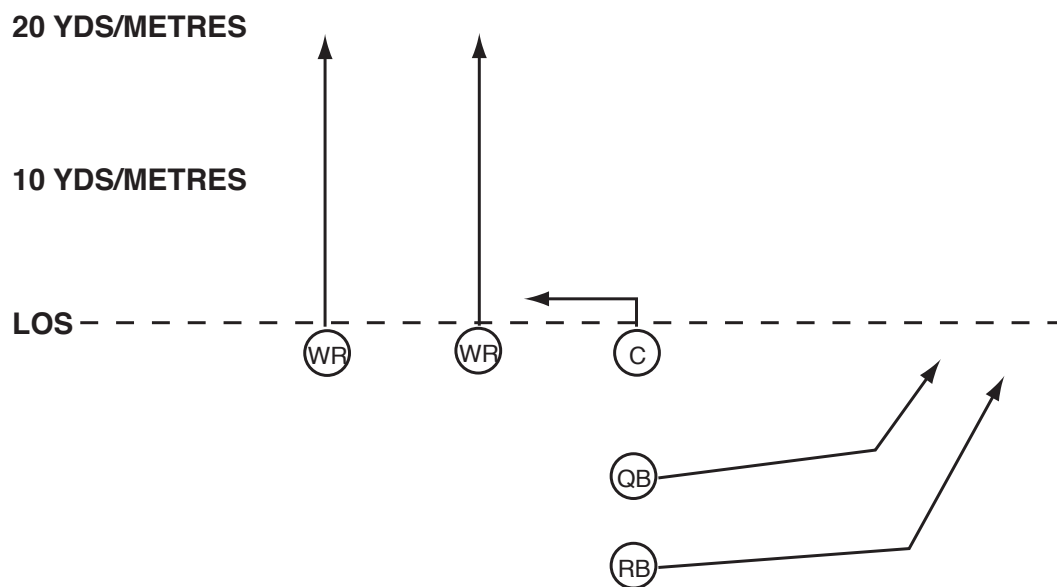


Fig160_IFAF

Option (Pitch or Pass)

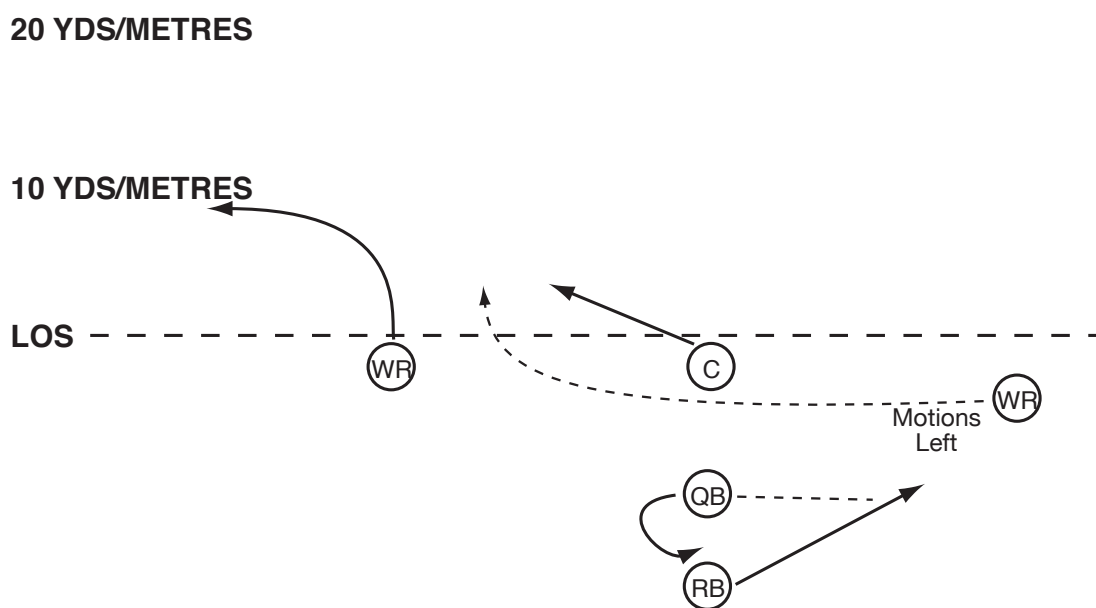


Fig161_IFAF

Motion Left Toss Right



Sample Offensive Plays

20 YDS/METRES

10 YDS/METRES

LOS

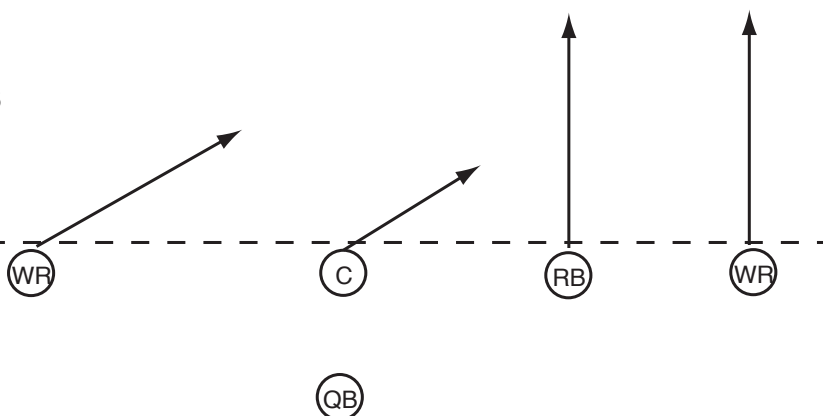


Fig162_IFAF

WR and Centre Left Slant Right

20 YDS/METRES

10 YDS/METRES

LOS

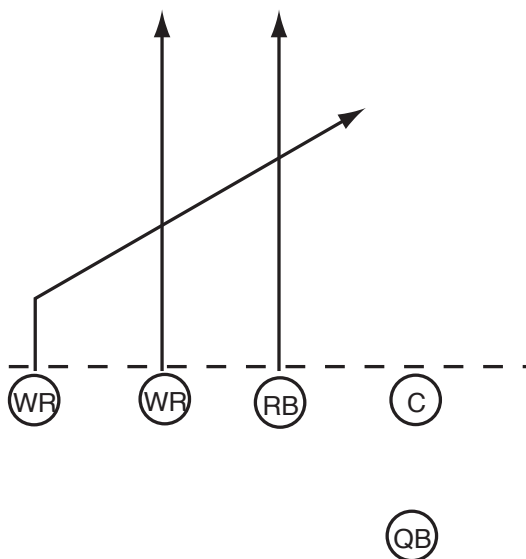


Fig163_IFAF

Inside Receivers Run Fly and WR Slant Right



Defensive Theory & Strategy

Introduction

Every defense has aims and objectives similar to those listed below.

1. To prevent the opponent from scoring, particularly the long, easy touchdown.
2. To gain possession of the ball by:
 - a) intercepting a pass;
 - b) preventing the opposition from reaching mid field.
3. To score by:
 - a) intercepting a pass and returning it for a touchdown;
 - b) flagging the opponent behind the goal line (safety).

The opposition can only score by running or passing. Whenever the defense is able to score, it gains a tremendous psychological advantage and many times during a ball game the team is able to rally and move on to victory.

Regardless of the defensive alignment employed, there are basic principles that must be adhered to if a sound defense is desired. Accordingly, a complete defensive system must provide the flexibility necessary to cope with varying situations that occur during the course of a game. Factors such as personnel, field position, down and distance, time left in the game, score, and weather demand a varied defensive attack.

In Flag Football, just as in tackle, there are two basic pass defense coverages: person to person and zone defense. In person to person, each Defender covers a specific Player on pass plays. In zone defense, a pass Defender has an area of the field to cover rather than a specific Player.

Defensive Strategy

As on offense, there are many defensive formations. Both offense and defense have become more complex in Flag Football, but in order to run variations in both formations you must start with the basic fundamentals.

Basic Defensive Formations

The basic formations on defense are:

1. Person to Person

Person-to-Person Defense Coverage

20 YDS/METRES

10 YDS/METRES

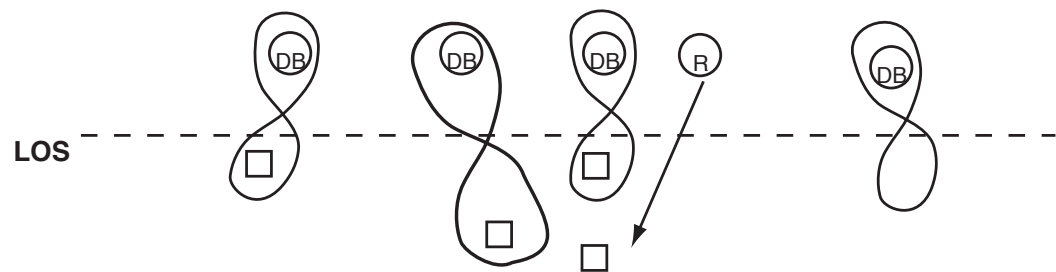


Fig133FF

2. Zone Defense

2 – 1 – 2 Zone Defense

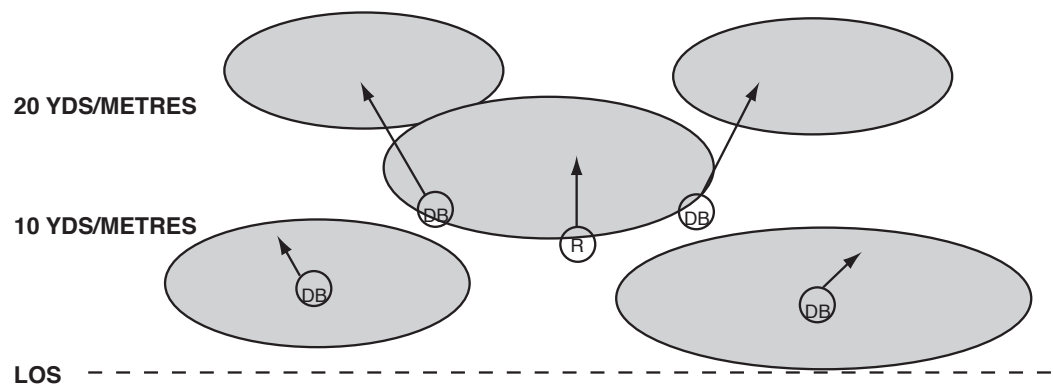


Fig134FF



2 - 3 Zone Defense

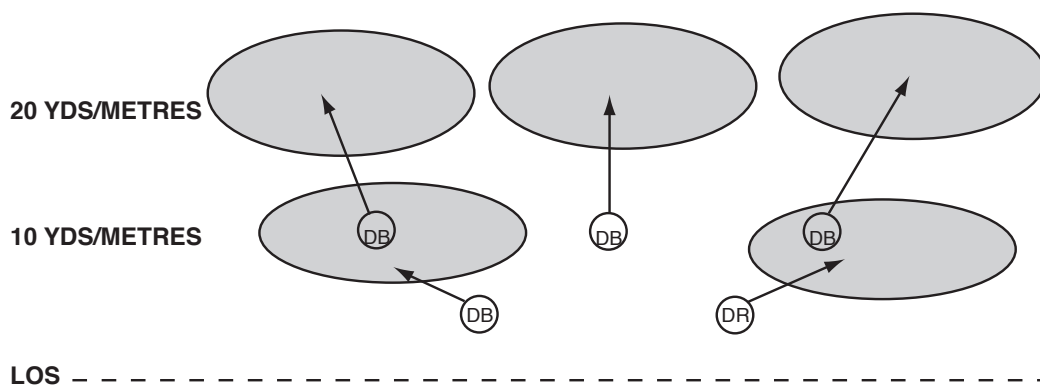


Fig135FF

3 - 2 Zone Defense

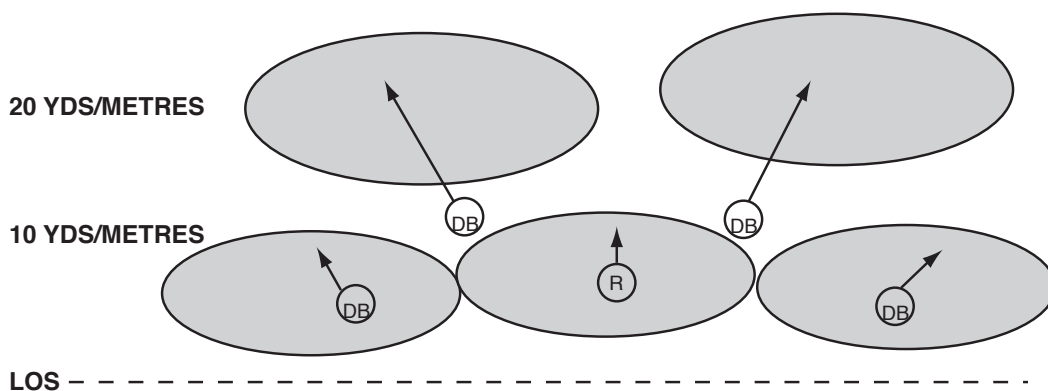


Fig136FF

2 - 2 Zone (one Rusher)

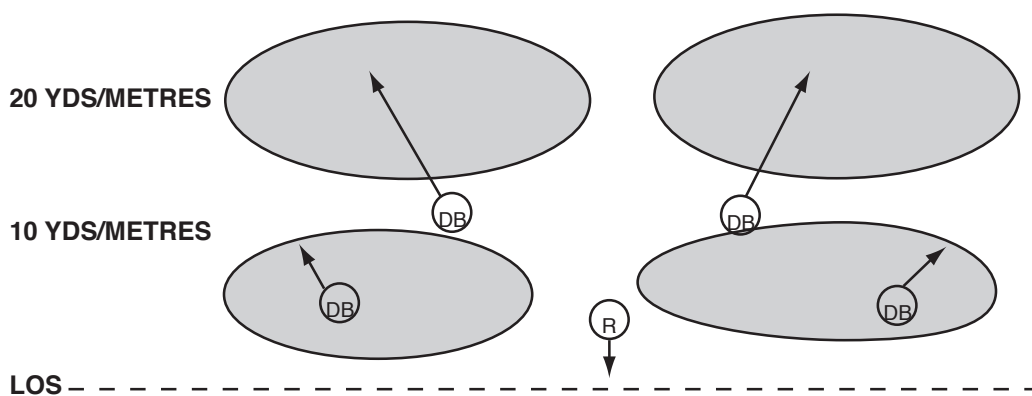


Fig144FF



Playing Types of Defense

Playing Person to Person Defense

In person-to-person defense the Defenders are assigned to cover specific Receivers. In order for this type of defense to be effective, the Defender must closely cover the Receiver no matter where that Receiver goes on the field, and should continue this coverage until the ball is thrown since all Receivers are potential targets. It is extremely important for all of the Defenders to know whom they are responsible to cover. This should be determined before the snap of the ball.

Often, an offense will employ some kind of crossing pattern when they recognize that they are facing a person-to-person defense. In this situation the defense must not get caught up in traffic. Before a play begins, the Defenders may decide that if the Receivers they are covering cross, they will switch and cover the Receiver moving toward them. This helps to avoid confusion in the coverage.

The particular stance and alignment a Defender assumes when playing person to person coverage will depend on a variety of factors: the Defender's own skill and speed; the Receiver's skill and speed; offensive tendencies; and the game situation (i.e. down and distance, field position, etc.). As the Defender gains experience, these things will become second nature. Usually, however, a staggered stance is preferred with either the inside or outside foot forward. The alignment is usually such that the Defender is either slightly inside or slightly outside the Receiver.

As the Receiver comes off the line of scrimmage the Defender should begin back pedaling. The Defender's eyes should be focused on the waist of the Receiver and while moving backward the Defender should keep his/her shoulders down and over the feet in order to ensure a balanced base of support. Leaning back should be avoided.

The Defender should always attempt to keep a 2 to 3 yard/metre cushion between himself/herself and the Receiver while back pedaling. It is important that the Defender knows the quickness and speed of his/her opponent. The Defender may have to give a little more "cushion" or he/she may be able to reduce the "cushion". At about 6 to 10 yards/metres off the line of scrimmage, the Defender should be prepared to react on the break taken by the Receiver. At this point it is important to get as close as possible to the Receiver in order to defend against a potential pass.

If possible, the Defender should attempt to intercept or knock down the ball. If circumstances do not permit this, the Defender must then pull the Receiver's flag.

No matter which Receiver catches the ball, regardless of the type of defense being played, all of the Defenders should pursue the ball carrier to make the "pull". It should never be assumed that someone else would pull the flag.



Playing the Zone Defense

Teamwork is the key on zone defense. Each individual is given the responsibility for a certain area on the field. It is important that the Defenders know which Receivers are threatening or entering their zones, at all times. Communication is very important. Each Defender must give verbal signals to the other Defenders as to where the Receivers are and where they are going.

Often the offense will send more than one Receiver into a particular zone. In this case the Defender must be in a position to react to a ball thrown to either of the Receivers. If the Defender commits himself/herself to one Receiver, the other Receiver will be wide open. Therefore, the Defender must be prepared to react to the ball after it is thrown and not before.

A good way for a Defender to play his or her zone is to play as deep as the deepest Receiver in that zone. A Receiver should never be allowed to get behind a Defender. By doing this, the Defender is attempting to force the Quarterback to throw to the short patterns. With the deep pattern covered, the Defender can then move up on the short pattern Receiver to limit the play to a minimum gain.

Defending Against Types of Offenses

Defending a Short Pass Offense

Although a "Two-One-Two (2-1-2)" defense is a good sound formation to cover both the short and long ball threat, good teams find its vulnerability. There are teams that run a very disciplined short pass offense. In cases of such teams, the "Two Deep - Three short" and "Person to Person" are probably the best defenses.

In "Person to Person", the key is having the personnel to be able to carry out this coverage. Each Defensive Player simply lines up on the inside or outside shoulder of the Offensive Player he/she is covering and never lets that Player get more than three steps away. Position is the key on this coverage.

Defending the Long Pass Offense

Again, there are teams that have Quarterbacks with strong arms, and good Receivers. These teams like to exploit the deep backs on defense. Often the "three deep", two short gives the deep protection needed to curtail the long pass.

The two short Players in the "three deep" also have an important role. They may be considered rovers, in that they read the Quarterback who may be trying to find his/her secondary Receivers underneath, if the deep Receivers are covered.



Defending Against the Sprint Out or Roll Out Quarterback

Sprint Out or Roll Out Quarterbacks pose a great deal of problems to a defense. Normally, a Defender can cover his or her area or zone for three to four seconds, just enough time for a Rusher to put pressure on a Quarterback. However, if the Quarterback eludes the Rusher, then he/she has one of the following three options:

1. The Quarterback can cause the short zone Player to come up to cover him or her, thereby allowing the Quarterback to throw into the zone the Defender has vacated;
2. If the Quarterback eludes the Rusher, he/she has a very good chance of finding a Receiver who has broken open downfield for a long gain.

In all cases the defense is at the mercy of the Quarterback.

The Rusher is the key Player on defense. His or her speed and quickness can make it a lot easier for the rest of the Defenders, especially when it pertains to a roll out or sprint out Quarterback. An alternative is the double rush (two Rushers). By using this method you keep the Quarterback's running to a minimum and may cause him/her to throw the ball prematurely.

