

# FORM RUNNING DRILLS

The primary phases involved in developing speed improvement are as follows:

1. Proper running technique
2. Flexibility
3. Sprint training
4. Overall strength training

When teaching form running, it is important to start with one technique and work on it first at half speed, work up to three-quarters speed, and finally, practice it at full speed. "Buzz" words, catchy words and phrases that go along with each technique, help players to better concentrate on the required skills.

## 1. HAMMER DRILL

**Purpose:** To develop the proper upper body fundamentals involved in speed development

**Execution:** The athlete stands with a slight forward lean, feet shoulder width apart. Eyes should be focused straight ahead and the arms should be in the locked position. On the coach's command, the athlete begins hammering his arms back at half speed for 15 seconds. The athlete takes a 15-second rest, and then begins a second set of arm repetitions at three-quarters speed for 15 seconds. The third and final set should be conducted at full-speed to give the athlete the correct feel for rapid arm action with proper technique.

### "Buzz Words"

- "Focus" - Eyes should be focused straight ahead.
- "Pinch" - Fingers should form a loose fist with thumb on top of first finger.
- "Lock" - 90-degree bend in elbow.
- "Squeeze" - Palms should be turned inside, elbows should be close to the side.
- "Hammer" - Fist moves down through the pocket and past the elbow, triceps should be parallel to the ground. The up hand should never pass the chin.
- "Rotate" - Arm action comes from rotation at the shoulder.

## 2. HIGH KNEES DRILL

**Purpose:** To develop proper running form with emphasis on quick high knee action. To develop flexor strength.

**Execution:** When the drill begins, each athlete will run 20 yards and back two times for a total of 80 yards. The coach will blow a whistle, signaling that each athlete is to run as quickly as he can while moving forward only gradually. Each repetition should be conducted a full speed and with an emphasis on quick high knee action while maintaining proper upper body technique. If the athletes tend to go forward too fast, slow them down. The athlete should be running on the balls of his feet with a slight body lean forward.

Variation: Low knees, quick hands, quick feet.

### "Buzz Words"

- "Drive" - Drive the knee up, feet should ricochet off the ground.

## 3. BUTT KICK DRILL

**Purpose:** To develop hamstring strength and quickness

**Execution:** On the coach's signal, the players run 20 yards while maintaining proper upper body technique and concentrating on snapping their heels to the buttocks as quickly as possible. The athletes should maintain a slight forward lean while running. The drill should be repeated four times, with each repetition conducted a full speed.

Coaching Point: Emphasize quickness without moving forward too fast.

## 4. BOUNDING DRILL

**Purpose:** To develop explosive power in form running.

**Execution:** The athletes should run 20 yards and practice driving the knee to the chest while exploding off the back foot. As the players land on the other foot, they should explode up and drive the knee to the chest. Emphasis should be on explosion upward not outward. The athlete should still concentrate on proper upper body mechanics. Make sure athletes are not skipping, and that they emphasize explosion every time they hit the ground. Each athlete should run four times.

### "Buzz Words"

- "Explode" - Drive knee to chest and explode off the ground.
- "Hang" - The better the explosion, the better the hang time.

## 5. GERMAN KICK DRILL

**Purpose:** To develop proper leg mechanics in form running.

**Execution:** The athletes will cover 20 yards while concentrating on punching the knee out, not up, and snap the foot down. This is not a punting motion. The knee will lift naturally, punch out, and snap down. The drill should be repeated four times.

### "Buzz Words"

- "Punch" - outward knee movement
- "Snap" - snap foot down and back underneath hip

## 6. STANCE AND START DRILL

**Purpose:** To develop proper stance and starts when running sprints.

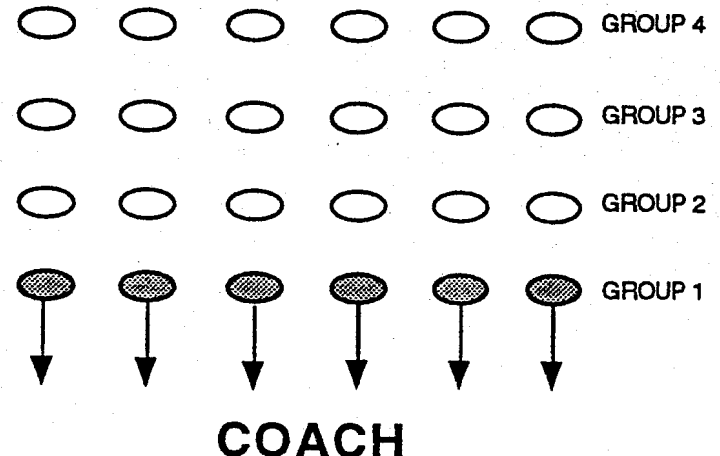
**Execution:** If the athlete is right handed, he should place his left foot as near to the starting line as possible, "crowding the line". He should also drop his right hand down in front of the line. The feet should be staggered with the majority of the weight on the front foot and hand. The back foot should not be extended too

## 7. SEVEN-AND-A-HALF FOOT STRIDE DRILL

**Purpose:** To increase stride length in form running.

**Execution:** From their small groups, the athletes will cover 40 yards. The first row begins the drill by running with proper stance and start techniques. As they run, they should work to lengthen their stride while maintaining proper running form. If the drill is run on the football field, the athlete should work to take two steps every five yards.

### Format for Form Running drills 1-7



# AGILITY DRILLS

The agility program included here consists of drills which relate to the game of football. The agility drills involve rapid change of direction, lateral movement, change of pace running, activities that force players to pick up their feet and drills to improve balance.

## 1. CARIOCA

*Purpose:* To improve hip flexibility.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. From their starting position, the athletes will "carioca" 20 yards in one direction, then back in the other directions. To carioca, the players face sideways with the shoulders square. They then run sideways, left foot over right and then left foot behind right while rotating the hips. The athletes will repeat the drill twice and keep an emphasis on staying low with shoulders square.

## 2. QUICK FEET CARIOCA

*Purpose:* To develop quick feet and improve hip flexibility.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. From their starting position, the athletes carioca 20 yards in one direction, then back in the other direction. The athletes should repeat the drill twice, with emphasis on staying low, keeping the shoulders square and taking short quick steps.

## 3. QUICK FEET

*Purpose:* To develop quick feet.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. From their starting position, the athletes take quick choppy steps laterally until coach signals them to sprint out past the coach. The emphasis should be placed on staying low and having quick feet.

## 4. QUARTER EAGLES

*Purpose:* To develop quick feet and improve hip flexibility.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. On the coach's signal, the players take quick choppy steps and "flip" their hips in the direction of the coach's signal and then return to base position. The athletes sprint out past the coach on the coach's command. The athletes should focus on quick feet and rotating their hips while keeping their shoulders square when executing this drill.

## 5. LATERAL SHUFFLE

*Purpose:* To develop athlete's ability to move laterally.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. Upon the coach's signal, the athletes will lateral shuffle (shuffle sideways) in the direction indicated. Athletes fire out on coach's signal. The drills' emphasis should be on staying low and moving laterally without the athletes crossing their feet.

## 6. LATERAL WAVE

*Purpose:* To develop the ability to change direction.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. Upon the coach's signal, the athletes turn and run in the direction of the coach's signal. The players should change direction on the coach's next signal and fire out on command. The coaches should stress the importance of staying low, planting, pivoting and redirecting.

## 7. LINE DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop change of direction skills.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows straddling the yard line facing the coach. On command, the athletes turn and run five yards, touch the yard line and sprint 10 yards back in the direction from which they came, touch the yard line and sprint through the original starting line. The players should keep in mind the importance of staying low, planting the foot, and then accelerating to a sprint in the opposite direction.

## 8. UP AND BACKS

*Purpose:* To develop the backward run and change of

direction skills.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three rows facing the coach. On the coach's command, the athletes backpedal five yards, touch the line, plant, and drive. They should sprint to the original starting line, touch the line, and begin to backpedal. The drill should be conducted for 30 seconds with an emphasis on staying low and perfecting change of direction skills.

## 9. LINE HOPS

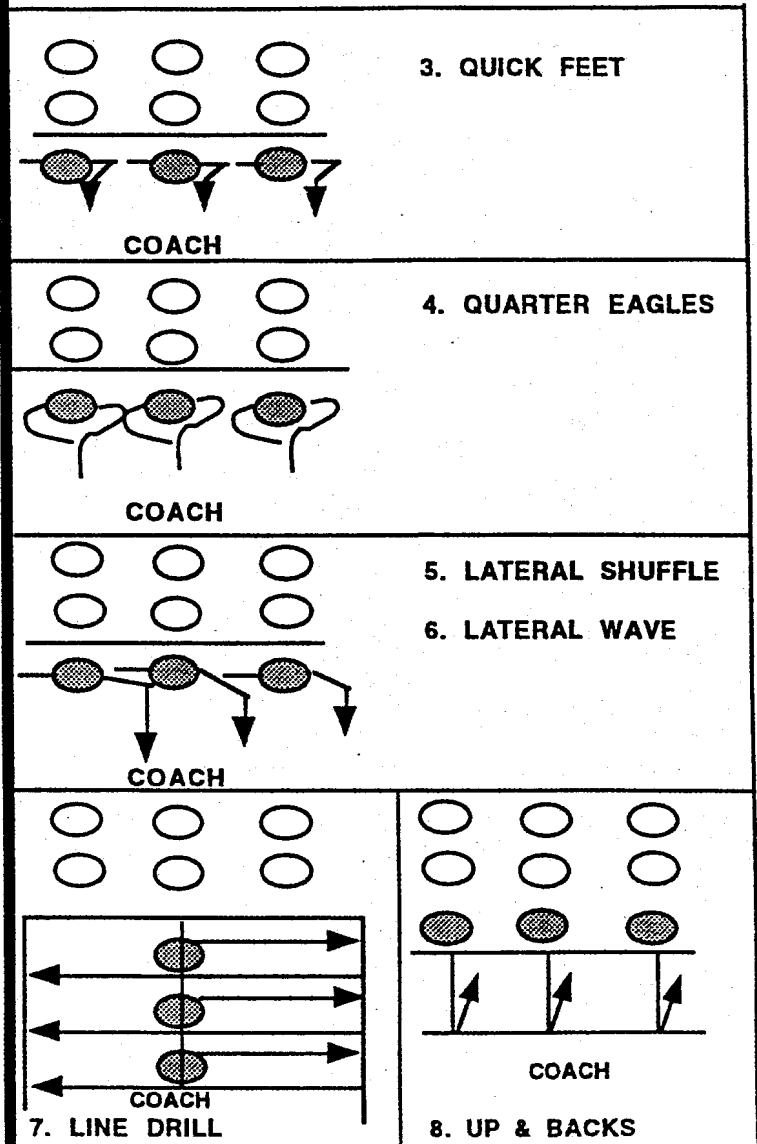
*Purpose:* To develop quickness of foot.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three groups on one side of a line. On the coach's command, each athlete crosses the line while hopping and keeping his feet together. The drill should be conducted for 15 seconds with four repetitions. The emphasis should be on keeping the weight on the balls of the feet and moving as quickly as possible.

## 10. WAVE DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop skills related to change in direction.

*Execution:* The athletes line up in three lines facing the coach. On the coach's command, the athletes sprint in the direction dictated by the coach (ie. right, left backward, forward, or any diagonal direction). The athletes change direction by planting the outside foot and sprinting in the proper direction. The drill should be conducted for 15-20 seconds with four repetitions. The coach should stress the importance of staying low, executing proper change of direction techniques, and keeping the eyes on the coach.



# BAG DRILLS

**Purpose:** To develop foot agility and quickness.

**Preparation:** Position six dummies (bags) in a straight row one yard apart. Align two cones five yards from the end dummies. The athletes will line up single file behind a specified cone. During each progression, the athletes will sprint through the cones as they cross the final bag. Each drill should be executed in both directions for two repetitions.

## BAG DRILL PROGRESSIONS

### 1. ONE FOOT IN THE HOLE

**Execution:** The athletes run through the bags with proper running form. During this drill, they should concentrate on picking up their feet.

### 2. TWO FEEL IN A HOLE

**Execution:** The athletes run through the bags with proper running form with an emphasis on quick feet.

### 3. SHUFFLE DRILL

**Execution:** The athletes shuffle through the bags with emphasis on staying low and picking up their feet.

### 4. CARIOCA DRILL

**Execution:** The athletes carioca through the bags with emphasis on staying low, keeping their shoulders square, and picking up their feet.

### 5. SNAKE DRILL

**Execution:** The athletes should sprint to the top of the bag, backpedal to the other end, sprint, and repeat, weaving through the bags.

### 6. EXPLOSION DRILL

**Execution:** The athletes should keep their feet together and hop over the bags. The emphasis should be on exploding (jumping higher each time) as the players go over the bags.

# ROPE DRILLS

**Purpose:** To develop quickness of foot and sense of balance.

**Equipment:** Ropes

**Preparation:** Position ropes on a selected line. Align two cones five yards from either end of the ropes. The athletes line up single file behind a specified cone. The emphasis of the drills should be on proper running form, staying low, and picking up the feet. As each athlete begins the drills, he should sprint through the cones. The drills should be executed for two repetitions and in both directions.

## ROPE DRILL PROGRESSIONS

### 1. ONE IN A HOLE

**Execution:** The athlete should step with the right foot in the right row of squares and the left foot in the left row.

### 2. EVERY OTHER HOLE

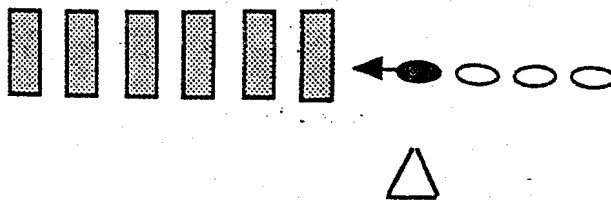
**Execution:** The athlete should step in every other square - right foot in the right row of squares and the left foot in the left row.

### 3. CRISS CROSS DRILL

**Execution:** The athlete should step in every other square, criss-crossing the feet - right foot in the left row and left foot in the right row.

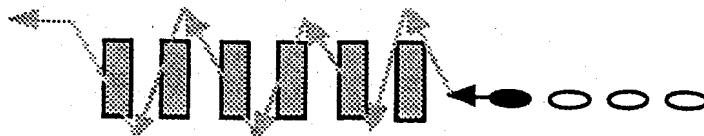
### 4. SHUFFLE DRILL

**Execution:** The athlete turns and faces the coach. He works his way through the ropes by side stepping, placing each foot in each square using one row of the squares.



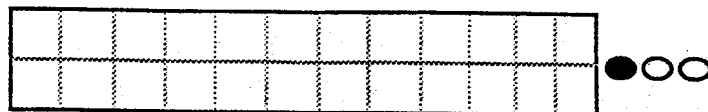
## BAG DRILL PROGRESSION

1. One foot in the hole
2. Two feet in the hole
3. Shuffle Drill
4. Carioca Drill



## BAG DRILL PROGRESSION

5. Snake Drill



## ROPE DRILL PROGRESSIONS

1. One in a hole
2. Every other hole
3. Criss Cross Drill
4. Shuffle Drill

# CENTER - QUARTERBACK EXCHANGE DRILLS



The center-quarterback exchange is the single most important fundamental in football.

The snap begins the first phase of the offensive play. Without a proper exchange, the offensive unit seriously handicaps its ability for success. The center-quarterback exchange must be drilled over and over until all quarterbacks and centers develop a "feel" for one another. This phase of the offense must be perfect every time.

## BASIC MECHANICS FOR THE CENTER

1. The ball should be placed with its strings up or on the left side for a left handed quarterback.
2. The center's feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width.
3. The left hand is on the ground or resting on the thigh pad.
4. The right hand grips the ball, forming a "V" with the forefinger and thumb splitting the seam of the football.
5. Both heels should be slightly off of the ground.
6. The back is parallel to the ground with the head up.
7. Bring the ball up with the locked wrist in a pumping action.
8. Fill the top hand of the quarterback with the ball and force the fingers through.
9. Keep the rear steady when hitting out.

## BASIC MECHANICS FOR THE QUARTERBACK

1. The quarterback stands in a parallel stance with the weight on the balls of his feet.
2. The knees should be slightly bent.
3. The right hand is wrist deep, the index finger should be placed in the middle of the center's rear. (**PRESSURE**)
4. The left hand should rest under and beside the right hand. (Thumbs should fit in natural grooves.)
5. The arms should be slightly bent.
6. As the ball is snapped, move with the center and close the left hand on the ball. (**PUSH**)
7. Bring the ball to the stomach and carry out the play. (**PULL**)
8. Constantly work on the three P's-->**PRESSURE**  
-->**PUSH**  
-->**PULL**

### 1. **FILL THE HAND DRILL**

*Purpose:* To see if the center is executing a proper snap.

*Execution:* The quarterback places his right hand underneath the center. The center executes the snap and works to fill the quarterback's hand. The quarterback lets the ball drop to ground. If the ball goes forward as it hits the ground, the center is too short on the snap. If the ball goes backward, the center is lifting the ball too deep. If the ball lands flat and bounces straight up, the center has executed a proper snap.

### 2. **ON THE LINE DRILL**

*Purpose:* To practice quarterback-center exchange against a defender.

*Execution:* Align all quarterbacks and centers on the selected line of scrimmage. A defender is positioned over each center, technique is dictated by coach. The quarterback selects play and cadence. On the cadence, the center snaps the football and executes the appropriate blocking scheme. The quarterback executes proper technique as designated by play.

Coaching Points:

1. Check for proper stances.
2. Check for proper ball exchange.
3. Make sure center is executing proper blocking scheme.

### 3. **CADENCE SNAP DRILL**

*Purpose:* Execute proper techniques and fundamentals with the quarterback-center exchange.

*Personnel:* All centers and quarterbacks.

*Execution:* Align the centers and the quarterbacks four yards apart on a selected line of scrimmage. The coach designates a signal caller. The quarterback selects a play and a cadence. On the cadence, the centers snap the footballs and quarterbacks and centers execute proper techniques.

Coaching Points:

1. Check for proper stances.
2. Make sure quarterbacks are applying enough pressure.
3. The ball should make "pop" noise.
4. Make sure center-quarterback exchange is properly executed.

COACH



3. Cadence Snap Drill

# QUARTERBACK DRILLS

## DEVELOPING "GOOD HANDS"

As the quarterback handles the football on every play, it is imperative to run quarterback ball handling drills at every practice. Ball handling drills help develop confidence in the quarterback's ability to handle the football and the quarterback's hand-eye coordination. Because the strong hand receives the majority of the work in most drills, the following drills will focus on developing the weak hand. Repetitions and confidence in the quarterback's ball handling skills will reduce the number of bobbled snaps, hand offs, and the like, thus resulting in fewer turnovers.

### 1. RE-GRIP DRILL

*Purpose:* To improve ball control.

*Execution:* The quarterbacks grip the ball with the palm of their hand facing the ground. They move the ball up and down, making sure to re-grip the ball every time. After a preset number of repetitions, the quarterbacks will switch hands and execute the drill with other hand.

### 2. BALL DROP DRILL

*Purpose:* To improve ball control.

*Execution:* The quarterback holds the ball in front of his body with an extended arm. He then drops the ball and re-grips it in the air. After re-gripping, the quarterback brings the ball back up to the original position and repeats the drill for a preset number of repetitions. Use both hands to execute this drill.

*Variation:* Use two footballs and execute the drill with both hands simultaneously.

### DROP AND CIRCLE DRILL

*Purpose:* To improve ball control.

*Execution:* Follow the same procedure as the "Ball Drop Drill". As the quarterback drops the football, he attempts to circle the football and re-grip it in the air. He then brings the ball back to original position and repeats the drill. Practice this skill with both hands.

*Variation:* Use two footballs and execute the drill with both hands simultaneously.

### 4. FLIP DRILL

*Purpose:* To improve ball control.

*Execution:* The quarterback holds the ball at one end with the palm of the hand facing down. He flips the ball with his fingers to give it a full back flip so the ball lands on the back of the hand. The back of the hand hits the ball forward, causing a full front flip which returns it back to its original position. The quarterback then re-grips the ball and continues the drill. Execute the drill with both hands.

### 5. GLOBETROTTER DRILL

*Purpose:* To improve ball control.

*Execution:* On the coach's command, the quarterback begins passing the ball from one hand to the other, between the legs, behind the back, and other varieties, as quickly as possible. The drill should last about 30 seconds, the players should then rest and repeat as many sets as desired.

*Variation:* Execute the drill with the eyes closed.

## PASSING TECHNIQUE - BASE MECHANICS

### THE GRIP

The grip will vary depending on the size of the quarterback's hand, his release, and what seems most natural to him. The ball should be gripped firmly in a comfortable manner with the fingers spread and relaxed. Most passers will have at least two fingers across the laces. The index finger will usually extend up toward the nose of the football. There should be a slight gap between the ball and the palm for a consistent release. If the pass is thrown and the nose of the ball is down, the grip is too tight; if the nose goes up, the grip is too loose.

### THE DROP

As the quarterback retreats to his drop, he should grip the ball with both hands and elevate the ball to chest height. The quarterback should retreat as quickly as possible whether it be a three, five, or seven step drop. The ball is swung slightly from side to side for added balance.

### THE STANCE

After the passer sets up to throw, he should have most of his weight on his back foot. His feet should be approximately shoulder width apart and the ball should be held around shoulder height.

### THE OFF-HAND AND ARM

The primary functions of the off-hand are for it to serve as a guide to help control the football and produce a fluid throwing motion by rotating the shoulders and hips back and through. As the off-hand and arm come forward during the throwing motion, added force is gained during the rotation of the shoulders.

### THE DELIVERY

When throwing the football, the quarterback should take a short jab step in the direction of the throw. By taking a short stride, the quarterback is able to step quickly at two or three receivers as he scans the field.

### THE RELEASE

The ball should be thrown either straight overhead or three quarters overhead. In releasing the pass, the ball should leave the index finger and possibly part of the middle finger. As the ball leaves, the hand should turn naturally with the thumb pointing downward.

### THE FOLLOW-THROUGH

As the football is released, it is important that the quarterback follow through with the arm, shoulder, and hip to increase the velocity on the football. The correct follow-through is one that allows the body to transfer weight from one side to the other.

*Coaching Points:* If the quarterback is having a hard time throwing spirals, you need to check for two possible mistakes:

1. Incorrectly gripping the football.
2. The ball should be leaving the index finger last - if it is leaving any other finger last, the player is putting too much pressure on the middle of the ball.

# DEVELOPMENT DRILLS-->QUARTERBACKS

## 1. KNEE DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop proper throwing action: wrist snap, arm strength, and quick release.

*Execution:* The quarterbacks face each other kneeling on the right knee (left knee if left handed passer) approximately five yards apart. When kneeling, the first player lifts the ball as if taking a snap and executes the proper throwing technique. The partner catches the ball and returns it, also using proper throwing technique. After a significant number of repetitions, move quarterbacks further apart - five yards back every ten repetitions.

### Coaching Points:

1. Check to see if the quarterback has the proper grip.
2. Make sure the off-hand is in position to help secure the football.
3. Check the player's release - make sure football is leaving the index finger last.
4. Check his follow-through as well as accuracy.

## 2. HIP ROTATION DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop proper release and follow-through technique.

*Execution:* The quarterbacks stand 10 yards apart sideways with the point of their shoulders facing each other. The first quarterback throws the ball, making sure to rotate his hips and get his shoulder around. The second quarterback catches the ball and returns the first player's throw with the proper technique.

### Coaching Points:

1. Check that athlete has the proper grip.
2. Make sure the off-hand and arm come forward during throwing motion.
3. Check for proper hip rotation.
4. Check for proper release technique.

## 3. ONE STEP AND THROW DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop proper delivery, release, and follow-through technique.

*Execution:* The quarterbacks stand 10 yards apart sideways with the point of their shoulders facing each other. Their feet should be approximately shoulder width apart with most of their weight on the back foot. The first quarterback takes a short jab step in the direction of the pass and executes proper release and follow-through technique. The second quarterback receives the ball and returns it to the first, using proper technique.

### Coaching Points:

1. Check for proper grip.
2. Make sure each quarterback has taken a proper stance.
3. The quarterback should take a short jab step in direction of the pass.
4. Check for proper release and follow-through technique.

## 4. QUARTERBACK DROP DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop proper mechanics in the three, five, and seven step drops.

*Execution:* Align a quarterback with a football on a selected line of scrimmage in a pre-snap position. The coach designates a play with a three step drop. On the snap, the quarterback executes a three step drop and sets to pass. Repeat the three step drop for five repetitions. The coach then designates a play with a five step drop. The drill continues until the quarterback has had five repetitions with a three step drop, a five step drop, and a seven step drop.

### Coaching Points:

1. Eliminate false steps - proper foot placement and weight

transfer.

2. The quarterback should grip the ball with both hands.

3. The ball should be elevated to chest level.

4. Make sure the quarterback is getting into the drop as quickly as possible.

5. Check to see that the majority of the quarterback's weight is on the back foot when he sets up.

### Variations:

- Include center-quarterback exchange.
- Time and record snap and drops.

## 5. CLOCK DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop proper drop and stance technique.

*Execution:* The coach tells the quarterbacks to execute a three, five, or seven step drop. On the cadence, the quarterback takes the proper drop. The coach calls out 12 o'clock, 9 o'clock, 3 o'clock, etc., and the quarterback must step in that direction, pump fake, and step to the direction of the next call.

### Coaching Points:

1. Emphasize the quick drop, securing ball with both hands.
2. Check to see if the quarterback is taking a short lead step or if he is over extending himself.
3. Make sure the quarterback is executing proper throwing mechanics.

*Variation:* Place receivers in these positions, and on the throw command, the quarterback releases the pass.

## 6. CIRCLE DRILL

*Purpose:* To develop the mechanics of passing a football on the run.

*Execution:* Align two quarterbacks 10 yards apart with one quarterback holding a football. On the coach's command, the two quarterbacks begin running clockwise in a circle, passing the football. After a certain number of repetitions, the coach will give a second command, and the quarterbacks will change direction and begin to run counter-clockwise, passing the ball back and forth. The drill continues until all paired quarterbacks have had a significant number of repetitions.

### Coaching Points:

1. Emphasis should be placed on proper hip rotation and square shoulders.
2. Football should be secured by both hands, slight swagger for balance.
3. Emphasize quarterback leading the receiver while on the move.

## 7. SPRINT OUT DRILL

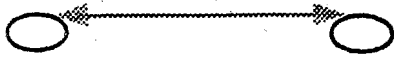
*Purpose:* To develop proper mechanics of passing a football on the run.

*Execution:* Use the yard lines at 10-15 yard interval beginning on the sideline. The drill consists of two quarterbacks being assigned a yard line. The players run down their respective yard line, throwing the football to each other. When the quarterbacks reach the far sideline, they will turn around and continue the drill in the opposite direction. The tempo of the drill should be dictated by coach. The drill continues until all paired quarterbacks have executed a sufficient number of repetitions.

### Coaching Points:

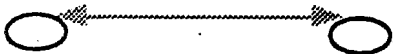
1. The football should be secured by both hands.
2. The player's shoulders should have a light swagger for balance.
3. Be sure to place emphasis on proper hip rotation, square shoulders and follow-through.
4. Emphasize the quarterback leading the receiver while on the move.

### 1. KNEE DRILL



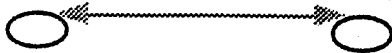
- A. Check to see if the quarterback has the proper grip.
- B. Make sure the off-hand is in position to help secure the football
- C. Check the player's release-make sure football is leaving the index finger last.
- D. Check his follow-through as well as accuracy.

### 2. HIP ROTATION DRILL



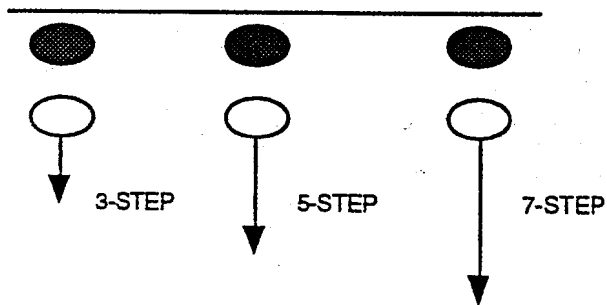
- A. Check that athlete has the proper grip.
- B. Make sure the off-hand and arm come forward during throwing motion.
- C. Check for proper hip rotation
- D. Check for proper release technique

### 3. ONE STEP AND THROW DRILL

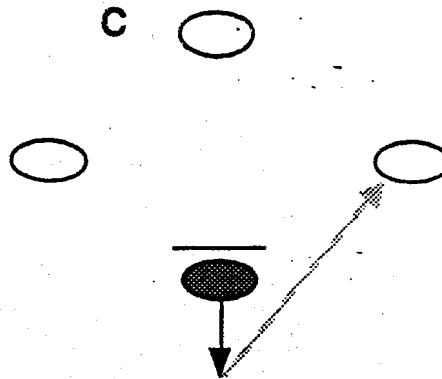


- A. Check for proper grip.
- B. Make sure each quarterback has taken a proper stance
- C. The quarterback should take a short jab step in direction of the pass.
- D. Check for proper release and follow-through technique.

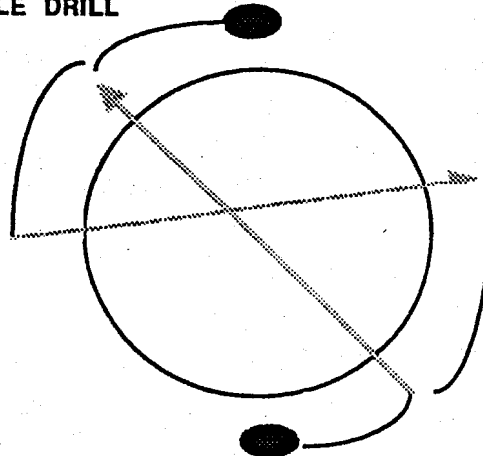
### 4. QUARTERBACK DROP DRILL



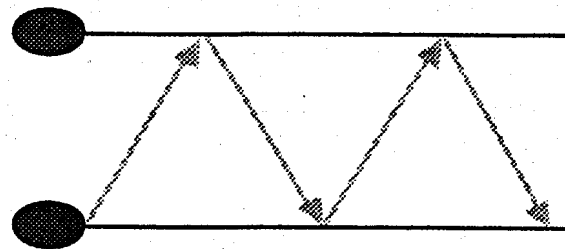
### 5. CLOCK DRILL



### 6. CIRCLE DRILL



### 7. SPRINT OUT DRILL



# RECEIVER FUNDAMENTALS

All of our drills are built around ten fundamentals. The following is list of them with several accompanying coaching points:

1. The first, and in our opinion most important, fundamental is *looking the ball into the tucked position—every time—in all practices*. Most dropped passes occur during the last six inches of the ball's flight when the receiver takes his eyes off the ball and looks to run. Just as important is to stress that the receiver tuck the ball into the proper carrying position and protect the ball with his opposite arm. Nothing is more demoralizing than a fumble after a fine reception.
2. Next we stress *turning the head quickly on a cut and focusing our eyes on the football*. Upon the cut, we also teach bringing both hands to chin level to improve reaction time for reaching for passes thrown at various locations.
3. Don't wait for the ball to get to you. *Reach for the ball and make the catch in front of your body*. Relax your hands and "give" with the ball. No short arms--> extend your arms toward the ball.
4. "Eyes in Palms"--> always *turn the palms* of your hands toward the football. This allows for the following:
  - a) It brings the elbows in during the catch
  - b) It positions hands for low and over-the-shoulder catches
  - c) It allows for "thumbs apart" for passes below the waist and "thumbs together" for passes above the waist.
5. When catching a high pass, jump and attempt to catch the pass at the *top point of the ball*. If you deflect it, at least the ball will come downwards to you.
6. For low passes, get the elbows together and scoop the arms/hands under the football. Get your arms between the football and the ground.
7. For passes behind the receiver, stress turning completely around as opposed to opening the hip and reaching back.
8. Keep your body *between the defender and the football* whenever possible.
9. *Comeback* to the football whenever possible.
10. When making a sideline catch and trying to stay in-bounds, never allow the back or far foot to leave the ground. This causes a dragging motion and gives the receiver the best chance of staying in-bounds.

SUMMARY-->good receivers can be made through diligent work habits and a knowledge of pass catching fundamentals

# INDIVIDUAL DRILLS

To be done in the off-season, before and after weight training and any time when the receiver is on his own.

1. **Air Dribbling:** Using one hand, hold the ball, drop it and with the same hand catch it as quickly as possible. Alternate drill to Left and Right hands.
2. **Finger Flip:** Grab the ball at one end and flip it over to fingertips to rest on top of the fingers. Then let it roll back to its original position and catch it. Alternate drill to Left and Right hands.
3. **Outside Roll In (Inside Roll Out):** Grab the ball at one end with the opposite point of the ball pointing across the body (laterally). Flip the football over the hand to the outside, then roll it back.
4. **Round the Body:** Take the ball as quickly around the body as possible, concentrating on taking the ball with the fingertips. Reverse this action on command.
5. **Figure Eight:** Spread legs shoulder width apart. Take the ball in a figure 8 pattern through legs as quickly as possible. Reverse this action on command.
6. **Inside Air Dribble:** With legs shoulder width apart, hold football between legs with one hand in front of body and one hand behind the body. On command, switch hand placement on the ball while continuously supporting the ball. Switch hands as quickly as possible.
7. **Forward and Back:** With legs shoulder width apart, support the football with both hands in the center of legs (arms behind body supporting the ball). On command, flip the ball to the front of legs and catching it with your hands. Once the ball is caught, flip it back behind body. Do this as quickly as possible.
8. **Globe Trotter:** With feet together, support the ball behind legs with both hands. On command, slightly toss ball up behind legs. Bring hands to a clap in front of the body and then catch the ball behind legs using the fingertips.
9. **Tap Drill:** Tapping the ball into the air and controlling the taps so the ball stays directly above you - do not move your feet. Do this with one hand and then the other, and then alternate hands with each tap.
10. **Spin Drill:** Grab the ball by each point. Notice the location of the laces. Spin the ball into the air and catch it again at the points with the laces in the exact position they were prior to the toss.