Defensive Tips

1. Move to make the ball carrier declare his or her direction.
2. Observe the offensive formation and position of the Players.
3. Watch for clues and tip-offs to the play.
4. Vary your rushing routes.



Planning & Running Practices

Preparing for Practice

Sample Practice Templates

Running the Practice

Tips for Teaching

Correcting Errors



Planning and Running Practices

Practice time is precious, so you'll want to make the most of it. Here are some tips for planning and running your practices.

Preparing for Practice

Write out your practice plan and follow it. This should make your session more productive and enjoyable. Remember that Flag Football's division of offense and defense units and individual positions make a coordinated practice plan a must! Your plan should include an outline of time commitment to each phase of practice for each coach with a recommended breakdown as follows:

1. Pre-practice session
2. Warm-up Routine
3. Individual Skill Development (should be the biggest time commitment for novice Players)
4. Offensive/Defensive Unit Work
5. Entire Team Work
6. Conditioning
7. Cool Down and Post-Practice Announcements/Meetings

*An example of a Practice Card appears on the next page.

Photocopy a supply, and use one each time you prepare for a practice.

Plan to keep everyone active. Use small groups when doing drills, for example, so Players do not have to wait long for their turn.

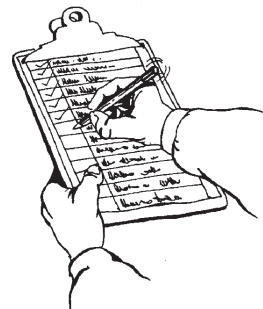
Plan practices so they are fun! Try to include a variety of drills, games, relays, and competitions.

Concentrate on practising a few skills well, rather than attempting to cover too much at one time.

Make sure you have enough equipment and sufficient space for all the drills and activities you want to do.

Take a step-by-step approach. Younger and inexperienced Players should master basic skills before moving on to more complex skills.

Keep your practice plans. They will remind you of what you have covered and any problems you encountered.





Practice Card / Master

Practice Plan # _____

Date _____

Time	Period	Center	QB's	RB's	WR's	DB's	Rusher
	Pre-Practice						
	Warm-Up						
	Individual						
	Group						
	Team						
	Scrimmage						
	Condition/ Cool Down						

Adapted from "A Novice Coaches Guide – Getting Started" from the St. Albert Minor Football Association.



Football Practice

Practice # _____ Position Practice Plan: _____ Date: _____

Time	Activity	Time	Activity

Football Practice

Practice # _____ Position Practice Plan: _____ Date: _____

Time	Activity	Time	Activity



Running the Practice

Get to practice early and insist that your Players arrive on time.

Share responsibilities with another coach (and other helpers if necessary). This will give Players more individual attention and help keep them active and involved.

Young children have a short attention span, so keep drills and other activities brief (5-10 minutes).

Continually challenge Players by increasing the difficulty of drills once they have mastered easier ones.

Treat all Players equally and emphasize positive feedback. Try to talk to each Player individually at every practice.

Tips for Teaching

Arrange an appropriate teaching formation.

Position Players so there are no distractions behind you — the sun shining in their eyes, for example.

Scan the group as you talk. Make eye contact with all Players.

Speak in a concise, clear manner. Too much information may confuse your Players.

Ask questions to make sure Players have understood you and know what is expected of them.

When setting up a drill, tell your Players how, where, in what direction, and how many, or for how long. Do a walk through of the activity so that your Players can visualize the requirements.

Correcting Errors

Whether they show it or not, most football Players feel embarrassed when they are unable to perform a skill. They may attempt to hide this embarrassment through different techniques: laughing, giggling, or the “I was not really trying” gambit, or by an out burst of temper. As a coach you must avoid these attempts by the athlete to hide his/her embarrassment by giving them encouragement immediately after the error. If you manage the situation correctly, errors can also be a golden opportunity to provide corrective instruction.

Corrective instruction should be provided in an encouraging and positive fashion. Do not focus on the error that has just occurred, but on the improvement that will follow. Your instruction should have three elements.

Compliment

Confirm effort or part of the skill that was performed correctly.

Future

Oriented instruction - correcting the error by stating how the athlete should perform the skill next time.



Positive statement

Provide a word of encouragement.

This kind of a “hamburger”, consisting of a reward for something done right and an encouraging positive remark wrapped around a constructive suggestion, is apt to make the Player feel encouraged as a result of what you have said. Emphasizing the positive things that will happen if he or she follows your instruction will tend to motivate the Player to perform correctly rather than be motivated to avoid failure and disapproval.





Drills and Activities

Fun, Fitness & Conditioning

Warming Up

Dynamic Stretching

Passing Drills and Activities

Pass Receiving Drills and Activities

Pass Route Drills and Activities

Centering Drills and Activities

Offensive Drills and Activities

Defensive Drills and Activities



Drills and Activities

Warm Up

- Jogging
- Jumping Jacks

Dynamic Stretching

- Leg Kicks
- High Knees
- Back Kicks
- Monster walk
- Shuffle
- Carioca
- Back Pedal
- Locomotive Run

Related Games & Activities

- Running with the Ball
- Flag Elimination
- Flag One on One - RB/DB Position
- Relay Race – Pass, Run, Catch
- Agility Box Drill
- Over and Under
- Hand Off Relay
- Hit the Target
- Ultimate Passing Game

Pass Route Drills & Activities

- Pass Pattern Bee
- Make a Move
- Cross Patterns
- Move It

Centering Drills & Activities

- Center Catch
- Snap & Move

Offensive Drills & Activities

- Quarterback under Pressure
- Quarterback Read
- One on One
- Team – One on One

Defensive Drills & Activities

- Introduction
- Footwork
- Go to Ball
- Zone Coverage
- Center Field
- Intercepting a Pass



Fun, Fitness and Conditioning

Improving the fitness level of your Players is an important part of your program, however you do not have to set aside time to do it and it does not have to be boring! Fitness activities should be a natural, normal, and fun part of every practice session:

- Include all kinds of sport specific movement and stretching activities in your general warm-up routine and as a part of your drills.

These will improve flexibility, coordination and properly prepare your Players for more vigorous activity during practice and games.

- Use various stunts, games, and races to develop agility, coordination, balance, and quickness.
- Devote part of each practice to short bursts of activity (alternating with rest). This will enhance speed and anaerobic conditioning.
- Keep your Players moving — for aerobic endurance. Keep your instructions (and their standing around) to a minimum. Strive for continuous activity throughout each practice session.

Warming Up

Before beginning drills or starting games, it is important for players to properly warm up. A warm up period raises player's core body temperatures, stretches their muscles and helps them transition to full speed drills or game action. The warm up period also allows coaches to emphasize basic fundamentals critical to various skills and positions.

The intensity of the warm up period gradually increases with each drill. It begins with a moderately paced jog around the field and leads into jumping jacks which are a great team exercise.

The warm up then moves to dynamic stretching which emphasize football movements, team work, while stretching muscles to prevent injuries. These exercises are done on the move at quarter and half speed.

The warm up period ends with a series of related games and activities. They help condition the players and require functional strength, while emphasizing football specific skills, such as the stance and start.

Jumping Jacks Drill

Set Up

The players line up with 5 yards/metres in between them with leaders or captains at the front of each line.

Drill

On a designated leader's command, the team executes 10 four count jumping jacks and counts them off in unison.



Teaching Points

- Each count to four is comprised of two jumping jacks. It should sound like this as the team counts: “ One, two, three, one; one, two, three, two....one, two, three, 10.”
- Each player begins with their feet together and their hands at their sides.
- In one motion, the players jump and spread their legs wider than their shoulders and swing their arms over their head. As they do this, they count out “one.”
- At the height of the jump, they swing their arms back to their sides and bring their legs back together, to land in their starting positions. As they do this they count “two.”
- They repeat the same motions, counting out “three” on the way up, and the number of four count jumping jacks completed on the way down.

Dynamic Stretching

Dynamic stretching (also known as explosive stretching) is done on the move. It incorporates functional strength and muscle usage that is specific to football. Each movement is done over a 20 to 30 yard/metre area (depending on the age of the players) moving from the sideline toward midfield and back.

Set Up

When jumping jacks have been completed the players are instructed to line up along the sideline 5 yards/metres apart facing midfield.

Drills

On the coach’s command, the players do a series of stretching drills. They move away from the sideline at one-quarter speed on the first whistle toward the half-way point. On the second whistle, they increase to half speed, unless the exercise specifies otherwise. When the players have completed the exercise to midfield the players line up and do the new exercise on the whistle.

Leg Kicks

The players walk toward the centre of the field, and on each step, they kick their legs as high as possible. On the second whistle, they increase to half speed and perform the leg kicks by skipping the rest of the way.

High Knees

The players run, using an exaggerated motion that brings their knees up as high as possible on each step. They pump one arm forward and the other one backward each time they bring a knee up.

Back Kicks

The players run using an exaggerated motion to bring each leg all the way back, so their heel hits their backsides. They pump their arms in a natural running motion.



Monster Walk

The players reach out so their arms are extended and their hands are in front of their bodies. With each step forward, they try to touch their hands with their toes in a forward kicking motion.

Shuffle

The players turn sideways and get into a two point stance, with their knees flexed and their bodies aligned (head, shoulders, hips and feet) for balance. They maintain the stance as they shuffle sideways to the half way mark. On the second whistle, they turn to face forward and run the rest of the way.

Carioca

The players maintain their two point stance and move sideways by crossing one foot in front of the other, and the other foot behind to propel themselves. On the second whistle they turn so they are facing forward and run the rest of the way.

Back Pedal

The players turn so they are facing away from the sideline and run backward staying on the balls of the feet. They pump their arms in a natural running motion. On the second whistle, they turn to face forward and run the rest of the way.

Locomotive Run

The players pump their legs as they run, as they are pistons, and move slowly forward to the half way mark. On the second whistle, they run at full speed the rest of the way.



Related Games and Activities

Running with the Ball

Purpose:

Develop Running and Ball Handling Skills

Setup:

- 20x30 yards/metres
- Cones are set 3-5 yards/metres in a straight line.
- Players are separated into teams and line up one behind the other.
- One football per team.

Procedure:

- Warm Up Drill or Relay Race.
- Each Player races around the cones and hands off to the next person in line.
- The first team to have all Players complete the cones win.

Coaching Emphasis:

- Proper ball carrying technique – One hand over the tip of the ball, tuck it away near the armpit. .
- Running technique- Natural Arm swing when running with a football.

Progression/Variation:

- Players can throw the ball back to the next person in line.

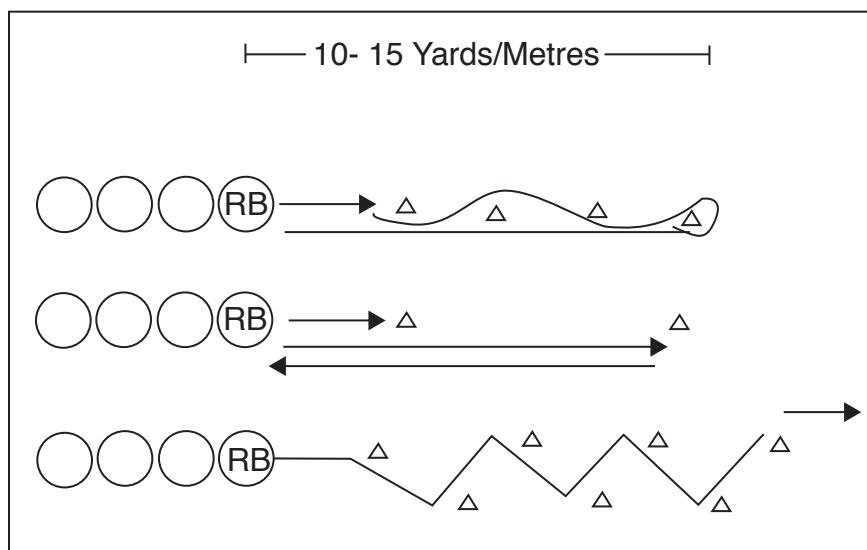


Fig124FF



Flag Elimination

Purpose:

Develop Flag Grabbing and Running Skills

Setup:

- 20(30) x 20 (30) area or gym.
- Players line up at one Endzone.
- 2-3 Players, DB'S are positioned 7-10 yards/ metres back from the other Players.

Procedure:

- RB's begin at one end zone and run towards the other end zone to avoid having their flag pulled.
- DB's try to eliminate RB's by pulling their flags (1)
- When a RB has their flag pulled, that Player becomes a DB.
- Running Backs run from opposite end zones and avoid having their flag pulled until the last RB remains.

Instructor's Tip:

- Pulling the flag the DB should break down and watch the RB's hips not the shoulders or head.
- Group Players in 8-10 . Have Running Backs carry the football.

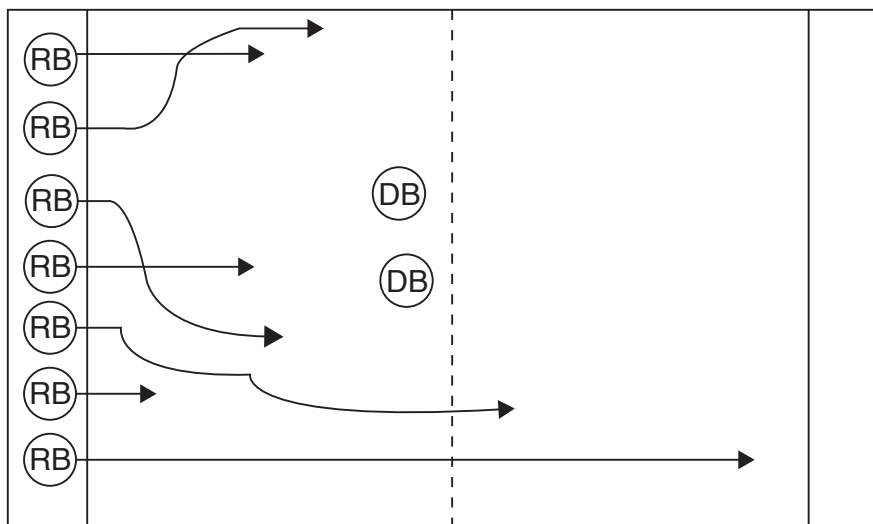


Fig125FF



Flag One-On-One – RB / DB Position

Purpose:

Develop individual offensive and defensive skills. Running with the ball, flag the Running Back.

Setup:

- 10 x 30 yard/metre area.
- Place cones every 5 yards/metres and establish an end zone area.

Procedure:

- This is a one on one competition between the RB and the DB.
- The RB receives a pitch from the QB and runs towards the end zone.
- The DB defends his area and attempts to flag the RB. Score 3 points
- Offensive points are scored if the RB reaches the end zone. Score 6 points for a touch down.
- Offensive team switches to defense after all Players have run the ball.
- Points are totalled to determine the winner.

Coaching Emphasis:

- RB's initiate moves, fakes and spins.
- DB chooses a shade of the RB either inside or outside and utilizes the sidelines to gain an advantage on the RB.

Progression/ Variation:

- Throw Short Pass Routes in front of the DB. The WR runs toward the end zone after the ball is received.
- DB aligns 7 yards/metres back and cannot close on the WR until after the ball is received.
- Add a second DB lined up 5-7 yards/metres behind the first DB.

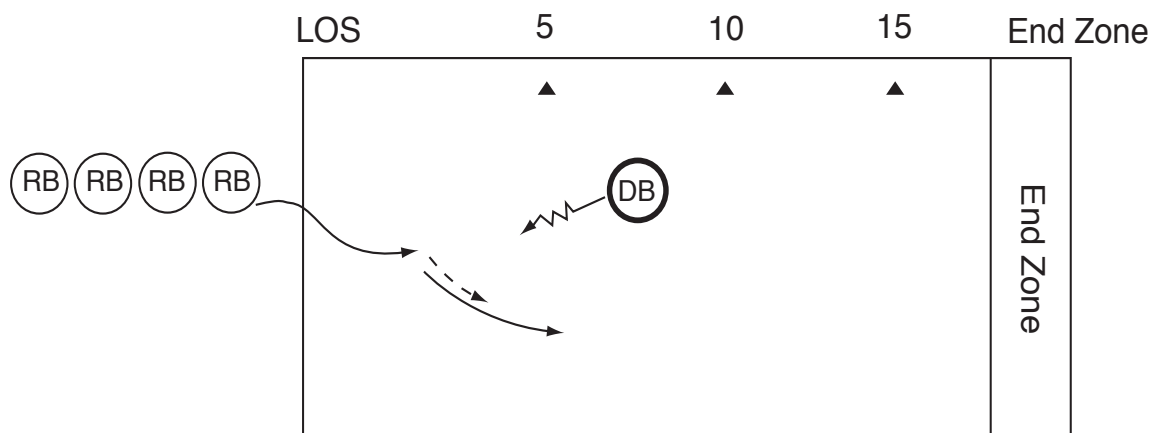


Fig126FF



Relay Race – Pass, Run, Catch

Purpose:

Running, Passing and Receiving.

Setup:

- 20 x 20 yard/metre area
- Set up cones 5 – 10 yards/metres apart.
- Team 1 Players are divided in half and line up behind each cone facing each other.
- Team 2, 3 and 4 same.
- 1 ball per team.

Procedure:

- Team 1, 2 and 3 – one line are QB's the other line are WR's in the respected team lines.
- QB's throws 5-10 yards/metres to the WR's who receives the ball and runs to the QB line and performs a handoff to the next QB.
- Players alternate until ever Player has thrown and received the ball at least once.

Progression:

- Use a Center to snap the ball to the QB. The Center runs to the end of the WR's line and the QB now becomes the Center.
- Players alternate as above until all Players have performed the three skills.

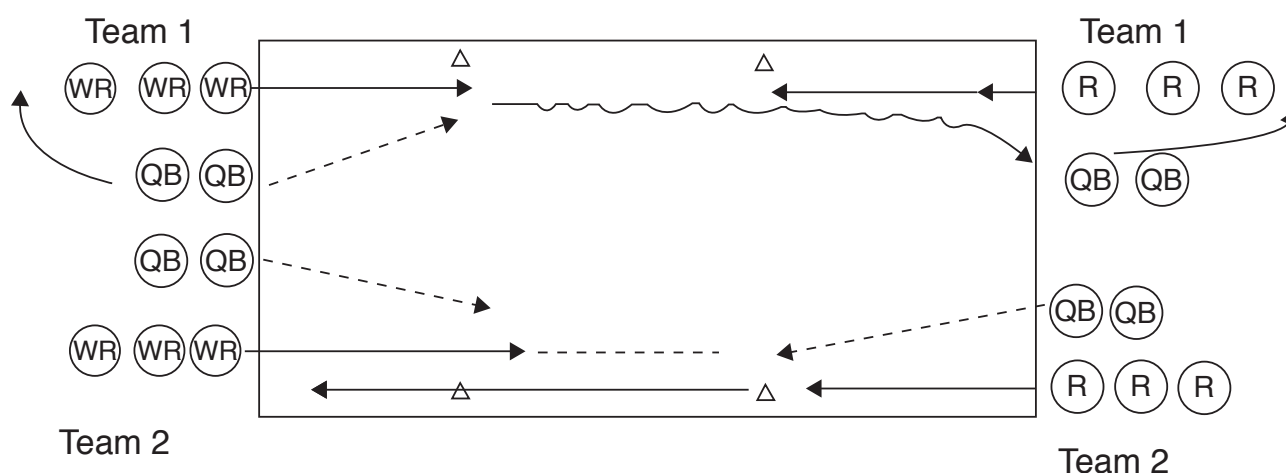


Fig128FF

**Drill : Agility Box Drill**

Purpose:

Agility drill for Warm Up and Movement.