**PARTNER DRILLS:** *To be done by two receivers, again in the off season and before or after strength training, and also during individual fundamental time at practice.*

**HEAD TURNED-->EYES FOCUSED-->LOOK IT IN-->TUCK IT AWAY**

1. **2-Hand Catch:** Ball will be thrown at high, medium and low angles and to various targets on the body. The receiver must position the hands properly depending on where the ball is thrown.
2. **1-Hand Catch:** The receiver must reach and give using only one hand to make the catch.
3. **Turn and Catch:** Receiver will face away from thrower. Thrower will say "ball" which signals the receiver to turn and make the catch.
4. **Behind Catch:** Receiver will be sideways to thrower. The thrower will pass behind the receiver forcing him to turn completely around to make the catch.
5. **Over the Shoulder:** Receiver will turn away from thrower but look back over his right shoulder (then left). Thrower will arc ball over receiver's shoulder.
6. **Over the Head:** Receiver will face away from thrower. Thrower will say "ball" and receiver will look up above his head.
7. **Scoop:** Receiver is on his knees facing thrower. Thrower will pass very low to the ground -->elbows together, roll & cradle ball.

## GROUP DRILLS-->WITH COACH THROWING

The objective of these drills are to improve reception skills in a particular situation while running specific routes. These drills are done with a coach throwing during an individual period at practice. The receiver will usually run a specific route during the drill.

1. **Cross Drill:** The receiver will run any type of middle crossing route at 12 - 17 yds. His path will run him directly into a large stand-up dummy. The coach times his pass so that the receiver catches the pass just before he runs into the dummy.

2. **Wrong Shoulder Drill:** The receiver runs a fade route while the coach arcs the ball over the wrong shoulder forcing the receiver to adjust his body and keep his eyes on the ball the entire time.

### 3. Foot Drag Drills:

**Sideline-->**The receiver runs an out or comeback route to the sideline as the coach passes just enough outside to force the receiver to drag his back foot to make the catch

**End Zone-->**The receiver runs a fade route into the end zone as the coach passes just far enough long to make the receiver drag both feet in bounds.

4. **Blind Catch:** Again the receiver runs any crossing route. The route takes him behind any type of object large enough to block his view of the thrower (large mat or line of receivers with their arms raised). The coach times the pass so the receiver catches it just as he comes out of the barrier. This forces the receiver to quickly find the ball and focus on it.

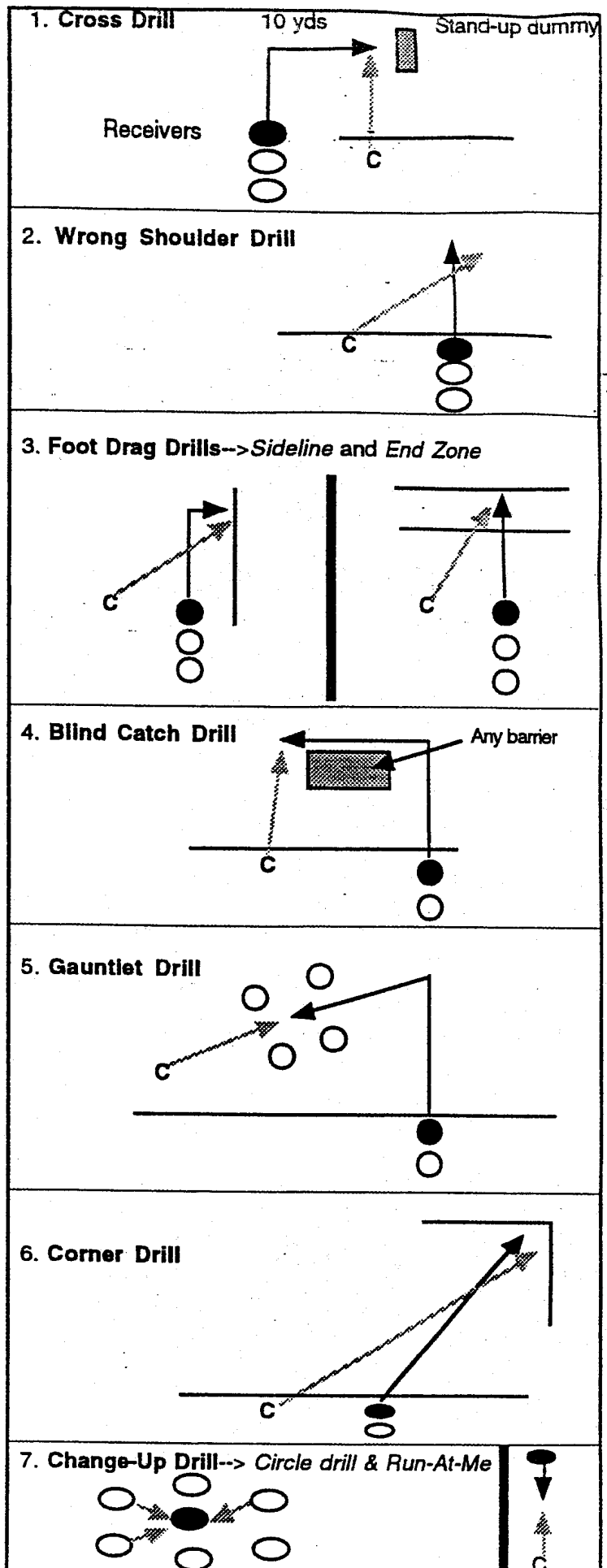
5. **Gauntlet:** The receiver will run a curl or comeback/deep out route. Several receivers will be positioned in front of the receiver and wave their arms as the ball is delivered to distract the receiver. A variation is to have one of the distracters tip the ball and really force the receiver to concentrate on the ball.

6. **Corner Drill:** With the coach (thrower) inside the receiver, the receiver runs directly on a 45' angle away from the thrower looking over his outside shoulder for the ball. This is one of the toughest angles a receiver has to pick up the flight of the football. (Use for flat or arrow type routes)

### 7. Change-Up Drills:

**Circle Drill -->** One receiver stands in the middle of a circle of the other receivers—who all have footballs. The receiver goes around the circle as fast as possible as each outside man throws any type of pass to him. He must catch it properly and throw it back and then focus on the next thrower. When he completes one cycle around the next man takes his place as he becomes part of the circle.

**Run-At-Me -->** Each receiver will run at FULL SPEED directly at the coach who will throw a high hard pass at the receiver.



## RECEIVER DRILLS --> QUARTERBACKS THROWING

**OBJECTIVE** - To improve reception skills while running a specific route or pattern against some type of defender with 1 quarterback using the exact timing of the route/pattern.

**PROCEDURE** - The QB will now throw to the receiver(s) with some type of pass defense in each drill.

### THE DRILLS:

1. **Shield Concentration:** The receiver runs a short or intermediate route emphasizing perfect technique. The QB takes a 3-or 5-step drop and passes to the receiver. The coach or a manager will slam the receiver the instant he catches the ball with a blocking shield. The receiver tucks the ball in, protects it, and gets up field.

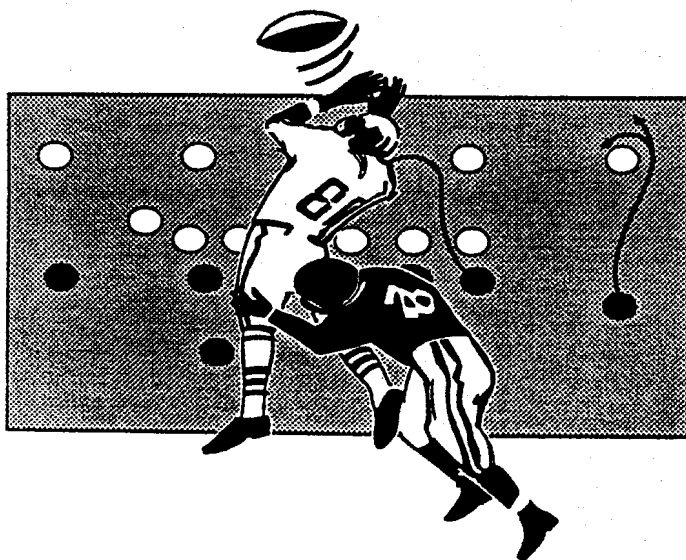
Variation: Instead of a coach with a shield, the receiver runs the route against a defensive back who will attempt to strip the receiver or put a hit on him AFTER the catch.

2. **Deep Distraction:** The receiver runs any of our deep pass routes against a DB who is instructed to distract the receiver BEFORE the catch while not touching the football.

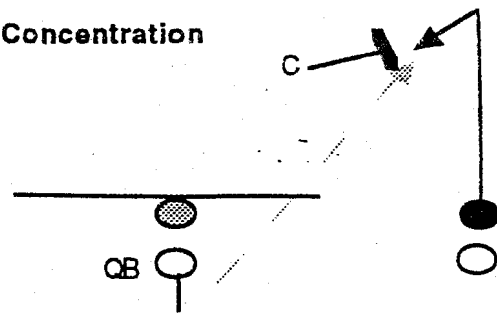
3. **1-on-1:** A live drill between a receiver and defensive back with the receiver running a short, intermediate and/or long pass.

4. **Middle Cross:** The receiver runs some type of 15 yd crossing route. He must first beat an inside technique double coverage DB (who will try to keep the receiver from going inside, but will not follow once the receiver breaks inside), and then find the open seam between two LBs who are playing a zone at 10 yds and trying to deflect the pass.

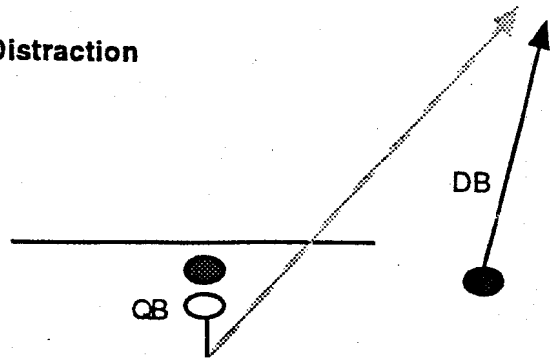
5. **3-on-3:** We will run a 3-man pattern against 3 DBs/LB who will run a basic Cover 3, Cover 2, and Man. The emphasis here is on adjusting the route vs. the given coverage.



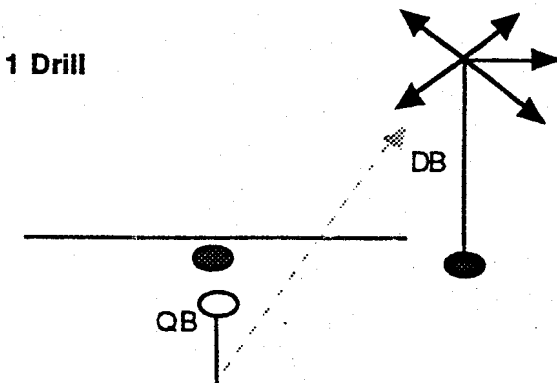
### 1. Shield Concentration



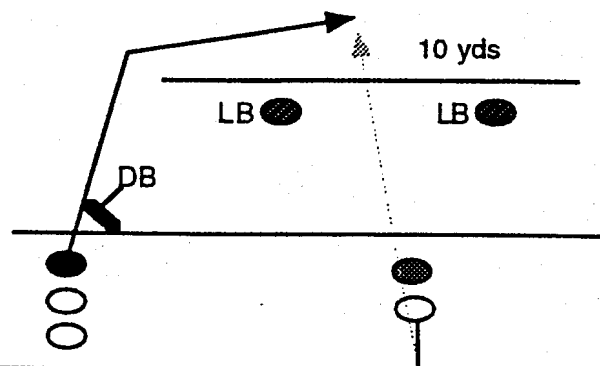
### 2. Deep Distraction



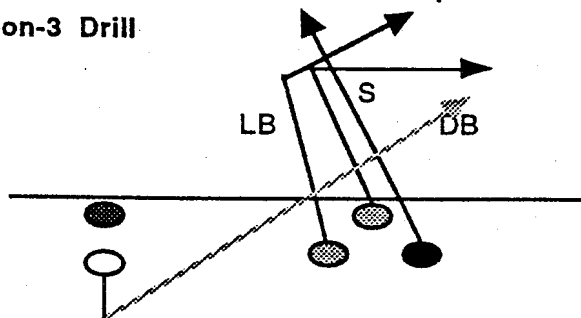
### 3. 1-on-1 Drill



### 4. Middle Cross Drill



### 5. 3-on-3 Drill



# RECEIVER DRILLS --> BLOCKING

The most important factor in receiver blocking is desire. Some receivers feel their only responsibility is to catch touchdown passes. The reality of sticking their noses into defenders turns them off. Good offensive running attacks include receivers that are willing to block and to do so aggressively. There are two types of blocks that may be taught to receivers --> Stalk block & Crack back block.

The *stalk block* is the block our receivers execute most often. As the ball is snapped, the receiver should drive off the line of scrimmage as if the play were a passing play. As he gets within three yards of the defender, he should break down under control, maintaining a low center of gravity and a wide base and taking short, choppy steps. His eyes should initiate the contact, not absorb it. As contact is made, the receiver should work for inside hand position and apply pressure where he feels pressure. As the defender attempts to get to the ball, the receiver should increase the pressure and drive the defender. It's important that the receiver maintain a good base; he should not cross his feet at all, if possible.

The *crack back block* is used to seal a linebacker or safety inside. On the snap of the ball, the receiver's eyes must go to the target. The receiver should come down the line of scrimmage under control with his shoulders parallel to the sideline. All adjustments to the defender's course should be made above the waist and with the receiver's head in front of the defender's body. The receiver will accelerate into the defender in the last five yards. His responsibility is to wall off the defender from the outside while executing the same fundamental described in the stalk block.

Receiver Blocking drills are broken down in the same manner as every other blocking drill: Approach->Contact & Follow through.

## 1. FORM FIT DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach proper stalk block technique.

*Execution:* Divide receivers into two groups on a selected line of scrimmage facing each other. The coach designates one group as the blockers and the other group as the defenders. On command, the blockers assume the perfect block position. The coach critiques each player, one at a time. Switch personnel and execute perfect block position with the second group.

## 2. LOCK ON DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach receivers to lock on defender as he attempts to release.

*Execution:* Divide receivers into two groups on a selected line of scrimmage facing each other. On the coach's command, the defensive man will move in the direction indicated by the coach. The offensive player will lock on and maintain contact until the whistle blows.

## 3. STALK BLOCK DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach proper technique and fundamentals involved in the stalk block.

*Execution:* Divide receivers into two groups and designate one group as the blockers and the other as the defenders. Align the first blocker on a selected line of scrimmage and the first defender five to seven yards off the line of scrimmage. The defender holds a hand shield, back pedals a short distance and breaks forward in one of three directions. The receiver will break down under control making contact with the shield and execute a stalk block.

## 4. STALK BLOCK AGAINST THE DEFENSIVE BACKS

*Purpose:* A full speed drill to teach proper techniques and fundamentals involved in wide receiver blocking against secondary support.

*Execution:* Divide receivers and defensive backs into two groups on each side of the field. Position a quarterback in the middle of the field and use backup defensive back as ball carriers. Position two cones 10 yards apart on both sides of the field on either side of the receiver. The coach instructs the defensive back which technique to play. On the cadence, the quarterback tosses the ball to the running back. The running back runs 3/4 speed between the cones. Receiver executes stalk block against a defensive back. The defensive back attempts to defeat the block and form up on the ball carrier.

### 1. FORM FIT DRILL

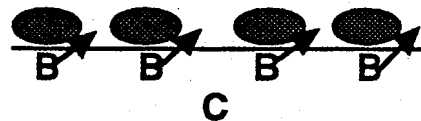
*Coaching Points:* Check for the following-->head up, butt down, good wide base, good power producing angles in the legs, and inside hand position.



### 2. LOCK ON DRILL

*Coaching Points:*

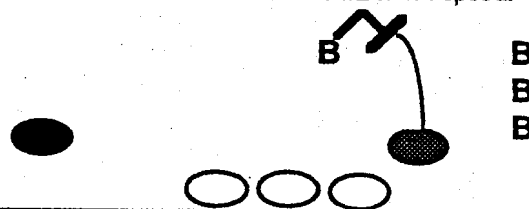
1. Check for the following: head up, butt down, good base.
2. Receiver should fight pressure with pressure.
3. No crossover steps, keep a base beneath the body.



### 3. STALK BLOCK DRILL

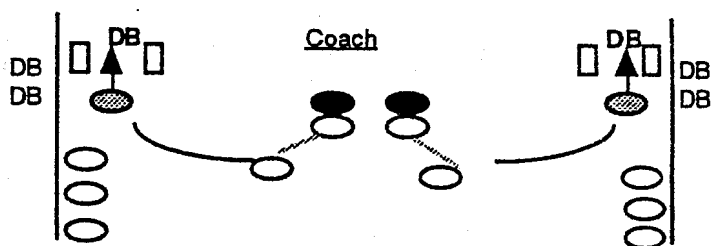
*Coaching Points:*

1. Make sure receiver breaks down under control, uses proper footwork and delivers a blow at the point of contact.
2. The drill should be conducted at 1/2 to 3/4 speed.



### 4. STALK BLOCK AGAINST THE DEFENSIVE BACKS

*Coaching Points:* Make sure receivers execute proper technique. Good competitive drill for receivers & D-backs.



# OFFENSIVE LINEMEN FUNDAMENTALS

When teaching the BASE or DRIVE BLOCK, we break it down into three distinct stages:

- ◊ **APPROACH STAGE** - Begins when you leave the huddle and ends when contact is made on the second step. It involves Alignment, Stance, and Start of the blocker.
- ◊ **CONTACT STAGE** - Begins at the end of the first step and goes until the whistle blows.
- ◊ **FOLLOW-THROUGH STAGE** - Begins with the third step and continues through the whistle.
- ◊ **ATTITUDE STAGE** - Linemen need to know that concentration is an important part of being successful and they should view their job as a personal battle between him and the man he is blocking. Coaches need to always be positive with linemen and to suggest, not order. For example, say "Hey! That was good, but have you tried to do this when you drive block."

I. **APPROACH STAGE** - Although it is the most controllable part of the block, it is often the most overlooked part by coaches. This is due to the fact that once you teach it, there are few drills to use reinforce it.

A. **Alignment** - We tell our Guards, Tackles, and Tight Ends that when they are in their stance that their hands line up even with the heels of the center.

B. **Stance** - We use a three point stance with our weight evenly balanced. We do this because we must be able to move in any direction - straight ahead, laterally, or backwards. The coaching points include:

- Begin teaching stance from a standing position with the feet shoulder width apart and with feet pointed straight ahead. Feet should be staggered with a heel to toe relationship.
- Next, bend straight down, bending at the hips, knees and ankles as they put their forearms on the thighs. Emphasize keeping the back straight at all times and keeping the "Power Angles" in the hips, knees and ankles. Bring the right knee inward, to have a "Z" in the knee, creating even more power.
- Thirdly, place the hand down directly under the eye, with their weight evenly distributed. Place the other hand just off of the hip. Check to see that their back is flat.
- Head and neck should be slightly back so that they can see the down lineman or the linebacker who is over them.

# FUNDAMENTALS, Con't

C. **Start** - From this stance, we simply drive off the up foot and fire out with the back foot. Coaching points are:

- Take a short, six inch step straight ahead with the back foot, replacing the hand.
- Cock both arms so that they are behind the hips and ready to deliver a blow on the second step.
- Stress keeping the "shoulder on the knee" to help them remain low. Back should remain flat and the head up looking at the defender.
- Maintain a wide base throughout.

II. **CONTACT STAGE** - Contact must take place on the second step with the **ARMS, not the shoulder**. New rules (1988) allow offensive linemen to use their hands to block, making it easier and safer. Coaching points include:

- As blocker steps with the back foot, he drives the palms of his hands into the defender at the base of his shoulder pads.
- Head should be up, avoiding all contact.
- Butt is down, and the back low and semi-arched. This position will allow you to have the **leverage** necessary to make a proper block
- Arms are bent with the thumbs up and the elbows in. Stand behind them to check that the elbows are in and you are **not** able to see them.
- Feet are shoulder width and pointing straight ahead.
- Offensive man's shoulder pads must be **under** the defender's shoulder pads.
- Knees and ankles as still bent, maintaining the Power-producing Angles.

III. **FOLLOW THROUGH STAGE** - At this point, if you have done everything properly, you have moved the defender off the Line of Scrimmage (LOS). Once you have moved the defender, we want to do two things:

A. **"Sink the Hips"** - so that we can use the large hip flexors in the legs to further move the man off the LOS. Bring the hips forward and keep the legs moving with short, choppy steps.

B. **"Climb the Block"** - after moving the man off the LOS several yards, the blocker can fully extend his arms forward and upwards. Obviously, this does not happen on every block, but we strive to make this happen.

IV. **ATTITUDE STAGE** - As a coach, if you are to have an impact on a young person's life, it will be because of the positive things you say and do. Psychologists say that it takes 10-12 positive statements to overturn one negative statement. Find something positive to say about every block, even if it is what you consider to be an insignificant thing.

# DRIVE BLOCKING DRILLS

## 1. ONE STEP DRILL (Approach Stage)

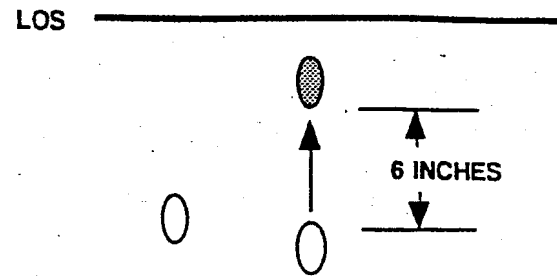
**Purpose** - Teach blockers to stay low and to take a short 6 inch first step.

**Execution** - Put blocker in his stance; Check for proper stance. On count, blocker steps forward with a 6 inch step and brings his arms back.

**Coaching Points** -

- Stress keeping the "Shoulder to the Knee" to maintain low body position.
- Back remains flat as you look at the defender.
- Short 6 inch step. Replace hand.
- Arms are cocked back behind hips.
- Wide base with the feet.
- Head is up and looking at defender's numbers.

## 1. ONE STEP DRILL (Approach Stage)



## 2. TWO STEP DRILL (Contact Stage)

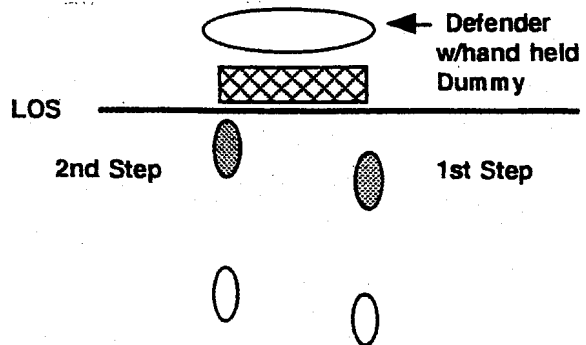
**Purpose** - Teach the ideal blocking position as we make contact with arms on the second step.

**Execution** - From a stance, on the count the blocker takes two steps, making contact with a teammate holding a dummy on the second step.

**Coaching Points** -

- On the second step, deliver a blow just below the defender's pads with the palm of the hand.
- Elbows are in and near the chest.
- Thumbs are up.
- Feet have maintained a wide base.
- Head is up and does **NOT** make contact with defender.
- Butt is low and back is semi-arched.
- Blocker's pads are **under** the defender's pads.

## 2. TWO STEP DRILL (Contact Stage)



## 3. FIT DRILL (Contact Stage)

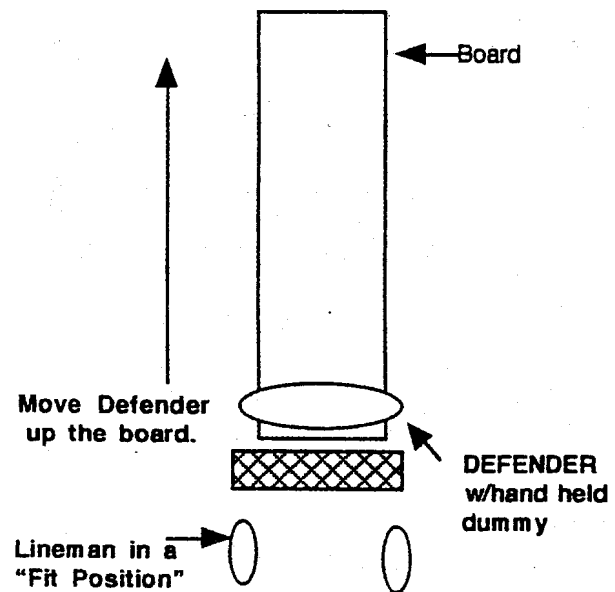
**Purpose** - To teach ideal blocking position using power producing angles and to teach proper use of leverage, hip roll and follow through when drive blocking.

**Execution** - Put blocker in a "perfect fit" position on the defender on a board as if he had already taken his first two steps. The defender is in a two point stance, crouched low with arms in a catching position.

**Coaching Points** -

- Feet parallel, with good bend in the knees and ankles. (Power producing angles)
- Butt down and back arched.
- Palms of the hands should be at the bottom of the defender's pads w/ elbows near the chest.
- Check for hip roll and acceleration of the feet.
- Blocker should keep a proper base underneath himself at all times to prevent over extension.
- Head is always up, looking at the numbers.
- Use short choppy steps until you get to the end of the board.

## 3. FIT DRILL (Contact Stage)



## BLOCKING DRILLS, con't

### 4. HIT AND DRIVE DRILL (Contact Stage)

**Purpose** - To teach all parts of the Base/Drive Block.

**Equipment** - Chutes and Boards

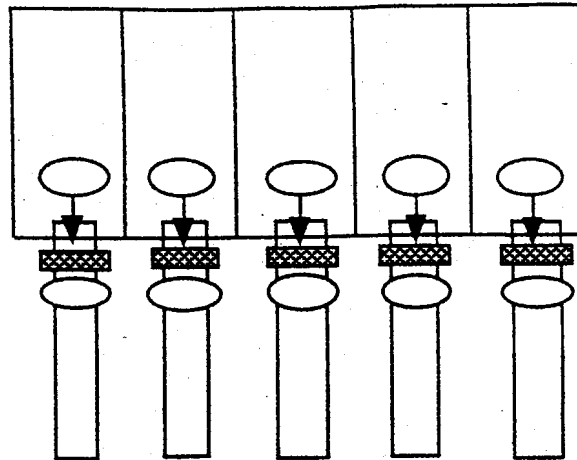
**Execution** - Align the blockers under the chute in a three point stance at the end of the board. Place the defender one foot away in a two point stance with a hand held dummy. On the cadence, the blocker will fire out of his stance and drive the defender down the board. The defender will give resistance as he is driven back.

#### Coaching Points -

- Check for proper stance and start technique.
- Make sure blocker fires out and **NOT** up.
- Check for hand and elbow position.
- Check for hip roll
- Emphasize good leg base and acceleration of feet.

### 4. HIT AND DRIVE DRILL (Contact Stage)

#### CHUTES



Defenders w/hand held dummies over boards.

### 5. 6 POINT EXPLOSION DRILL (Follow-through Stage)

**Purpose** - Teach the "Sinking of the Hips" or hip roll on the the base/drive block.

**Equipment** - Two or Five man sled

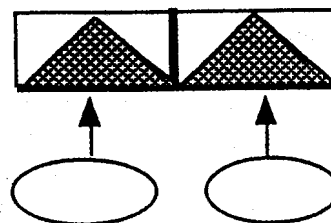
**Execution** - Align blockers up in front of sled in a 6 point stance with toes, knees and hands in contact with the ground. On cadence, blocker explodes toward sled making contact with his hands, rolling his hip forward and ending up flat on the ground. His feet stay where they were at the beginning of the drill.

#### Coaching Points -

- Roll hips forward on contact
- Thumbs up and elbows in.
- End up flat on the ground.

### 5. 6 POINT EXPLOSION DRILL (Follow-through Stage)

#### 2- Man Sled



Blockers in 6-Point Stances.

### 6. FIVE AND CLIMB (Follow-through Stage)

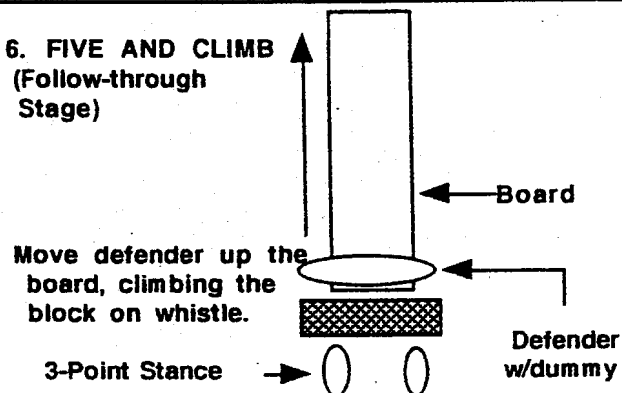
**Purpose** - Teach the "Sinking of the Hips".

**Execution** - Align blockers in a three point stance in front of a defender with a hand held dummy. On cadence, drive the defender backwards 5 yards and on the coach's whistle, fully extend the arms (Climb).

#### Coaching Points

- Roll Hips forward on coach's whistle.
- Arms are fully extended on whistle.

### 6. FIVE AND CLIMB (Follow-through Stage)



## PASS PROTECTION FUNDAMENTALS

The primary objective of the offensive line in passing situations is to protect the quarterback. The success of the protection can be measured by the number of passes that are thrown without pressure and without obstruction. Linemen must accept the responsibility for providing whatever time is necessary to get the ball off.

Adjustments must be made in body position and technique in the transition from run blocking to pass blocking. While run blocking using forward leg drive, pass blocking requires the use of lateral and backward movements.

Pass blocking techniques can be broken down into five distinct stages:

- ◇ **PRE-SNAP READ STAGE**
- ◇ **SET UP STAGE**
- ◇ **PUNCH STAGE**
- ◇ **BODY POSITION STAGE**
- ◇ **THE FINISH**

**I. PRE-SNAP READ STAGE** - The linemen need to know before the snap of the ball where the quarterback is going to set up and his assignment according to the alignment of the defense. He needs to know which man or area he is responsible for and what his blitz responsibilities are.

**II. SET UP STAGE** - This will depend on the alignment and ability of the opponent. The goal is to set up so that he is between the quarterback and the defender. You want to do this as quickly and as close to the LOS as possible. You want to get from a three point stance to a two point stance as quickly as possible. The linemen should bend his knees, arch his back, **keep his head up** and snap his arms into the punch position.

## PASS PROTECTION FUNDAMENTALS, Con't

**III. THE PUNCH STAGE** - We teach to punch with the butt of the palm inside the framework of the defender's body and to aim for the player's numbers. The linemen should punch upward (finishing with their hands above their chins), working through the man and work for a lockout position with their arms. They should remember the QB's position and fight pressure with pressure as to keep themselves between defender and the QB.

**IV. BODY POSITION STAGE** - Linemen must also be able to position their body with their weight low and forward to maintain balance. **NEVER** let the defender get to the lineman's body and force him into an upright position. Always position yourself so that your belly button is pointing at the thigh pad of the defender that is closest to the QB. The lineman must work to keep separation from the defender while maintaining a proper base beneath his body. In order to keep a proper base, the lineman must have the ability to slide or shuffle his feet quickly without crossing over.

**V. THE FINISH STAGE** - Because pass plays take an average of three to four seconds to complete, linemen must accept responsibility for doing whatever it takes to provide protection until the play is over. They need to stay after the defender until the whistle blows.

# PASS PROTECTION DRILLS

## 1. QUICK SET DRILL (Set Up Stage)

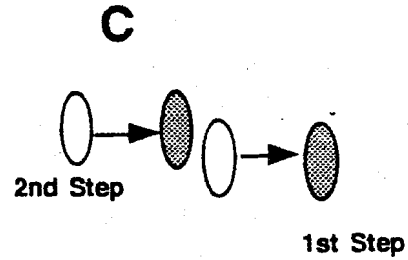
**Purpose** - To teach proper technique to the set position.

**Execution** - The lineman takes correct three point stance. On the coach's command, the lineman takes a quick lateral step so that he is positioned between the QB and the defender over him.

### Coaching Points -

- Check for correct three point stance.
- Stress having the eyes on the defender.
- Begin drill by shifting weight to the inside of the foot away from the QB's final set up position.
- Laterally slide step toward the QB's set up position/ launch point.
- Lastly, slide the other foot.
- Weight should be evenly distributed.
- Point butt at QB.

## 1. QUICK SET DRILL (Set Up Stage)



QB

## 2. BODY POSITION DRILL (Set Up Stage)

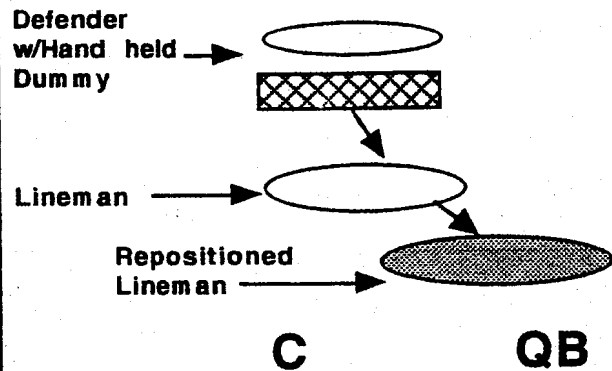
**Purpose** - To teach proper alignment technique in relationship to the man on the lineman.

**Execution** - The defender opposite the lineman takes one step forward and the lineman aligns himself so that his belly button is pointed at the thigh pad closest to the QB's set up/launch point.

### Coaching Points -

- Make sure belly button is pointing at thigh pad that is closest to the QB's set up/launch point.
- Hands and elbows are at the chest, ready to punch. Thumbs are up.
- Butt is low, chest is out, and the head is back.

## 2. BODY POSITION DRILL (Set Up Stage)



## 3. PUNCH DRILL (Punch Stage)

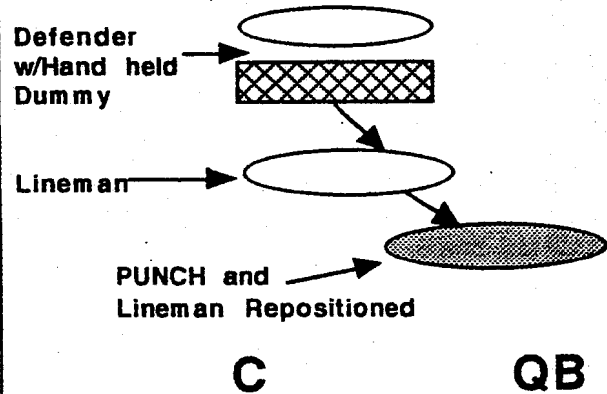
**Purpose** - Teach delivering a blow when pass blocking.

**Execution** - Pair with another lineman. On coach's command, the blocker will set up in the proper pass protection position and will punch the defender using proper technique.

### Coaching Points -

- Punch should be made with butt-of the hand to the inside framework of defender.
- **AVOID** lunging. Butt low, chest out, and the head is back. Only hands and arms move out.
- Work for a lockout position with elbows and then bring hands back to the chest.
- Reset after first punch in correct body position.