Setup:

- 10 x 10 yard/metre area.
- Four Pylons position at each corner.

Procedure:

Each Player performs a forward run, side shuffle, backpedal, and carioca. The drill is performed in both directions.

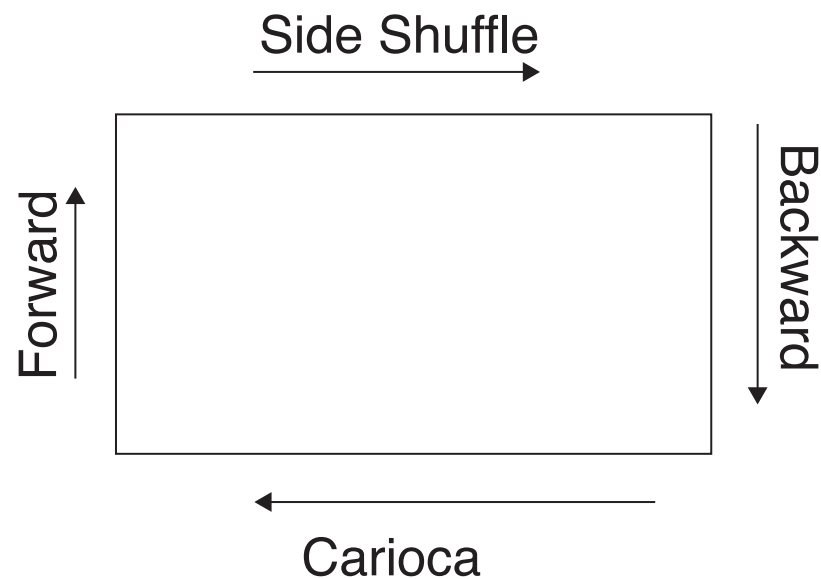


Fig132FF



Over & Under

- 5-8 Players on a team, the object is to see which team can be first to finish passing the ball under (between their legs) and over (hand ball to teammate over their heads).
- The ball alternates first under and then over down the line until the final Player receives it.
- That Player then runs with the ball to the front of the line and starts the process again.

Variation:

- The drill continues until the line reaches a determined end point or the first person in line rotates through the line a number of times.
- Have the end Player with the ball run through the line breaking around his/her teammates to reach the start of the line, the activity continues until each Player returns to their original position.

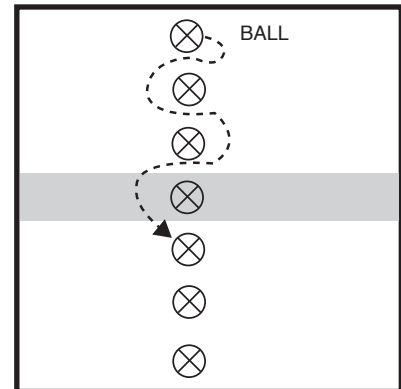


Fig68FF

Hand-off Relay

- Divide the class into two teams, each team behind a pylon.
- Each Player runs the described course and hands the ball off to the next teammate.
- The course can vary as you see fit.

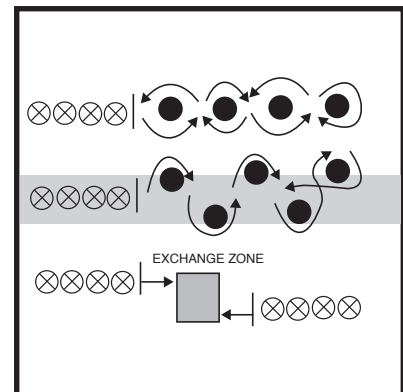


Fig70FF



Hit the Target

- Place a chair(s) or pylon(s) between two teams which are 20 yards/metres apart.
- Students try to hit target with the ball. Score a point each time a target is hit.
- Use as many balls and targets as available to keep everyone active.
- Variations include different sized targets for different point values, or placing targets at different distances for different point values.

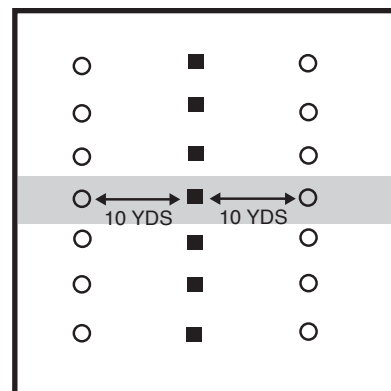


Fig74FF

Ultimate Passing Game

Ultimate Flag is an ideal game to teach Receivers to get open and away from a Defender. QB's learn to throw to the open Player and Defenders learn to cover (guard) and not let the Offensive Player get behind them.

Set up:

- 20x40 area with two 7-10 yard/metre end zones.
- Space can be modified and can be played indoors.

Procedure:

- Divide students into two or four teams (two teams per field) of five to ten Players, one ball per game. One team takes possession of the ball on their 5-yard/metre line.
- Players pass the ball continuously to their teammates toward the opponent's end zone without dropping a pass.
- Players can move anywhere on the field to get open from Defenders.
- Passes can be forward, backward or lateral.
- Possession of the ball changes if the pass is incomplete or a touchdown is scored.
- Players with the ball are allowed two steps and must throw in 5 seconds of receiving the ball.
- Team scores a touchdown (6 points) when the ball is caught in the opposition's end zone.
- Defenders must be 1-2 yards/metres from the passer.
- If the ball is dropped, knocked down, or a pass is not caught, the other team possession of the ball at the point it was dropped or touched the ground.



Progression:

Teams must complete 4 or more passes before attempting a touchdown pass.

Passers (QB's) must use only overhand throws.

Team that scores must sit the Player scoring until the next change of possession or opponent's touchdown.

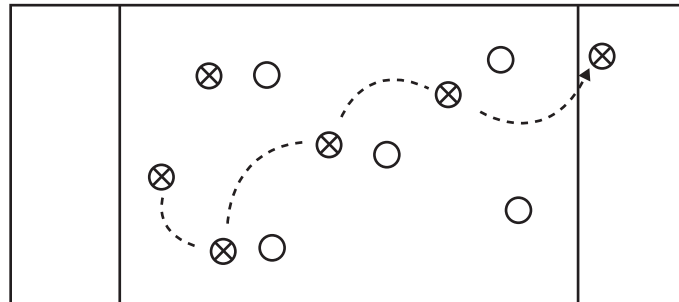


Fig75FF



Pass Receiving Drills and Activities

Champ

- The Players are divided into pairs 5-7 yards/metres apart and continue to throw the ball back and forth, first from a standing position, then from a kneeling position (one knee on ground), and then to a partner who is moving forwards, backwards and sideways.
- Players count each completed pass.
- After 3 consecutive catches the Players receive a C; 3 more catches an H; and soon until they spell CHAMP.
- For variation, increase or decrease the number of catches.
- Add third Player to the group and triangle pass.

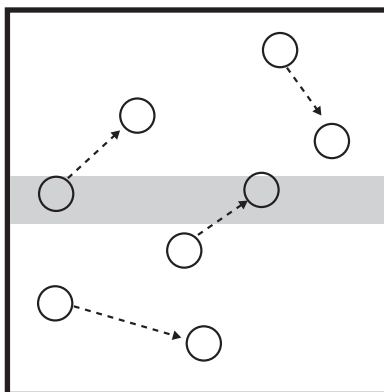


Fig81FF

Reaction Drill Turn

- Have the Receiver stand 7-10 yards/metres with his/her back to the Quarterback.
- On command, the Receiver turns toward the Quarterback who throws the ball.
- The ball should be thrown lightly at first and then gradually harder, to the reaction time of the Receiver.
- Ball height and line can vary as well to make it more challenging for the Receiver.

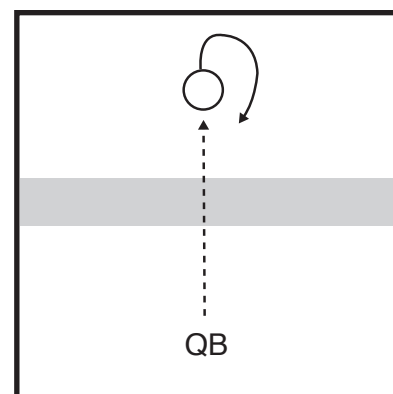


Fig82FF



Catching - On the Move

- Form groups of 5-7 Players. Designate a QB.
- Receivers run a pass “pattern”. Hook, out, fly, post pattern.
- Quarterback throws the ball to a Receiver.
- A variety of patterns can be run in order to develop the Receivers catching skills (i.e. over the shoulder, etc.). Instructors should emphasize that Receivers run the correct distance of each pass pattern. Cones can be used to designate distances.

Variations:

This is an ideal warm up drill and game preparation drill for QB's and Receivers to time patterns up and gain confidence with completing passes.

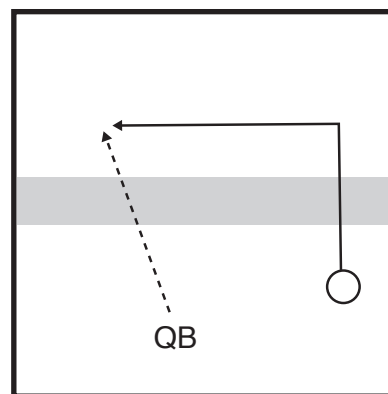


Fig83FF

One on One Receiving Drill

- In groups of five or seven, students will practice the skills of passing, receiving, and defending.
- Set up a 15 yard/metre x 25 yard/metre area.
- One student is the Quarterback, another is a Receiver, and another is the Defender.
- The Quarterback calls a pass pattern for the Receiver to run, the Defender must cover the Receiver.
- The Defender should try to intercept the pass, knock down the pass, or flag the Receiver when he/she catches the ball.
- Rotate positions frequently for improve skill development.

Variations:

Use all receiving positions RB and Center alignments to complete this drill.

Note: Remember, in Flag Football, the Defender is not allowed to grab the flag of the Receiver until the Receiver has touched the ball.

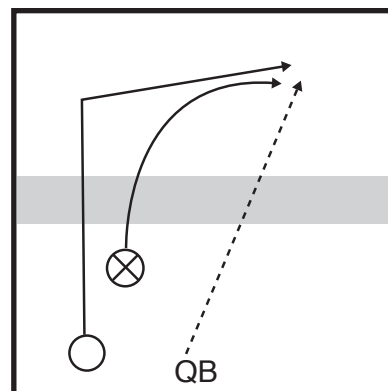


Fig85FF



Pass Route Drills and Activities

Pass Pattern Bee

- This drill is patterned after the spelling bee.
- Players form a single line, are given a type of pattern to run and then they must run it.
- If they run a wrong route (or drop a catchable ball) they go to the back of the line.
- The Quarterback continues to work down the line.
- Once the Quarterback reaches the end of the line, a new pattern is introduced and the process is repeated.
- A special reward can be given to those Players at the front of the line when the drill is over.

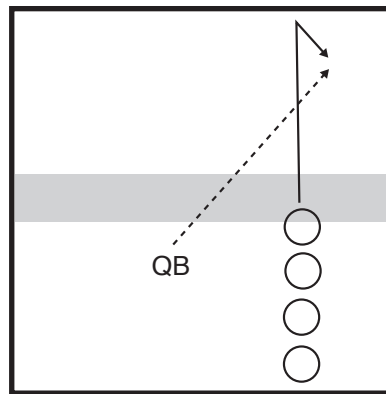


Fig86FF

Make a Move

- Participants are asked to think of a number of different types of moves they could use to “fake out” a Defensive Player who is playing person to person.
- The instructor keeps track of the number (examples: head fake, jab step, turn and go, arm fakes, pause and go, etc.).
- After the list has been compiled, each participant should run a particular pattern (10 and out) and introduce a move into the pattern.
- A number of Players can go at once.

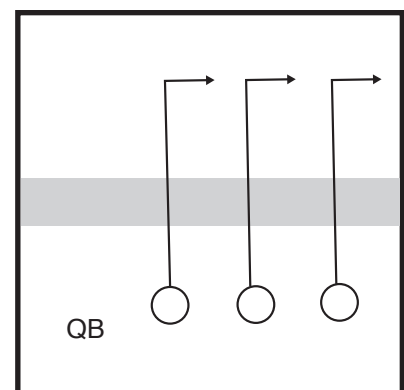


Fig87FF

Cross Patterns

- Two Receivers run out and cross over on their patterns.
- They should try this without Defenders initially, coordinating who will cross first.
- After they have the cross “down pat”, then add the Defenders.
- The “pick” play should be explained and the ruling on the play covered.

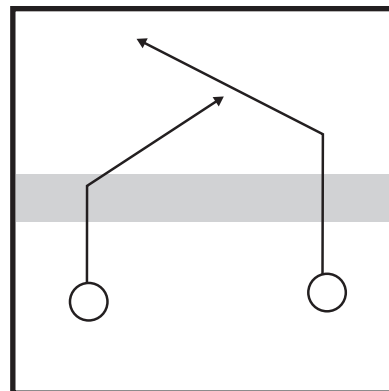


Fig88FF

Move It

- Setup a 15 yard/metre X 30 yard/metre area.
- Divide into groups of four or five students.
- One student is the Quarterback, another is the Receiver.
- The Quarterback chooses a pattern for the Receiver.
- The goal of the game is to move down the field by completing passes to the Receiver.
- The Receiver stops wherever he/she catches the ball.
- A new pattern is then called for a new Receiver, the ball is thrown from that spot.
- If the ball is not caught, it is returned to the spot it was thrown from.
- The game can be made competitive by seeing which team gets to the other end of the field the quickest or reaches the end of the field in the fewest number of pass attempts.

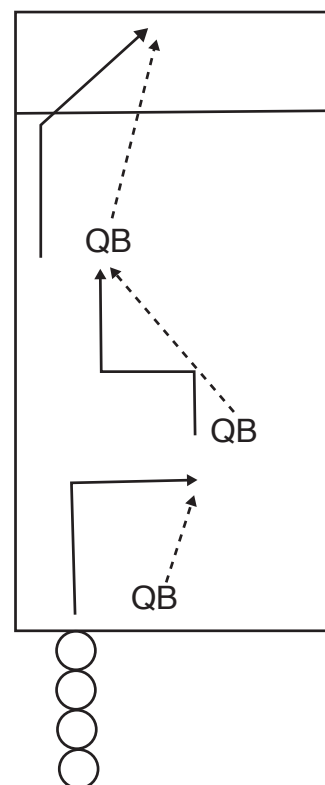


Fig89FF



Centering Drills and Activities

Center Catch

- Two Centers can work together snapping the ball back and forth between each other.
- Two Centers align 5 yards/metres apart while one student is snapping the ball, the other assumes the role and positioning of the Quarterback in a shotgun stance.

Instructors - QB's can use a cadence to initiate the snap.

Progression:

From this alignment Centers can increase distance up to 7 yards/metres from the Quarterback. The Center can initiate a short pass pattern immediately after the snap.

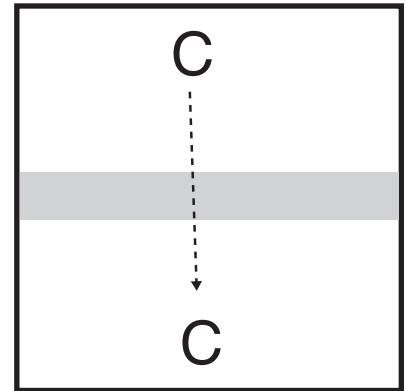


Fig90FF

Snap and Move

- Set up a 10 x 15 yard/metre area. Mark a 7 yard/metre rush distance with a beanbag or cone.
- The Center first checks on the alignment of the Rusher, snaps the ball and then runs his/her pattern.

Note:

The Center cannot block or obstruct the Rusher. The Quarterback then throws the ball to the Center.

Progression:

A variation is to have two people line up as Rushers. The Center then must adjust his/her pattern depending on which one rushes or if both rush. The other Defender can play person-to-person coverage on the Center.

Instructors Tip:

The Center must concentrate on a successful snap to avoid loss of down. Rushers must move forward on ball movement from the Center to avoid moving offside prior to the snap. Reference Rule 15 – Defensive Penalty – Illegal Rush

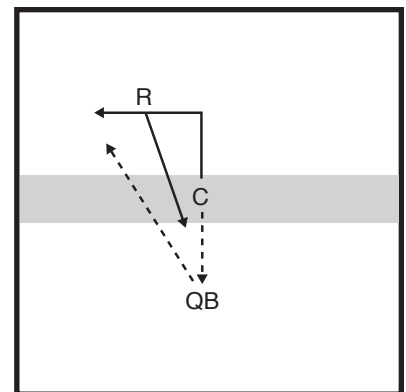


Fig91FF

Offensive Drills and Activities

Quarterback Under Pressure

- The group should divide into three units; Quarterbacks, Receivers and Rushers.
- This would be a good time to explain the alignment of the Rusher and Quarterback.
- Upon command, the Receiver moves downfield and the Rusher comes toward the Quarterback.
- The Quarterback, who already has a ball in his hands, then throws the ball to the Receiver prior to being touched by the Rusher.
- Players should rotate through all the three groups.

Instructors Tip:

Receivers are encouraged to run the required distance of the pass pattern. Distance markers may be placed at the 5, 10 and 15-yard/metre line.

Limit the area that the QB can scramble to 10 by 10 yard/metre area.

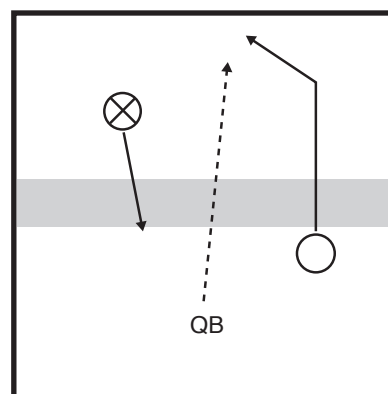


Fig92FF

Quarterback Read

- Three Receivers will be sent out against two Defenders.
- The Quarterback must “read” which one is in the clear and throw the ball.
- To add more difficulty, allow a Rusher to come in.

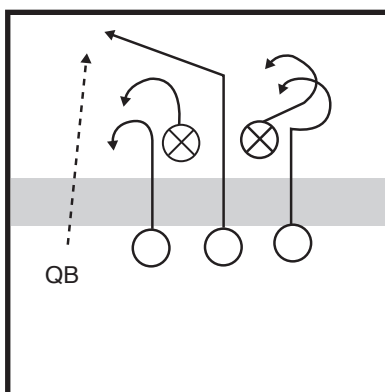


Fig93FF



One on One

- Setup an area approximately 10-15 yards/metres x 25 yards/metres.

This is a competitive drill that teaches Players to defend and receive against person-to person coverage.

- Defensive Backs (DB's) cover a Receiver, one-on-one.
- A system of scoring can be set up to add additional excitement to the drill (i.e. Defender gets 1 point if pass is incomplete, 2 points if he/she knocks pass down and 3 if he/she intercepts, etc.).