## 3. PUNCH DRILL (Punch Stage)



# PASS PROTECTION DRILLS

## 4. MIRROR DRILL (Body Position Stage)

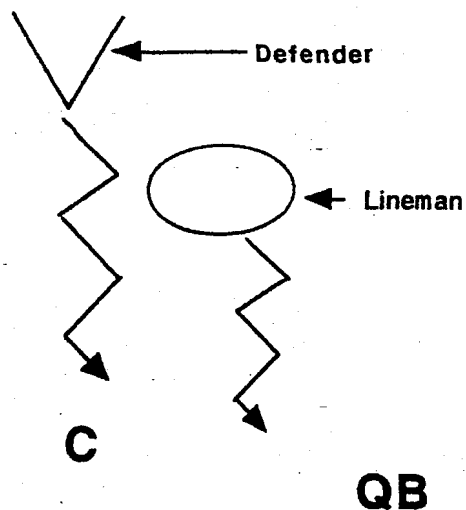
**Purpose** - To teach maintaining Body Position during pass blocking.

**Execution** - Defender aligns in a challenge position. Lineman assumes the proper Body Position with belly button pointed at correct thigh pad. Defender zig-zags toward the QB and the Lineman maintains his correct Body Position, remembering to **ALWAYS** point his butt at the QB.

### Coaching Points -

- Blocker should slide his feet as quickly as possible to maintain body position.
- **NEVER** overextend - butt low, chest out and head up.
- **ALWAYS** have belly button pointing at correct thigh pad - the one closest to QB.

## 4. MIRROR DRILL (Body Position Stage)



## 5. MIRROR DODGE DRILL - (Finish Stage)

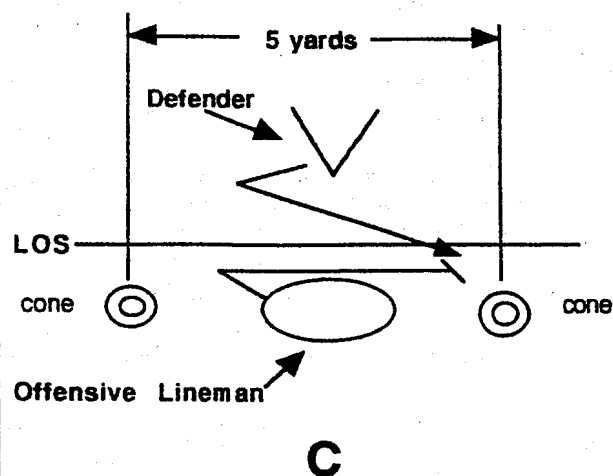
**Purpose** - To teach proper position, balance and lateral movement while pass blocking.

**Execution** - Divide lineman into two groups and have them pair up. Two cones are placed five yards apart and one yard off a selected LOS. Lineman gets into his with his hand on the LOS. Position the defender in a two or three point stance directly across from the offensive lineman. On the cadence, the lineman sets up and punches. The defender attempts to run past the blocker between the cones and around the cone. The lineman mirror the defender's moves and punches to a lock out position, trying to prevent him from going around the cone. The defender continues to work moves until the whistle blows, usually 15-20 seconds.

### Coaching Points -

- Make sure the blocker executes proper punch and keep himself separated from the defender.
- Lock out the arms as defender comes forward and return arms to chest after the punch.
- Stab the outside leg to prevent defender from going around the cone.
- Check for over extension. **AVOID** lunging.
- Make sure blocker shuffles his feet and always has a base beneath himself.

## 5. MIRROR DODGE DRILL - (Finish Stage)



# RUNNING BACK DRILLS

The most important fundamental a running back needs to learn is how to carry the football. **Ball security** is #1 on his priority list. We teach our running backs a check list of things to do when carrying a football: 1. Both points of the ball are covered by the hand and the elbow.

2. The ball is held tight against the ribs.
3. Cover the ball with both hands when going through the line of scrimmage between tackles.

*This check list is used in every drill -->all of the time.* Ball security is stressed so often it becomes a habit for the running back every time he touches the football.

## 1. TEN HIGH DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach ball security and high leg action.

*Execution:* Put the RB's in three lines with a ball in each line. On the whistle they must get ten high knee lifts in five yards concentrating on ball security. You may end this drill with a somersault as well.

## 2. CROSS OVER LEG DRIVE

*Purpose:* To develop leg extension and hip flexibility while concentrating on ball security.

*Execution:* Put the RB's in three lines with a ball in each line. On the whistle they will turn and face the coach and keeping their shoulders square will drive the knee up & leg over striving for maximum extension with each cross over.

## 3. BALL CHAIN HAND-OFF DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach the proper method of receiving a hand-off from the Quarterback.

*Execution:* Two single file lines facing each other with one football. The first player in each line walks toward each other, the player with the football handing the ball off. The next person in line does not go until the player receives the hand-off. This drill must be done at a walk several times before you can do this at 1/2 or 3/4 speed.

*Variation:* You may also teach the hand-off using a three man weave.

## 4. ROPE DRILLS

*Purpose:* To work on foot agility, ball security, and hip flexibility.

*Execution:* A single file line going through the ropes. Make sure the running back is carrying a football. Let the player go completely through the ropes before the next player begins. The running back will execute a jump cut or up spin when coming out of the ropes.

## 5. PITCH DRILL

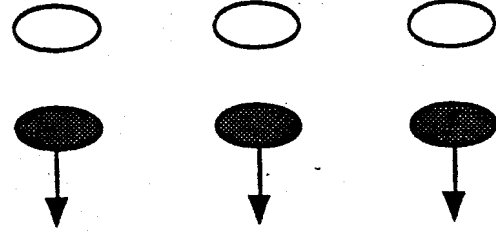
*Purpose:* To properly receive a pitch as in a sweep or option play.

*Execution:* RB's will pair up and space themselves 10 yards apart. Working across the field they will pitch the ball back and forth carrying out the proper fundamentals.



## 1. TEN HIGH DRILL

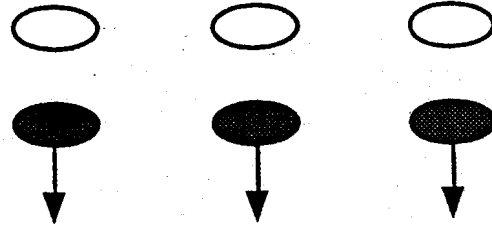
*Coaching Points:* High knees; shoulders over knees; ball security



COACH

## 2. CROSS OVER LEG DRIVE

*Coaching Points:* Keep shoulders square to the coach; drive knee up and leg over; reach for distance; ball security



COACH

## 3. BALL CHAIN HAND-OFF DRILL

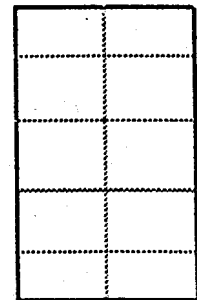
*Coaching Points:* Eyes up & straight ahead; form pocket; inside elbow up and thumb down; off hand on hip.



This drill must be done at a walking pace at first!

## 4. ROPE DRILLS

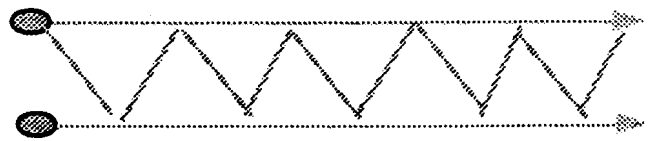
- \*Every square
- \*Every other square
- \*Cross over
- \*Quick feet
- \*Diagonal quick feet
- \*Bunny hop (diagonal)
- \*Lateral run
- \*Lateral quick feet
- \*Jingle-Jangle



Finish with an up cut or a jump cut

## 5. PITCH DRILL

*Coaching Points:* Catch the ball with two hands; look it in; tuck it away; sprint for five yards; ball security.

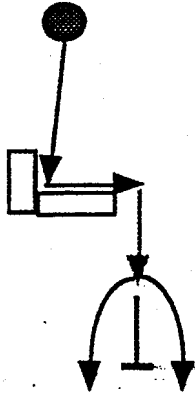


## RUNNING BACK BAG DRILLS

### 1. JUMP CUT / QUICK FEET

**Coaching Points:**

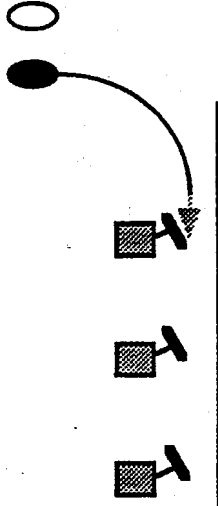
1. Bury into "V" formed by two dummies
2. Jump cut & get North and South
3. Attack stand-up dummy & break opposite movement
4. Accelerate for 10 yards



### 2. SIDE LINE DRILL

**Coaching Points:**

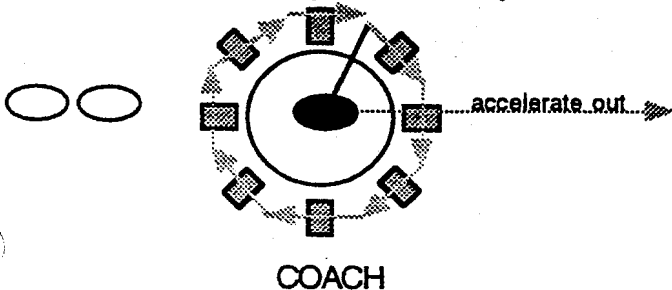
1. Fight Pressure
2. Keep feet moving
3. Ball security
4. Stay in bounds



### 3. ONE HAND SPIN DRILL

**Coaching Points:**

1. Spin on palm of hand
2. Shuffle over dummies placed in a circle
3. Pop up with high knees
4. Accelerate for ten yards/ball security



## RUNNING BACK CONE DRILLS

### 1. QUICK FEET

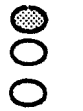
**Coaching Points:**

1. Pop feet at each cone
2. Stay low, forward lean, high knees



### 2. QUICK FEET WEAVE

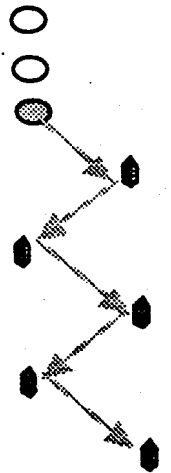
**Coaching Point:** Pop feet at each cone alternating from side to side.



### 3. HARD CUT

**Coaching Points:**

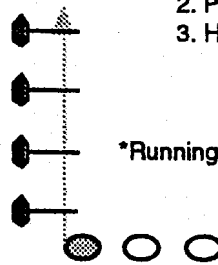
1. Stagger cones
2. Plant on outside foot just inside of each cone
3. Stay low, forward lean, sink & burst



### 4. POP UP --> 3 LEGGED RUNNER

**Coaching Points:**

1. Put palm to ground at each cone
2. Palm down, forward lean
3. Head & eyes up/do not turn shoulders

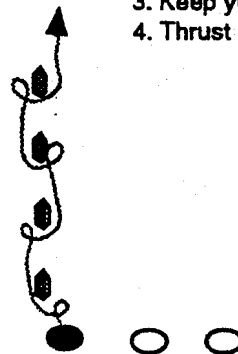


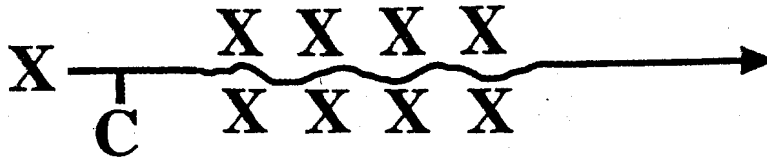
\*Running back should almost be falling on face mask

### 5. UP SPIN

**Coaching Points:**

1. 3-4 cones five yards apart.
2. Plant on alternating feet & spin to plant foot.
3. Keep your momentum north & south
4. Thrust knee forward





**Objective:** To develop confidence in running with the football through “heavy traffic” using good ball security.

**Equipment needed:** one football per six players and four to six hand held dummies

**Procedure:**

1. Players should form two lines one yard apart facing each other, holding dummies if possible, and one running back in front of the two lines.
2. On a cadence, the running back accelerates towards the gauntlet and receives a handoff from the coach.
3. If there are no dummies, the other players reach in and try to strip the ball from the running back. If there are dummies, the other players use the dummies to attempt to knock the ball from the running back.
4. Once the running back leaves “the gauntlet” he should sprint 10 yards.

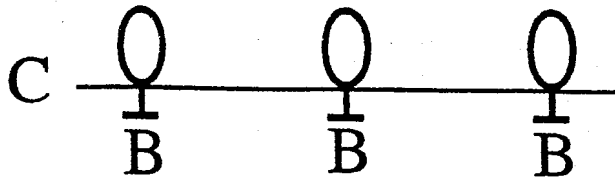
**Coaching Points:**

1. The running back should receive the handoff properly and secure the football.
2. Make sure the running back keeps his shoulders down, head up and center of gravity low to help maintain leverage and good balance.
3. Running back should explode through “the gauntlet” with high knee drive and the keep feet moving.
4. The running back should protect the football and stay on course.

**Variations:**

1. Put a cone or extra player five yards from the end of “the gauntlet” and have the running back make a cut off of the cone/man.
2. Put a defender with a pad five yards from the end of “the gauntlet” and have the running back make contact with the dummy and make a move off the hit.





Objective: To teach running backs the proper blocking technique.

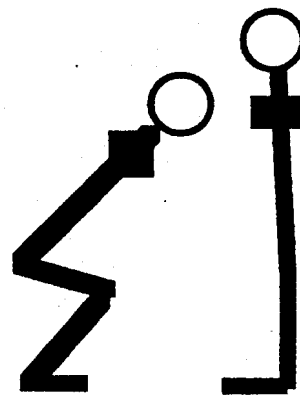
Equipment: a line of scrimmage

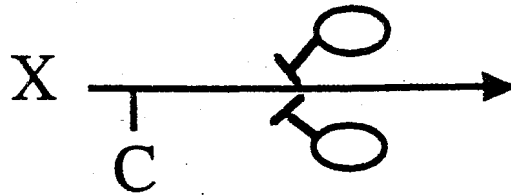
Procedure:

1. Have running pair up and stand across from each other along the line of scrimmage.
2. Designate an offensive and a defensive side.
3. On command the running backs assume a perfect fit on defender.

Teaching Points:

1. Running backs should have their:
  - head up
  - flat back
  - butt down
  - good base
  - inside hand position





**Objective:** To teach running backs to maintain good ball security, run strong, and maintain balance after being hit by a defender.

**Equipment needed:** two hand-held or stand-up dummies and a football

**Procedure:**

1. Have two players hold the dummies side by side three yards from the ball carrier.
2. On a given cadence, the running back receives the handoff and explodes through the two dummies.
3. All running backs should have the opportunity to take the handoff from both the left and right sides.
4. The drill continues until all running backs receive a sufficient number of repetitions.
5. Bag holders can be given three options:
  - both hit the ball carrier
  - one hits the ball carrier
  - neither hits the ball carrier

**Coaching Points:**

1. Make sure the running back takes the handoff properly and secures the football.
2. Make sure the running back keeps his shoulders down, head up and center of gravity low to help maintain leverage and good balance.
3. Running back should explode through the bags with high knee drive.

**Variations:**

1. Put a cone or extra player five yards behind the defenders and have the running back make a cut off of the cone/man.
2. Put a defender with a pad five yards from the end of "the gauntlet" and have the running back make contact with the dummy and make a move off the hit.

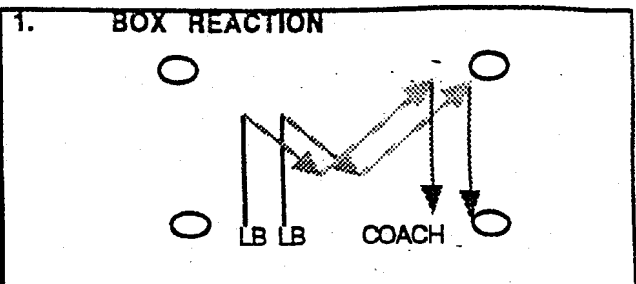


# LINEBACKER DRILLS

## 1. BOX REACTION

*Purpose:* To teach linebackers how to change direction after a visual stimulus while keeping a fundamental movement base.

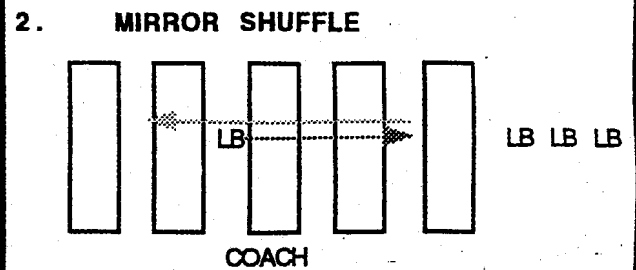
*Execution:* The drill station is a 10-yd square outlined by cones. Two linebackers align one yard apart on the baseline facing the coach. The linebackers react to the coach's hand signals by backpedaling, opening their hips and executing crossover runs and sprinting forward.



## 2. MIRROR SHUFFLE

*Purpose:* To teach proper techniques and fundamentals for pursuit of the football.