Instructors Tip:

Defensive Players should align in an inside or outside shade to the Receiver and 3-5 yards/metres back (cushion). Defensive Players must concentrate on the Receivers hips and not the upper body. Receivers must initiate fakes and quick moves to get open and receive a pass.

Progression:

Advance drill to include two-on-two person coverage.

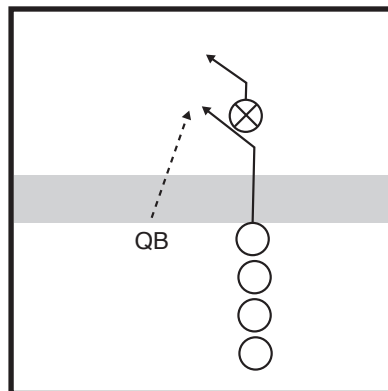


Fig94FF

Team - One on One

- Players should be taught how to slide through an offensive crossing pattern; and then practice.
- Players should also be taught how to switch coverage on the Offensive Players.
- The students will be formed into teams of 4 - 7 Players per team.
- Each team will work together in developing plays to be used when they play against another team.
- Samples of offensive plays are provided below.
- To speed things up in the class, you could put the plays on large pieces of cardboard, then the students have a quick reference on the field.
- Teams can rotate Quarterbacks or designate one Player as the Quarterback.
- Plays should be designed so that the Receivers are not close together when the ball is thrown.
- If Receivers are in the same location, then the ball is more likely to be knocked down by a Defender.
- Each Player on defense will have to determine which Offensive Player he/she is covering.
- This will have to be determined before each play starts.

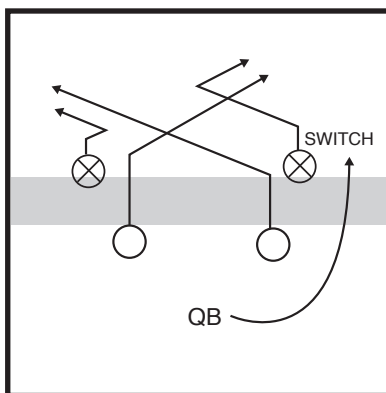


Fig95FF

Defensive Drills and Activities

Introduction

- Explain the basic techniques of defensive pass coverage (footwork, positioning, rules etc.).

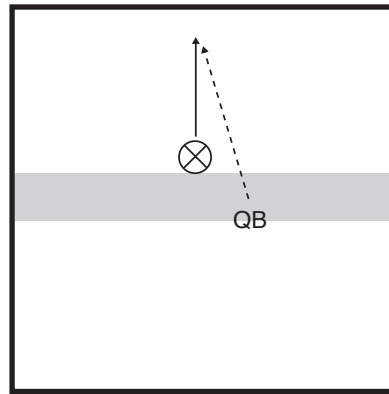


Fig96FF

Footwork

- Have Players run backwards and then throw them the ball.

Variation:

Have the Players run backwards and then turn and run forwards while looking back toward the Quarterback. Teach correct footwork. Have Players run backwards and break at 45 degree angles.

Note:

The coach (QB) should signal when the Defender breaks one way by pointing in that direction with the non-throwing arm.

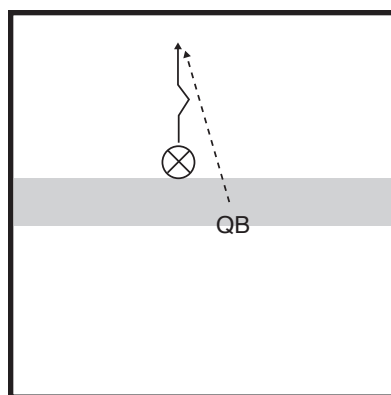


Fig97FF

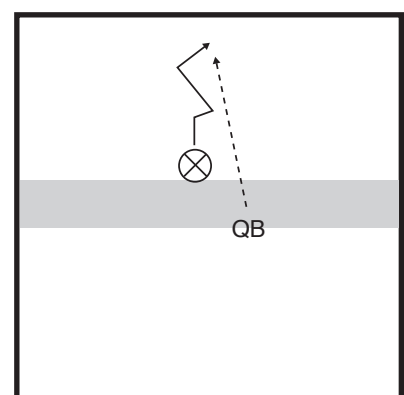


Fig98FF

Go to Ball

- Defensive Players can line up covering Offensive Players.
- When the ball is thrown, the Defenders must call “Ball” and go to where the ball is thrown.
- If the pass is intercepted, “Bingo” or something similar should be called.

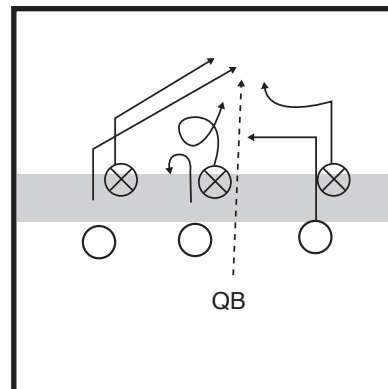


Fig99FF

Zone Coverage

- Players should be taught how to move into their zone and then react to the ball.
- There are a number of types of zone defenses that can be employed, a couple of the basic ones are indicated here.

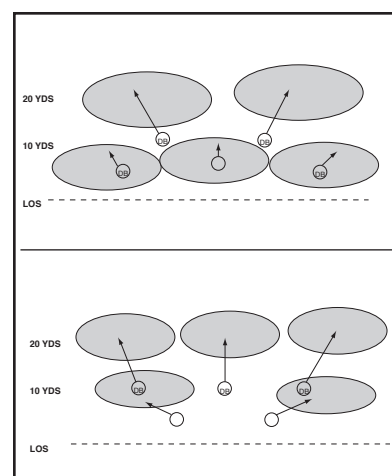


Fig135/136FF

Centre Field

- This drill is designed to teach the Players how much ground they can cover when the ball is in the air.
- The Defender moves into his/her zone and reacts to the ball thrown to a Receiver in that zone.
- Good against teams who like to throw long.

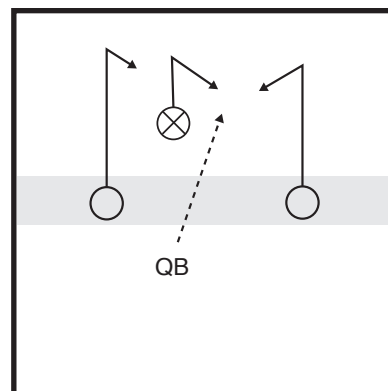


Fig101FF

Intercepting a Pass

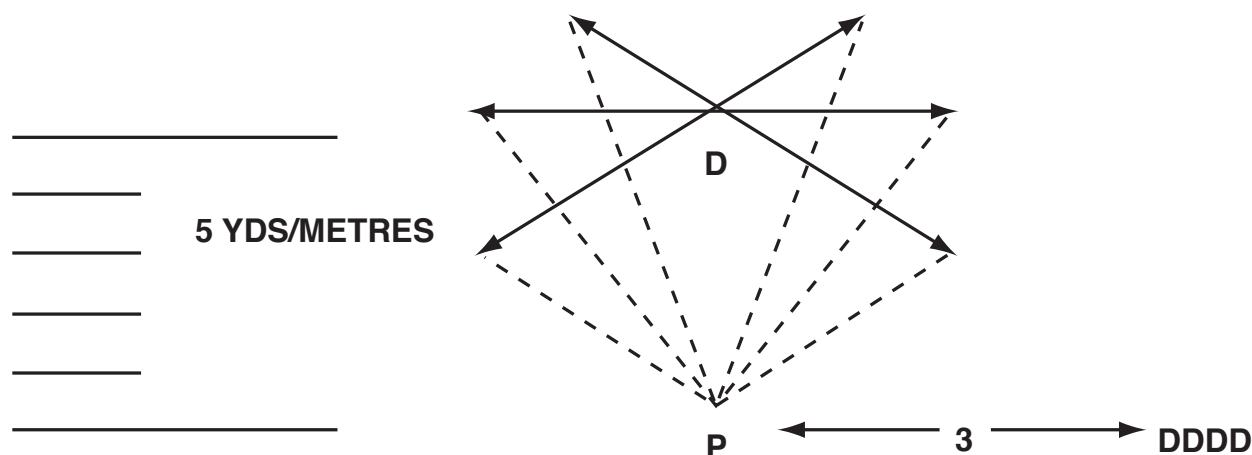


Fig145FF

Objective:

To develop the interception skills of Defensive Players.

Procedure:

- Station one Defender approximately 5 yards/metres out in front of the passer (have the remaining Defenders line up to the side of the passer, about 5 yards/metres away.)
- On command (movement of the ball into the throwing position) have the Defender execute a good back peddle.
- Passer throws the ball to various points, and the Defender breaks to the ball and makes the interception.
- Upon completing the interception the Defender "tucks the ball away" and runs the ball back into the passer.

Note: The passer throws the ball to different locations and heights so the Defender will have to adjust his approach to and catch the ball with different hand positions.

Coaching Emphasis:

- Defender executes a good backpedal.
- Defender explodes quickly to the ball once it is thrown.
- Catch the ball at highest point when thrown high.
- Catch the ball with the hands.
- "Put the ball away" after the catch.
- Run the ball back into the passer.