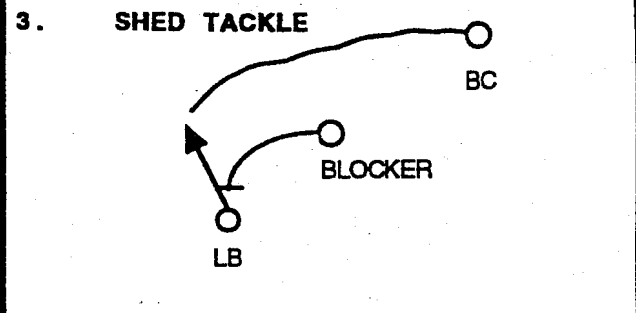
*Execution:* Place five large blocking dummies one yard apart and perpendicular to the line of scrimmage. The coach stands in front of the middle dummy. On command the linebacker begins shuffling over the dummies. The coach moves to his left or right on the linebacker mirrors the movement of the coach.



## 3. SHED TACKLE

*Purpose:* To teach linebackers how to use their hands or forearms to deliver a block, shed a blocker, and execute a tackle.

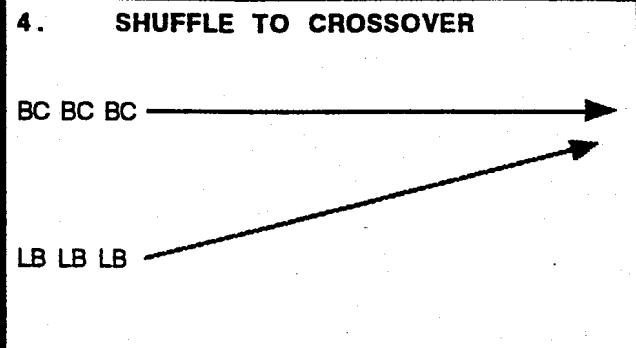
*Execution:* Position the blocker and the LB 5 yards apart, with the LB to one side. The ball carrier is 8 to 10 yards behind the blocker. The LB reacts to the blocker by delivering a forearm blow or hand shiver. He then disengages from the block and locates the ball carrier to execute a form tackle.



## 4. SHUFFLE TO CROSSOVER

*Purpose:* To teach the use of inside-out leverage against the ball carrier while emphasizing the shuffle technique and appropriate use of the crossover run.

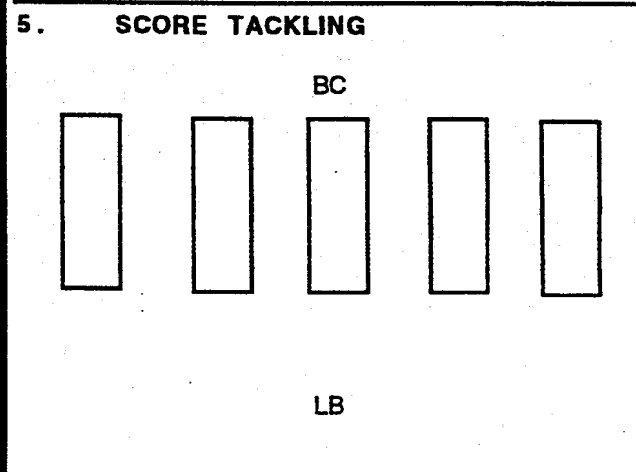
*Execution:* The LB starts the drill by facing the ball carrier at a depth of 5 yards. Holding a football, the ball carrier alternately jogs, runs, and walks from the sideline straight down the yard line to the hash mark.

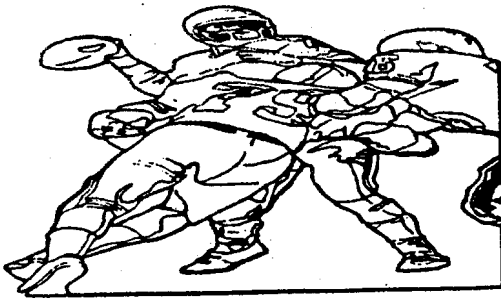


## 5. SCORE TACKLING

*Purpose:* To teach linebacker movement and direction change before making a tackle.

*Execution:* Place 5 bags on the ground two yards apart. The ball carrier and the LB's align on opposite sides of the bags. The ball carrier begins the drill by running back and forth between the outside bags. The LB mirrors the ball carriers movement by running on his side of the bags. On the coach's command "score," the ball carrier runs up the nearest alley and attempts to cross the front edge of the bags while the LB attempts to stop him.





## DEFENSIVE LINE DRILLS

### 1. FOUR POINT WAVE DRILL

**Purpose:** The purpose of this drill is to get the players used to staying low and keep their feet moving all the time. It also strengthens the shoulders and arms.

**Execution:** Players get into a good 4-point stance about 2-3 yards apart. The coach stands in front of them, holding a ball on the ground. The coach shouts out a cadence, and when he moves the ball they start moving their feet, watching the coach, and shuffling into the indicated direction, always keeping their hands on the ground. On command the players will sprint past the coach. As a variation you can include seatrolls with every change of direction and have the players recover a fumble.

### 2. OFF THE BALL

**Purpose:** To develop quick reaction on movement of the ball for defensive line.

**Execution:** Defensive lineman assume good stance on designated line. On movement of football, defensive line comes off the ball with good pad level, sprinting 5 yards. Coach shall call out different signals to train defensive linemen to move only on movement of football.

### 3. SHUFFLE WITH MEDICINE BALL

**Purpose:** To develop quickness with the feet while keeping the pad level of defensive line down, and the use of the hands of a low cut block.

**Execution:** Defensive lineman assumes good football position, on coaches command the defensive lineman steps over dummies, leading with the front foot with his eyes up and pads down, as lineman comes off of last dummy, the coach throws a medicine ball at DL feet, while DL uses hands to defend himself of ball.

### 4. CLOSE DRILL (PASS RUSH DRILL)

**Purpose:** To develop quickness and good body position while closing the distance between offensive blocker while pass rushing.

**Execution:** Defensive lineman assumes good pass rush stance on LOS, offensive lineman aligns off of defender 3-4 yards off of LOS. On snap of football the offensive lineman shuffles straight back trying to avoid the defensive line, while defensive line close to offensive lineman with good body lean and execute a pass rush technique when reaching OL.

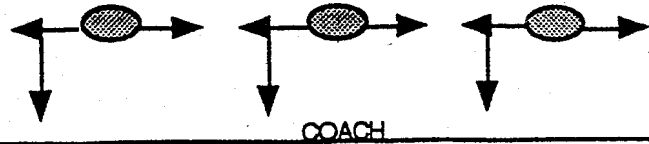
### 5. CONTROL, READ & REACT

**Purpose:** To help the defensive lineman to read and react while contact is made. This will also decrease reaction time and increase aggressiveness.

**Execution:** You will need 3 cones in a triangle about 10 yards apart. 1 offensive lineman, 1 defensive lineman & 1 running back. On the whistle, the offensive and defensive linemen will make contact, while the RB will run to one of the cones. The defensive lineman will read and react to the direction of the ball carrier. Once he has his read the defensive lineman will shed the OL and make the play before the running back reaches the L.O.S.

### 1. FOUR POINT WAVE DRILL

**Coaching Points:** Wide base with feet & hands; quick change of direction is more important than speed on the lateral movement.



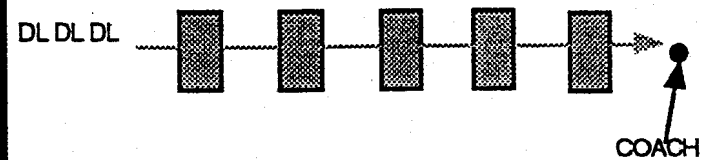
### 2. OFF THE BALL

**Coaching Points:** Proper stance; weight forward; pad level; good key on football.



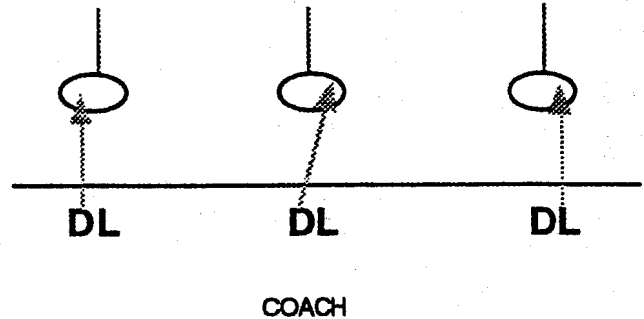
### 3. SHUFFLE WITH MEDICINE BALL

**Coaching Point:** Pad level; quick feet; eyes up; push level on ball.



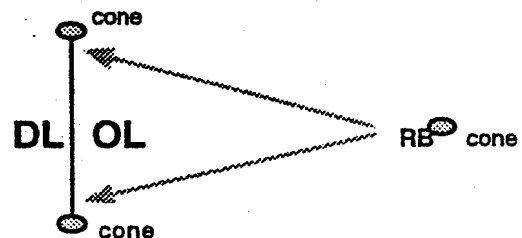
### 4. CLOSE DRILL (PASS RUSH DRILL)

**Coaching Points:** Good movement off of ball; good body lean; eyes on blocker; make defensive lineman use a move.



### 5. CONTROL, READ & REACT

**Coaching Points:** keep hips & shoulders square to LOS; deliver a blow; teach DL to extend arms to keep OL off of his body.



**RUN THIS DRILL AT FULL SPEED!**

# DEFENSIVE SECONDARY AGILITY DRILLS

## 1. BACKPEDAL DRILL

**Purpose:** To teach defensive backs proper backpedaling technique.

**Execution:** Divide the defensive backs into two groups aligned on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs should backpedal to the hash mark. When the defensive backs reach the hash mark, the coach points a direction for the back to break. After each repetition, the defensive backs must switch lines. The drill continues until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

## 2. WEAVE DRILL

**Purpose:** To teach defensive backs to keep proper leverage on the receiver while staying in their back-pedal.

**Execution:** Divide the defensive backs into two groups aligned on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs begin backpedaling straight back. The coach gives hand signals for the direction of the weave. When the backs reach the hash mark, the coach gives a direction for the defensive backs to break. After each repetition, the defensive backs must switch lines. The drill continues until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

## 3. QUICK HIPS

**Purpose:** To increase hip flexibility and balance.

**Execution:** Divide the defensive backs into two groups aligned on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs begin backpedaling. The coach will point in a direction. The defensive back must open up and run on the signal. The coach then points in the opposite direction, the defensive back pivots, opens up in that direction, and then sprints down the line. The coach then gives a directional signal for the defensive backs to break. The drill should continue until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

## 4. ZONE TURN DRILL

**Purpose:** To teach proper zone turn technique.

**Execution:** Divide the defensive backs into two groups aligned on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs begin to backpedal. The coach gives a directional signal; the defensive backs execute proper zone turn technique and sprint to the hash mark. After each repetition, the defensive backs switch lines, working both right and left zone turns. The drill should continue until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

## 5. CENTERFIELD TURN

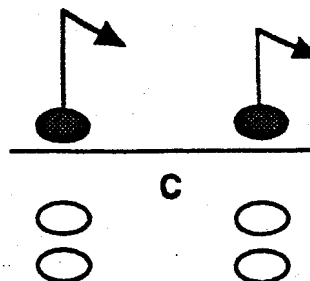
**Purpose:** To teach proper centerfield turn technique.

**Execution:** Divide the defensive backs into two groups aligned on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs begin to backpedal. The coach then gives a direction signal for the defensive backs to execute a zone turn. On the coach's next signal, (opposite direction) the defensive backs execute a centerfield turn at 45 degrees. The drill should be conducted with the centerfield turn executed to both the right and left. The drill is executed until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

## 1. BACK PEDAL DRILL:

**Coaching Points**

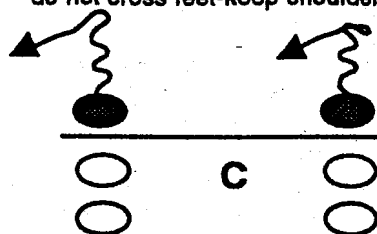
- \*check for proper stance & starts
- \*stay low, sliding across the grass
- \*chin over the toes, eyes focused on the coach



## 2. WEAVE DRILL

**Coaching Points:**

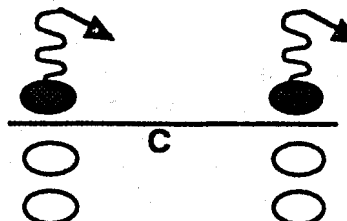
- \*check for proper stance & starts
- \*steer their bodies with their hips & feet
- \*do not cross feet-keep shoulders square to LOS



## 3. QUICK HIPS

**Coaching Points:**

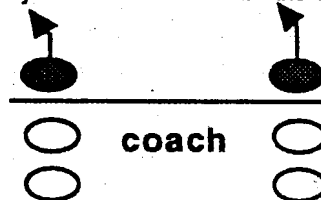
- \*check for proper stance & starts
- \*stay low & drive the near elbow to get hips opened



## 4. ZONE TURN DRILL

**Coaching Points:**

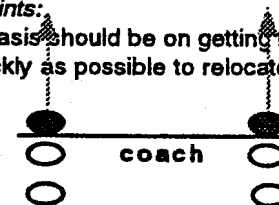
- \*d-back should accelerate through the turn to get out of his backpedal and into his sprint as quickly as possible.
- \*zone turn should be on a fluid motion
- \*use the yard line to make sure the d-backs don't drift.



## 5. CENTERFIELD TURN

**Coaching Points:**

- \*Emphasis should be on getting the head turned around as quickly as possible to relocate the football & receiver



## DEFENSIVE BACKS → BREAK POINT

It is imperative for defensive backs to have the ability to get out of their backpedal and close on receivers or ball carriers as quickly as possible. Stopping the backward run and making the transition to a forward movement requires proper body position in the pre-break position and proper footwork.

The two key factors in body position are that the defensive back stays low in his backpedal and that the defensive back keeps his feet from getting overextended outside the framework of his body.

The footwork involved in breaking on a ball or ball carrier consists of three steps. 1. Plant Step 2. Directional Step 3. Cross-over Step

The plant step is used to stop the backward momentum and should be with the foot opposite the direction intended to break. The second directional step should be placed in front of the plant step and pointing in the desired direction. It is at this point that a defensive back will often round his break off. The third cross-over step serves as the acceleration step and enables the defensive back to close the ground on the ball or ball carrier.

### 1. M-DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach the defensive backs proper techniques when breaking on the receiver or on the ball.

*Execution:* Divide defensive backs into two groups and align them five yards apart, standing on the side line. On the coach's command, the two defensive backs begin backpedaling at a 45-degree angle. When the defensive backs reach the next yard line, they should execute proper break technique, driving up at a 45-degree angle. The drill continues from one sideline to the other. When all the defensive backs reach the far sideline, repeat the drill coming back up the field to work the break technique in opposite direction.

### 2. BACKPEDAL AND DRIVE

*Purpose:* To teach the defensive backs proper techniques when breaking on the receiver or on the ball.

*Execution:* Divide the defensive backs into two groups aligned on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs begin backpedaling. The coach then gives a visual hand signal to the left or right to determine the direction to plant and drive 45-degrees. The defensive backs should change lines after each repetition. The drill should continue until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

### 3. POST COMEBACK

*Purpose:* To teach defensive backs proper break techniques when they are not in a backpedal.

*Execution:* Divide the defensive backs into two groups and align them on the sideline. On the coach's command, the defensive backs begin backpedaling. The coach then gives a hand signal left or right to determine the direction in which the player should open up and run at 45-degrees. On the coach's next command, the defensive backs should plant and sprint back to the original line of scrimmage. The drill continues until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

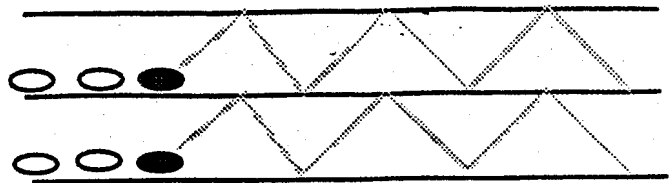
### 4. ZONE TURN-OUT

*Purpose:* To teach defensive backs to break on the out-cut after executing a zone turn.

*Execution:* Align the defensive backs on top of the numbers in a single file line. The coach assumes the position of the quarterback. On the coach's command the first defensive back begins backpedaling. As the coach opens his shoulders, the defensive back should execute a zone turn. When the coach begins his throwing motion, the defensive back should plant and drive to the out-cut. The drill should be conducted in both directions and until all defensive backs have had a sufficient number of repetitions.

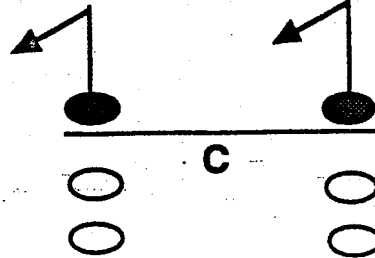
### 1. M-DRILL

*Coaching Points:* When d-backs are breaking to their left, their plant step should be with their right foot and vice-versa



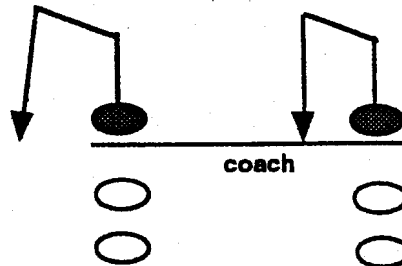
### 2. BACKPEDAL AND DRIVE

*Coaching Points:* Make sure d-back executes proper break technique  
• emphasis should be changing direction as quickly as possible and do not round breaks



### 3. POST COMEBACK

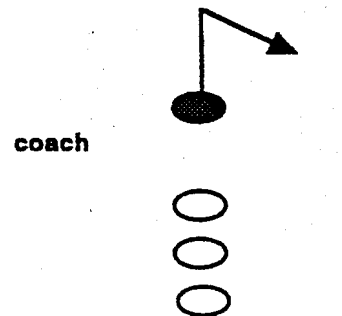
*Coaching Point:* The d-back should plant off his upfield foot, lower his center of gravity, get his directional step down as quickly as possible, cross over and accelerate back to the original line of scrimmage.