Coaching Aids

Flag Football 3 Hour Skill Awareness Clinic

Sample Practice Plan

Positional Skill Development Checklist



Coaching Aids

Flag Football 3-Hour Skills Awareness Session

Introduction /Warmup

15 minutes

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Getting Started	Introductions, explain the clinic format.	Clinic format can be in either position stations or divided into offense and defense team areas. Rotate Players throughout segments at the appropriate time.	5 minutes
	Highlight the rules and fundamentals skills of Flag Football.	a. No Tackling, Blocking, Co-ed, anyone can play. b. Importance of learning the basic fundamentals skills to enjoy the game.	
Warm up	Warm up activity and stretch	Refer to Guide 79-81	5 minutes
Agility	Agility Drills	Individual / positional agility drills, includes box drill, footwork and reaction drills. Refer to Guide 82-105	5 minutes



Flag Football 3-Hour Skills Awareness Session

Position Skills -Offense

1 hour

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Passing	Partner Passing Drill – Players pair up 10 yards/ metres apart.	Explain the Proper Grip, Passing Motion, Follow through. Players can perform kneeling and progress to standing position.	10 minutes
Pass Receiving	Partner Passing Drill -Above and Below the waist.	Hand positions, eye tip of the ball, arms give on contact "soft hands". Ref. Page 82-88	10 minutes
Pass Routes	Line passing drills a. Demonstrate each pass patterns. Patterns can be marked with pylons. b. Players run pass patterns without receiving a pass. c. Progress with a coach or QB passing the ball to Receivers.	Group Players in five to seven. Demonstrate pass patterns. a. Hook, Out, In, Slant. b. Vary routes and multiple Players can run pass routes. c. Focus on proper break and pattern distance. Ref. pages 88-89	15 minutes
Break			2-3 minutes
Centering	Players pair up 5 yards/ metres apart and perform a shotgun snap. Drill: Center Catch Ref. Page ...	Explain Center Position and Snap Technique. Demonstrate the Center Snap and QB position for receiving the snap. Introduce QB cadence.	5 minutes
RB Handoffs	Drill: Hand-off drill. Players pair up and complete a set number of handoffs to either side. Players rotate positions QB /RB.	Demonstrate Handoff Technique. QB Position, refer page 90; RB Position, refer page 81	5 minutes



Flag Football 3-Hour Skills Awareness Session

Position Skills -Offense (continued)

1 hour

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Carrying The Football	From a stationary position. Each Player holds a ball with proper grip and performs running arm action. Refer to page 97 Drill: Players run, zig zag around cones or within a grid.	Demonstrate proper ball carrying technique and efficient running form.	5 minutes
Pass Receiving	Over the shoulder catching. Line passing drill in groups of 5-7 Players. Coach or QB passes the ball to Receivers.	Demonstrate over the shoulder catching and long pass patterns Fly, Post, Flag.	10 minutes



Flag Football 3-Hour Skills Awareness Session

Position Skills Defense

40 minutes

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Defensive Back Coverage	Back Pedaling Breaking, Intercepting. a. Players align facing coach and backpedal 10 yards/ metres. b. Players break at 90/45 angles. c. Players break on coaches direction.	Demonstrate back pedal technique. Refer to Page 94	10 minutes
Defensive Back Coverage	Person – to Person Coverage. a. DB covers a partner running various pass patterns without a pass. b. Progress to coach passing the ball.	Emphasize cushion, leverage on the Receiver. Refer to page 80	10 minutes
Flagging Technique	Drill: One-on-one flag pull. Ref. Page 99 Game Flag and Out. Ref. page 103	Key Points. Watch the ball carriers hips. Target near the belt attachment. Release Player on missed grabs to avoid penalty. Learn to grab with either hand.	10 minutes
Rushing Technique	Drill: Snap and move. Ref. page 90	Review alignment and position rules for Rusher. Blitzing Technique. Refer to manual page. Emphasis on movement on the snap of ball to avoid illegal rush.	10 minutes
Break			5 minutes



Flag Football 3-Hour Skills Awareness Session

Offense Team Basics

30 minutes

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Introduce Offensive Formations	Stationary -Align Players in assigned positions.	a. Review position and summary rules of the game. (LOS) Line of scrimmage, downs, etc. b. Introduce huddle formation and procedures.	10 minutes
	Run: Offense Pass Plays (5) Run: Running Plays (5)	Use carded plays against a ghost defense.	20 minutes

Defense Team Basics

20 minutes

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Introduce Defense Zone Coverage	Demonstrate 3-2 Zone Coverage.	Practice area drops and reaction to QB movement and ball.	10 minutes
	Demonstrate 2-1-2.	No Rush.	

Team Play

20 minutes

Skill	Activity	Description	Time
Scrimmage	Practice Game Scrimmage.	Run offense plays against defense.	20 minutes
		Defense coverage zone and person-to-person.	
Cool Down	Group stretch. Announcements and Communication.		10 minutes



Sample Practice Plan

Practice Objectives: Introduce deep pass patterns.

Zone defense – area drops and intercepting.

Practice new plays for upcoming game..

Duration:

60 Minutes

Segment	Skill	Description	Time
Warm-up Activities	Agility Box Drill. Stretching Routine.	Reference Page ...	7-10 minutes
Individual Skills	Over the shoulder catching.	a. Running Receiver. b. Introduce Deep Pass Patterns: Fly, Post, Flag.	10 minutes
	Back Pedal and Break. Intercepting.	a. Player breaks at 90 / 45 angles. b. Coach initiates break and passes the ball to the DB.	10 minutes
Break			1 - 3 min
Offense / Defense	One-on-ones.	a. Receivers and DB's perform one-on-one pass receiving/defending skills.	12 minutes
Team	Offense Pass Plays.	a. Offensive team runs 8-10 plays from LOS. (Carded)	12 minutes
	Defense Team Coverage.	b. DB's work on zone coverage drops 2-1-2.	
Cool Down	Stretch.		5 minutes



Positional Skill Development Checklist

Skill (D) Developing (E) Executing	Player 1	Player 2	Player 3	Player 4	Player 5	Player 6	Player 7	Player 8	Player 9
QB Skills	D					E			
Passing the Ball	D					E			
Executing Handoffs	E					E			
Executing Play Action	E					E			
Receiving Shot Gun Snap	E					E			
Drop Back Pass Action	D					E			
Executing a Pitch Toss	E					E			
Pass Pattern Completions: (5 routes)	D					E			
Skills-RB		E				D			
Receiving Handoffs		E				E			
Receiving Pitch Toss		E E				E			
Running with the Ball		E				E			
RB Footwork Cuts, Spin-moves		E				D			
Center Skills			E				D		
Center Stance			E				E		
Center Shot Gun Snap - 1 Hand			E				D		
Center Release			E				E		



Positional Skill Development Checklist

Skill (D) Developing (E) Executing	Player 1	Player 2	Player 3	Player 4	Player 5	Player 6	Player 7	Player 8	Player 9
Receiver Skills									
Receiving the Ball - High, Low, Side, Over the Shoulder				E	D				
Running Pass routes: Hook, Out, Post, Fly				E	D				
DB Skills									
Stance					E		E		
Backpedal					E		E		
Footwork Breaking 90					E		E		
Footwork Rotate/ Breaking 45, 180					E		D		
Intercepting					E		E		
Flagging -Both Hands					D		D		
Zone Coverage Drops					E		E		
Person -to-Person Coverage					D		D		
Pass Rush Skills					E		E		

Evaluation Date: _____

Evaluated By: _____

TEAM: _____



Game Day Coaching

Before the Game

During the Game

After the Game

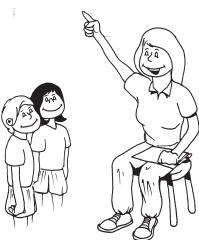
Taking Stock

References

Game Day Coaching

If you are well organized and prepared for games, your Players will do their best and enjoy themselves. Here are some things you can do before, during, and after games.

Before the Game



- Arrive at the location in lots of time.
- Make sure you have your first-aid kit and all the equipment you need.
- Check the play area for safety hazards.
- If you are the head coach, make sure that you introduce yourself to the chief official.
- Ensure that all Players go through a proper warmup and that they are wearing the proper equipment.
- Make sure you have sufficient equipment for pre-game activities.
- Have a short meeting with your Players. Be positive and stress just a few points of instruction.

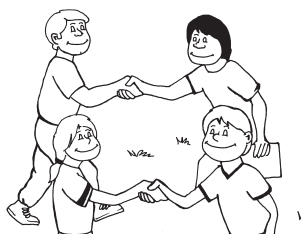
During the Game

- Be enthusiastic. Create a happy and positive mood on the bench.
- Plan substitutions so everyone has an equal chance to play.
- Set a good example in dealing with officials and the other team.



After the Game

- Make sure Players and team staff shake hands with the other team and the officials.
- Provide Players with encouragement and positive feedback.
- Try to say something positive to each Player individually before they leave.
- Make announcements about upcoming practices or games.
- Ask yourself these questions: *Did my Players have fun? – Was there equal opportunity for everyone to play? – Was it a positive experience for everyone?*





Taking Stock

It is a good idea to "take stock" from time to time to see how you are doing as a coach. Complete the following checklist early into your season. Do it again midway through and at the end of the season.

Always	Sometimes	Not yet	
☐	☐	☐	I make sure Players feel at ease when I am talking with them.
☐	☐	☐	I am well-prepared for our sessions.
☐	☐	☐	I do a safety check of our field before sessions.
☐	☐	☐	I make sure practices involve lots of activity for each child
☐	☐	☐	I encourage cooperation among Players.
☐	☐	☐	I involve Players in making decisions whenever possible.
☐	☐	☐	I actively assist Players who are having difficulty.
☐	☐	☐	I promote respect for the officials and the rules.
☐	☐	☐	I am an enthusiastic coach.
☐	☐	☐	I try to make sure everyone is having FUN!

Keep monitoring yourself and if you are not at a level you want to be, plan to make some changes. To help you do this, complete the following statements for each area you would like to change.

I would like to improve _____

I can do this by _____

My deadline for improvement is _____



References

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