### 4. ZONE TURN-OUT

*Coaching Points:*

• make sure the d-back executes proper zone turn  
• as the d-back drives on the out-cut, he should plant off his upfield foot, rotate his hips, get his second step down as quickly as possible, and accelerate on the out-cut.



• Incorporate a ball and throw the out-cut.  
• D-back should read coach's shoulders. Coach should throw the fade route or out-cut

# TURNOVER DRILLS

## 1. STRIP DRILL

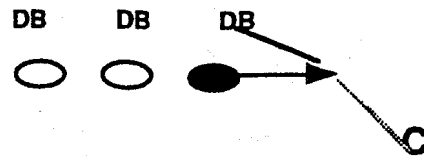
*Purpose:* To teach secondary players and linebackers to strip the ball from the intended receiver.

*Execution:* Divide the defenders into two groups and align them five yards apart on the sideline. The coach designates one group as the defenders and one group as the intended receivers. The defender group should move out one yard from the sideline. On the cadence, the receiver runs down the yard line. The defender drives to the interception point. The coach throws the football to the receiver, and the defender executes proper strip technique.

## 1. STRIP DRILL

*Coaching Points:*

1. Instruct defenders to drive to the interception point and strip with the outside arm down on the receiver's up field arm.
2. The coach should throw the ball out in front of the intended receiver.
3. The defender must work to rip the ball out of the receiver's hands.



## 2. FUMBLE TACKLE

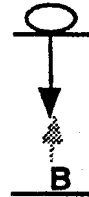
*Purpose:* To develop proper fundamentals of tackling with an emphasis on creating a turnover.

*Execution:* Divide the defenders into two groups aligned five yards from each other. Designate one group as the ball carriers and the other as the defenders. Instruct the defender to lay on his back with his hips on the line and his head facing the ball carrier. The ball carrier faces away from the defender with his heels on the line, and the ball and the ball placed behind his feet. On the cadence, the defender springs to his feet and attacks the ball carrier. The ball carrier turns around, picks up the ball and starts forward toward the defender. The defender aims for the ball, executes a form tackle to create a fumble and scrambles to recover the football.

## 2. FUMBLE TACKLE

*Coaching Points:*

1. Ball carrier release the ball as contact is made.
2. Defender works to put his face mask on the football and execute proper tackling technique.
3. Make sure defender recovers the football with two hands and cradles his body around the football.



## 3. SECOND MAN STRIP

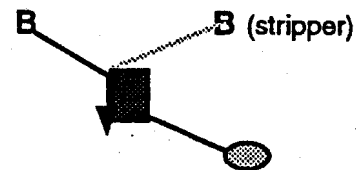
*Purpose:* To teach the second defender to strip the football as the ball carrier has been fronted up by the first defender.

*Execution:* Divide defenders into three groups. Designate one group as the ball carriers, one group as the tacklers, and the third group as the strippers. Position the third group five yards away from the cone on the same line as the tackling group. Instruct the ball carrier to carry the football with his outside arm. On the cadence, the ball carrier runs to the cone and the defender executes an angle tackle. When contact has been made, the stripper attacks the ball carrier and rips the ball out of his hands.

## 3. SECOND MAN STRIP

*Coaching Points:*

1. Make sure the defender executes the proper angle tackle techniques.
2. Instruct the second defender (stripper) to rip the football out of the ball carriers hands and advance the ball up field.



## 4. CHASE DRILL

*Purpose:* To teach defenders to strip the football when trailing the ball carrier.

*Execution:* Divide defenders into two groups and designate one as the ball carriers and the other as the defenders. Align the ball carrier group on a selected line of scrimmage and position the defender group two yards behind them. On the cadence, instruct the 1st ball carrier to run at half to three-quarter speed straight down the field. The defender sprints to catch up and works to strip the ball from behind.

## 4. CHASE DRILL

*Coaching Points:* The number one goal is to make the tackle. Then he should either strip down on the ball or punch up through it creating a turnover.

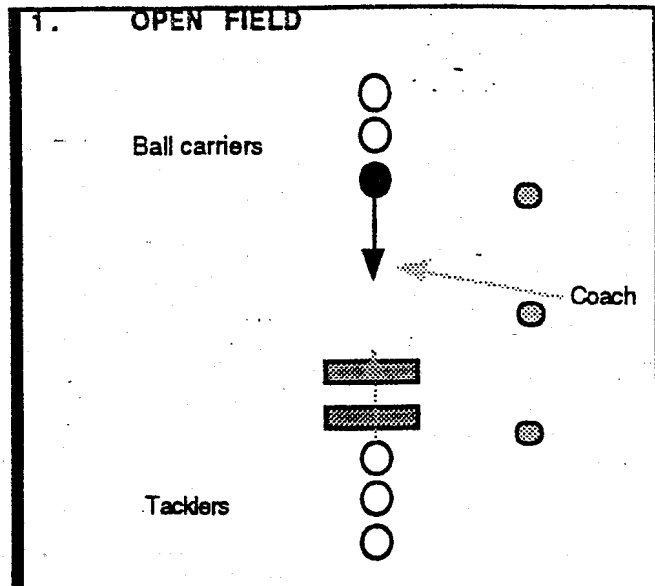


# TACKLING DRILLS

## 1. OPEN FIELD

*Purpose:* To execute a perfect form tackle from a predetermined side.

*Execution:* One line of offensive players aligns 10 yards from a line of defenders. Place two square bags in front of the defenders. Place three cones 5 yards apart to form one boundary with the coach standing behind the middle cone. The sideline forms the other boundary. The drill starts with the coach throwing the ball to the offensive player who is moving forward. The tackler stands in a two point stance and moves forward over the bags to gain ground on the ball carrier. He executes a gather technique while making progress toward the ball carrier in a correct football position.

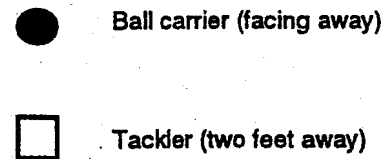


## 2. POWER TACKLE

*Purpose:* To teach defensive players to wrap up, grab cloth, and hang on until the ball carrier is on the ground.

*Execution:* The ball carrier stands facing the sideline. The tackler aligns two feet away in a good football position, head up knees bent. On command, the ball carrier turns and attacks the tackler. After contact is made, anything goes as the ball carrier retreats, spins, or runs over the tackler.

## 2. POWER TACKLING



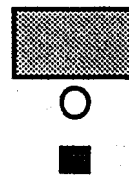
## 3. TACKLING CIRCUIT

*Purpose:* To set the tempo for practice and teach proper tackling techniques.

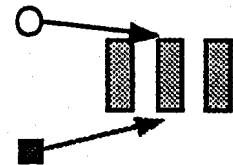
*Execution:* Locate four tackling stations 20 yards apart. In one corner is the **mat drill**. The defender, keeping square, lifts the ball carrier and drives him back on the mat. In the second corner is the **eye opener**. On command the ball carrier chooses a hole to run through while the defender shuffles square, keeping tackling leverage on the ball carrier. The third station is the **low block drill**. The defender sheds a low block and attacks the ball carrier up field. The final station is the **score drill**. The ball carrier runs on either side of a dummy; the defender reacts to attack and tackle the ball carrier before he crosses the goal line. At each station the players execute tackling specific drills for two minutes. They have 30 seconds to change stations.

## 3. TACKLING CIRCUIT

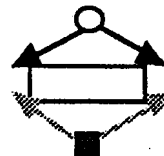
**Mat drill**



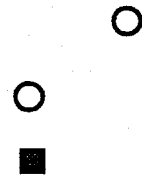
**Eye Opener**



**Score drill**



**Low block**

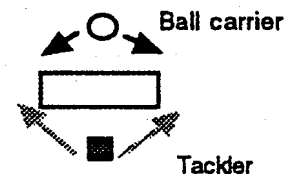


## 4. GOAL LINE TACKLING

*Purpose:* To teach the tackling technique used in goal line and short-yardage situations.

*Execution:* Place the dummy one yard from the sideline and directly in the middle of two five-yard stripes. The tackler, in hitting position, puts his heels on the goal line and the ball carrier aligns one yard behind the dummy. Upon the ball carrier's movement, the tackler reacts and tries to prevent the ball carrier from scoring.

## 4. GOAL LINE TACKLING

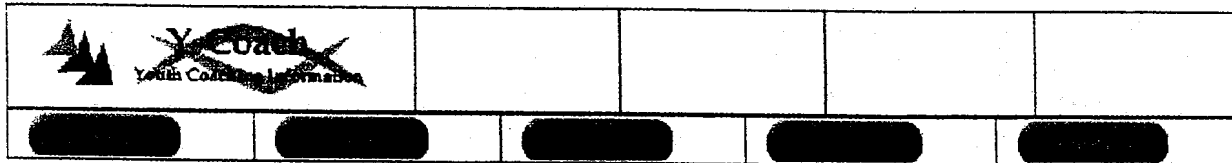





**Football - Ready Stance Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach proper stance.

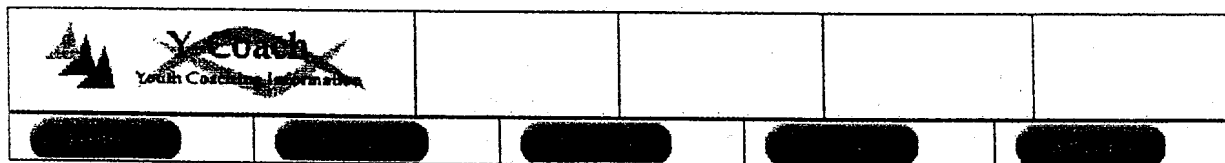
**Procedure:** Players line up, each in the proper stance for their position. Inspect each player's stance, making necessary adjustments. Then the players fire out for 5 yards and properly execute a designated skill from the stance.



**Football - Quick Hit Drill**

**Purpose:** To get linemen or blocking backs quickly from their stance to a blocking position.

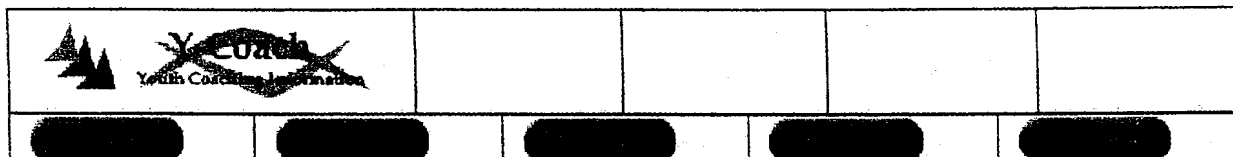
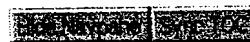
**Procedure:** Players line up in a circle in a good stance. On the coaches command, they pop up into a correct pass protection position - taking a quick step with the outside foot, putting hands up in a punch position, and assuming a squat position, ready to strike a blow. Have them continue this repeatedly - up, down, up, down.



**Football - Receiver Concentration Drill**

**Purpose:** Works on getting the receiver to focus on the ball and watch it all the way into the hands, even though they know they are going to get hit.

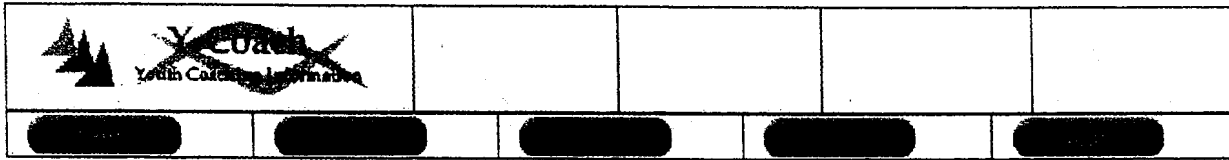
**Procedure:** Have three players holding hand shields line-up 10 yards deep and 3 yards apart from each other in an equal triangle. Have a receiver run a pattern into the middle of the triangle. As the receiver enters the triangle the coach or quarterback should throw the receiver a high pass. The receiver must jump to catch the pass. When his hands touch the ball, the three players holding the hand shields should jam the receiver with their shields.



**Football - Good Balance Drill**

**Purpose:** Help linemen and blocking backs keep their feet apart and keep their bodies from being pushed, pulled, or tipped from side to side.

**Procedure:** Have the players line-up from each other and grab the shoulder pads of the player opposite them. On the coaches command, one of the players, the defensive player, tries to get his opponent off balance by pushing, pulling and tipping him from side to side. This forces the offensive player to get low, get a wide base, and move his feet to keep his balance. Switch offensive and defensive players and continue the drill.









**Football - Bag Drill**

**Purpose:** Teach players how to receive a proper handoff and keep the head up to make the proper read and cut.

**Procedure:** This drill involves the center, quarterback and running backs. The quarterback takes the snap from the center and hands the football to the running back. The running back has his eyes upfield running towards a dummy, (the defender), held three yards away by a coach. As the player approaches the dummy, the coach will move it to the right or the left, indicating that the back should cut in the opposite direction. Players should be running at full speed.

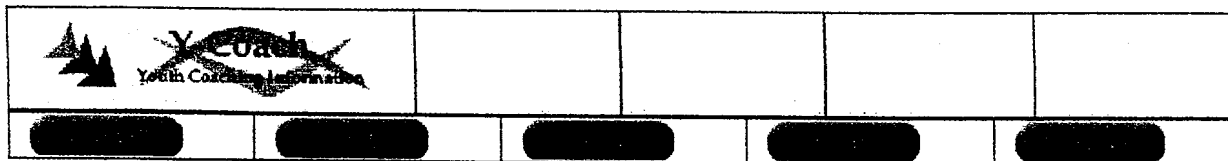


**Football - Set, Find and Fire Drill**

**Purpose:** Improve the quarterbacks reaction upon setup.

**Procedure:** The quarterback takes a quick drop and sets to deliver the football. Station three or four players downfield, facing him in a horizontal line spread evenly across the field. Each player has an assigned number. The coach calls out a number, the quarterback must quickly set his feet in the direction of the designated player and throw the football.



**Football - Turn Drill**

**Purpose:** To force the receiver to get into a position to see the ball and concentrate on catching it.

**Procedure:** Form two lines of receivers on each side of the field, with a quarterback throwing to each line. The receiver in each line has his back to the quarterback. The quarterback yells "go" as he passes the ball to the first receiver in line. On the commands the receiver must snap his head around quickly, locate and catch the ball, tuck it in, and turn upfield with it. Have the receivers change lines each time so they get used to turning over each shoulder.



About Coach Bass

## SKILLS & DRILLS - CATCHING

by: Coach Tom Bass; Photos: Gary Payne; Diagrams: Gabriel Berlin



Ever since the forward pass was introduced (at one time football had no passing), offensive wide receivers, tight ends and running backs have had to be able to catch the ball. Being able to catch is important because most teams mix pass plays with running plays in order to move the ball down the field.

Being able to catch the ball is also important for defensive players because a key interception often determines the outcome of a game.

There are three basic elements to catching:

- You need to have your hands in the proper position.
- You need to concentrate on the ball and see it into your hands.
- You need to reach out so you can see both your hands and the ball at the moment of the catch.

### Drill 1 - Catching A Ball At Or Above The Numbers

Purpose: to learn the proper hand position when you are facing the quarterback and the ball is thrown even with or above the numbers on your jersey.

Two receivers face each other during this drill. One receiver calls out where the pass will be, and his partner quickly positions his hands to make the catch. The receiver reacting to the call starts with his feet even, spread shoulder width apart. His knees are slightly bent. His back is straight, and his head is up. His arms are hanging down at his sides.

The two receivers take turns calling out the position of the ball:

CHEST, CHEST RIGHT, CHEST LEFT  
 SHOULDER CENTER, SHOULDER RIGHT, SHOULDER LEFT  
 FACE, FACE RIGHT, FACE LEFT  
 HEAD HIGH, HIGH RIGHT, HIGH LEFT

Each call tells where the pass is going. You then quickly move your hands to the area your partner called and put them in a position to make the catch.

#### TECHNIQUE

- The thumbs of both hands are together and touching.
- Your fingers are spread, with both hands forming a catching mitt for the ball.
- Your palms are facing forward and up. Your wrist is cocked slightly back. If your palms are facing down, the ball will usually hit your hands and fall straight down to the ground.
- Your arms are forward so that you are able to see the ball and your hands when making an actual catch.

You can also do Drill 1 on your own in front of a mirror.

### Drill 2 - Catching A Ball Below The Numbers

Purpose: to learn the proper hand position when you are facing the quarterback and the ball is thrown below the numbers on your jersey.

Two receivers face each other. One receiver calls out where the pass will be, and his partner quickly positions his hands to make the catch. The receiver reacting to the call starts with his feet even, spread shoulder width apart. His knees are slightly bent. His back is straight, and his head is up. His arms are hanging down at his sides.

The two receivers take turns calling out the position of the ball:

WAIST, WAIST RIGHT, WAIST LEFT  
 THIGH CENTER, THIGH RIGHT, THIGH LEFT

Each call tells where the pass is going. You then quickly move your hands to the area your partner called and put them in a position to make the catch.

#### TECHNIQUE



- The little fingers of both hands are together and touching.
- Your fingers are spread, with both hands forming a catching mitt for the ball.
- Your palms are facing forward and up. Your wrists are cocked slightly back.
- Your arms are forward so that you will be able to see the ball and your hands when making an actual catch.

You can also do Drill 2 on your own in front of a mirror.

### Drill 3 - Catching A Ball Over Your Shoulder Or Over Your Head

**Purpose:** To learn the proper hand position when you have your back to the quarterback and the ball is coming over your shoulder or directly over your head.

One receiver starts with his back to the other receiver. The receiver facing forward calls out where the pass will be, and the other receiver quickly positions his hands to make the catch. The receiver reacting to the call starts with his feet even, spread shoulder width apart. His knees are bent slightly. His back is straight, and his head is up. His arms are hanging down at his sides.

Your partner can make the following calls:

HEAD, RIGHT, LEFT

Each call tells where the pass is going. You then quickly move your hands to the area your partner called and put them in a position to make the catch.

#### TECHNIQUE

- The little fingers of both your hands are together and touching.
- Your fingers are spread, with both hands forming a catching mitt for the ball.
- Your palms are facing the ball and up; your wrist is cocked slightly back.
- Your arms are extended so that you will be able to see the ball and your hands when making an actual catch.

You can also do Drill 3 on your own in front of a mirror.

### Drill 4 - Practicing Catching With An Actual Ball

**Purpose:** to practice the different kinds of catches with an actual ball.

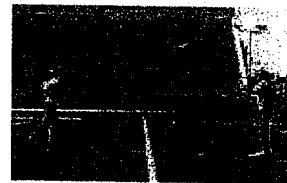
Two receivers face each other 10 yards apart and throw the ball back and forth. Each passer throws the ball to different areas so that the receiver has to adjust and position his hands correctly and reach out to make the catch. Once both receivers have caught the ball while facing each other, they take turns turning around and practice catching balls thrown over their right and left shoulders and directly over their head.

#### TECHNIQUE

- Focus on seeing the ball.
- Your arms and hands are extended so you can see the ball and your hands at the moment of the catch.
- The ball is secured against your side each time you make a catch. Always expect to be hit when you make a catch during a game.
- Have your hands in the proper position.
- Concentrate on the ball and see it into your hands.
- Reach out so you can see both your hands and the ball at the moment of the catch.

Coach Tom Bass is a former NFL coach with more than 20 years of experience with the Cincinnati Bengals, San Diego Chargers and Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He is the author of *Play Football the NFL Way*, as well as *Coach Bass Sport Maps* (available at [www.coachbass.com](http://www.coachbass.com)). Coach Bass does a popular twice-weekly question-and-answer column on the NFL's High School Football site ([www.nflhs.com](http://www.nflhs.com)).

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About Coach Bass

## SKILLS & DRILLS - QB FOOTWORK

by: Coach Tom Bass; Photos: Gary Payne; Diagrams: Gabriel Berlin



For young quarterbacks, it's important to learn how to pass the ball accurately. These drills will teach you how to grip the ball properly, how to carry the ball securely as you drop back to pass and the correct footwork when dropping back. You will also learn the proper body movements when passing a football.

### Drill 1 Drop-Back And Set-Up

#### PURPOSE

To learn how to set up properly after dropping back three or five steps in order to pass. The coach tells the quarterback the snap count, and the quarterback calls out the cadence to start the drill.

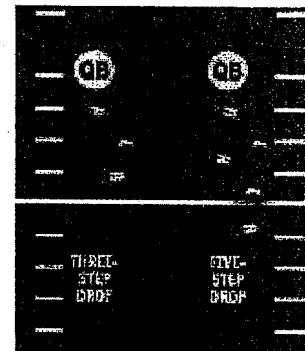
One thing to concentrate on is the final step in the drop back, and the next quick step forward, in which you position your feet directly under your hips. Once his feet are set, the quarterback holds the ball securely in both hands, chest high. He stands tall with both feet under his hips; he hasn't started moving forward toward his target throwing area yet.

#### TECHNIQUE

Use the three-step drop for short pass patterns like a quick out, a hitch or a slant. Timing is the key to the success of those passes. You have to drop back and deliver the ball quickly without any hesitation.

As the coach calls out the snap count, to take a three-step drop:

1. Don't count the slight step forward you may need in order to take the snap from the center.
2. Take your first step away from the line of scrimmage with the foot on the side of your passing hand.
3. Follow with a crossover step with your other foot behind the first foot and finally a third step with the foot on the side of your passing hand.
4. Use your third step to stop your momentum away from the line.
5. Bring your other foot back so both feet are under your hips.



The five-step drop can be used for all other passes.

1. Take the first three steps back the way you would for a three-step drop.
2. After your third step, crossover step with your foot on the side of your passing hand, take a fourth crossover step with your other foot and a final crossover step with your foot on the side of your passing hand.
3. Use your fifth step to stop your momentum away from the line.
4. Bring your other foot back so both feet are under your hips.

Always know the surface of the field.

When playing on a wet or loose field, shorten the last step in your drop and keep your feet under you, so that you don't slip while you are setting up to throw.

#### Gripping The Football

1. Place your index or pointer finger near the tip of the ball off the laces and across the seam of the ball.
2. Place your middle and third finger across the laces with the finger tips of these two fingers on the surface of the ball.
3. Place your little finger on the laces of the ball-it should just reach.
4. Make sure you feel the pressure between the ball and your passing hand just behind the center point on the back of the ball.



## Drill 2 The Throwing Motion

### PURPOSE

To teach the quarterback to step directly at his target and throw the ball with the proper motion. The coach calls out the target for the pass. The quarterback turns completely toward the target so that he uses his entire body when making the throw. You can start throwing to the left and right sidelines after you have gotten good at downfield passes.

### TECHNIQUE

Make sure you are standing tall with both feet under your hips. Hold the ball securely in both hands, chest high. When the coach calls out the target area, begin your passing motion.

Step toward your target area:

- Step forward with the foot opposite your passing arm.
- Aim the toes of this foot directly at where you want the ball to go. Your entire body, including your hips, will point at the spot you want to deliver the ball.



Prepare to throw:

- Remove your nonpassing hand from the ball.
- Bring back your passing hand, and bend your elbow.
- Position the ball above your shoulder pads and slightly behind your helmet.

Begin your passing motion:

- Move your hips, chest and shoulders toward your target, ahead of your passing arm and hand.
- Bring your passing arm and hand forward, keeping your elbow bent and the ball held high.
- Bring your passing arm forward as you pass the ball.

The release and follow-through:

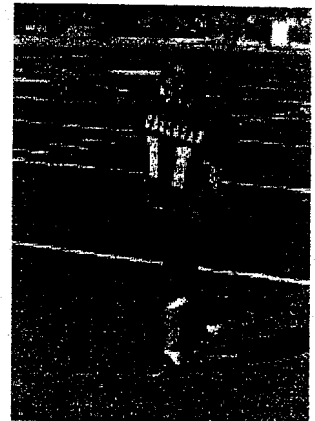
- Let your forearm pass over and in front of your passing arm's elbow.
- As your hand comes forward, release the ball in a nice, tight spiral.
- Make sure that your hand and fully extended passing arm are pointed directly at your target.
- After you release the ball, rotate your passing hand to the inside.
- Finish the passing motion with your palm facing the ground.

Practice until your motion is smooth.

At the moment you release the ball, nearly every part of your body—your lead foot, hips, shoulders, head, eyes and passing hand—should be pointing directly at your target. You can practice without a ball until the throwing motion becomes comfortable. Make sure you practice throwing to all areas of the field—not just to the middle of the field or the side of your passing hand.

*Coach Tom Bass is a former NFL coach with more than 20 years of experience with the Cincinnati Bengals, San Diego Chargers and Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He is the author of Play Football the NFL Way, as well as Coach Bass Sport Maps (available at [www.coachbass.com](http://www.coachbass.com)). Coach Bass does a popular twice-weekly question-and-answer column on the NFL's High School Football site ([www.nflhs.com](http://www.nflhs.com)).*

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About Coach Bass

## SKILLS & DRILLS - OFFENSIVE LINE BLOCKING

by: Coach Tom Bass; Photos: Gary Payne; Diagrams: Gabriel Berlin



Most games are won or lost on how the offensive line plays. The individual battles that take place in the "trenches" decide the outcome of the game.

Playing offensive line requires quickness, strength, balance and the ability to move quickly in a small area. Offensive linemen need great personal pride and the desire to keep opening up holes for the running back or to protect the quarterback when he drops back to pass.

To be a successful offensive lineman, you have to drive block well. When drive blocking, your goal is to move the defensive lineman back off the line of scrimmage, not just to tie him up. Executing a good drive block starts with a proper stance and requires getting out of the stance the instant the ball is snapped. Defensive players may charge to one side or the other, so you must concentrate on the man you are blocking.

### Drill 1 Drive Blocking

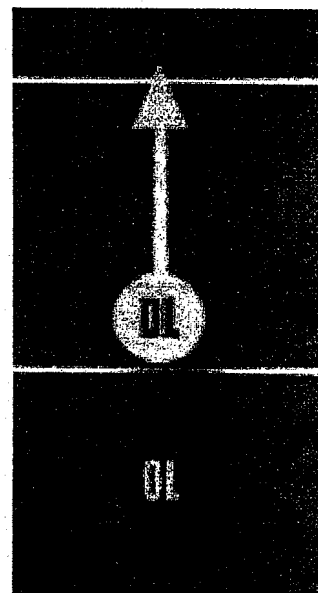
#### PURPOSE

To learn how to drive block. This drill requires one offensive lineman and one defensive lineman. Both the offensive lineman (OL) and the defensive lineman (DL) line up in their stance facing one another. The coach tells the offensive lineman the play and snap count. When the coach calls out the snap count, the offensive lineman explodes across the line, driving into the defensive lineman. The offensive lineman should try to drive the defensive lineman back off the line. Do the drill at half speed, at first, with the defensive lineman allowing himself to be blocked. After practicing it a while, you can increase the speed and resistance.

#### TECHNIQUE

When the coach calls out the snap count:

- Begin your drive block with a short step up with your back foot.
- Get your momentum moving toward the defensive player.
- Maintain a wide base, stay low and keep your feet spread apart.
- Take short rapid steps.
- Keep your shoulders square and your back straight.
- Keep your head up and your eyes looking directly at your target.
- Expect to make contact when your second short step hits the ground.
- Continue driving with your feet on contact, never stopping your forward movement.
- Drive forward with both arms and hands.
- Keep your elbows close to your ribs (to get maximum leverage and force).
- Push out and up with the palms of both hands.
- Make contact with the middle of the defensive lineman's body.
- Allow your legs to do the majority of the work.
- Push your hips forward and upward the instant your hands make contact.
- Keep your legs under you and drive the defensive lineman back with short choppy steps.



## Drill 2 Double-Team Blocking

In a double-team block, two offensive players block one defensive player. The "double team" is the most powerful block an offense can direct at one defensive player. When it is executed well, the combined size, weight and power of two players moves one defender.

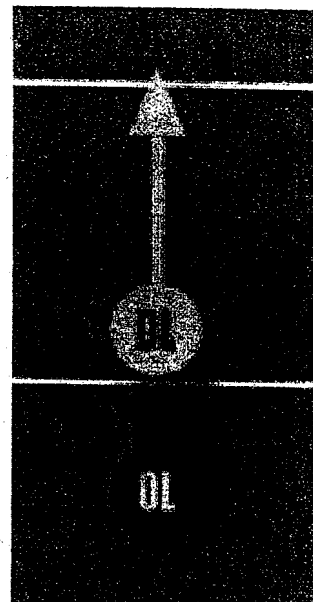
### PURPOSE

To learn how to double-team block. This drill requires two offensive linemen (OL) and one defensive lineman (DL). The players line up in their stance with the defensive lineman directly in front of one of the offensive linemen. The coach tells the two offensive linemen the play and the snap count. The offensive player directly in front of the defender drive blocks the defender. The offensive player blocking from the side of the defensive man uses an angle or side block. The two offensive linemen must work together as one unit.

### TECHNIQUE

When the coach calls out the snap count:

- The drive blocker takes a short position step with his foot that is on the side of the other blocker, and he explodes into the defensive man to stop any penetration.
- The angle blocker takes a short position step with his foot that is on the side of the drive blocker.
- After taking the short position step, the angle blocker explodes into the defensive man and starts moving him back.
- When the two position steps have been taken, both blockers should be next to one another.
- The two blockers should stay low and bring their hips and shoulders together.
- Keep your feet under your hips and move the defensive lineman with short choppy steps.
- Moving together, side by side, the two blockers should overpower the defensive player.
- The double-team block moves the defender down the line of scrimmage and back toward his own goal line.



*Coach Tom Bass is a former NFL coach with more than 20 years of experience with the Cincinnati Bengals, San Diego Chargers and Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He is the author of Play Football the NFL Way, as well as Coach Bass Sport Maps (available at [www.coachbass.com](http://www.coachbass.com)). Coach Bass does a popular twice-weekly question-and-answer column on the NFL's High School Football site ([www.nflhs.com](http://www.nflhs.com)).*

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### OFFENSIVE LINE BLOCKING II

by: Coach Tom Bass

In our first discussion on Offensive Line Blocking techniques, we looked at teaching the "Drive" & and the "Double Team" blocks. Now our focus will be on two additional blocks that your offensive linemen and tight ends should learn and master.

The first block is the "Angle" block where we are going to have the offensive player block inside on a defensive player who is lined up in the inside gap or a defensive player who is lined up in front of the next adjacent offensive player.

The second block, the "Hook" block, will be used by the offensive player when he is assigned to block a defensive player back to the inside, who is lined up head up or on his outside shoulder.

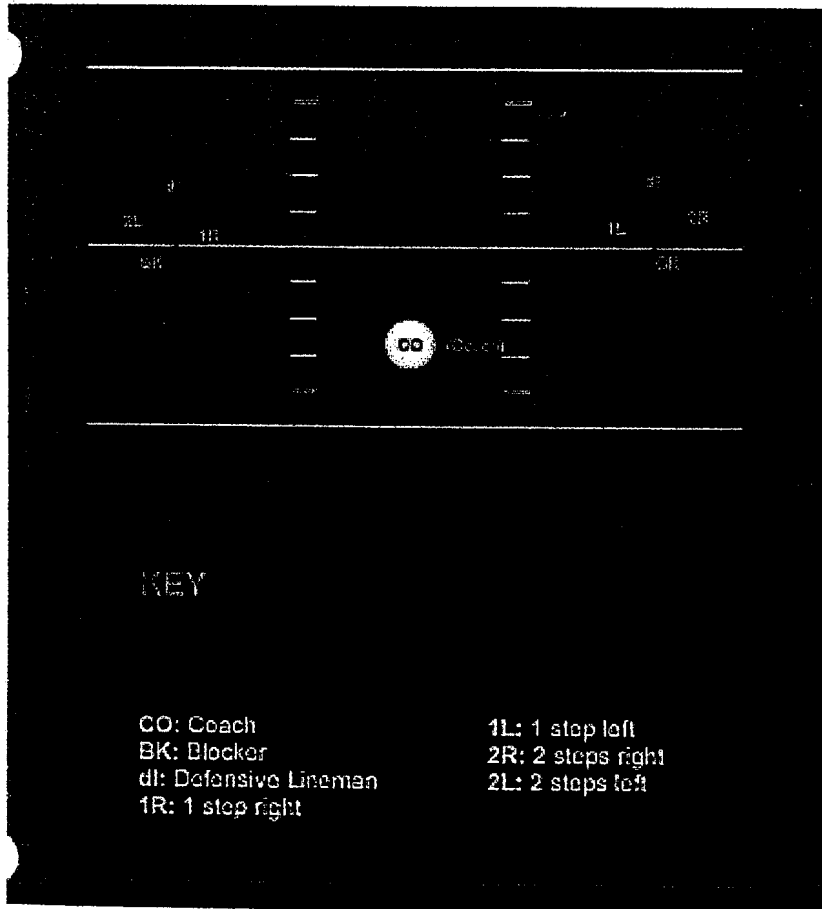
#### Drill 1

**ANGLE BLOCK** - for offensive linemen and tight ends

#### Purpose of the "Angle" block:

Often you will find that it is easier for your offensive blockers to block a defensive player from the side rather than straight-ahead. This is especially true if the defensive players are bigger than your offensive blockers.

In using an "Angle" block, we are trying to stop the defensive player's penetration across the line of scrimmage at the same time the blocker is attacking the exposed side of the defensive man's body, driving him down the line away from the area where the ball will be run.



In this drill, the coach can call the cadence and have one blocker go at a time. When the offensive player has completed the block, he can assume the position of the defensive player.

Make certain to have your tight ends also participate in the drill.

**Technique - "Angle" block:**

- Take a short lateral step down the line of scrimmage with your foot on the side of the defensive player you are blocking.
- Stay low and aim to get under defensive player's shoulder pads.
- Anticipate forward movement of the defensive player on the snap.
- Keep your head in front of the defensive player.
- Position your body into the side of the defender on your second step.
- Explode with your shoulder pad and drive the palm of your hand on the side of your second step into the near side of the defensive player.
- Push your hips forward on contact and drive the defender down the line.
- Stay low and take short steps as you drive the defensive player.

Remember this block is best used for blocking a defensive man lined up in the inside gap or to the inside in front of another offensive blocker on the line of scrimmage.

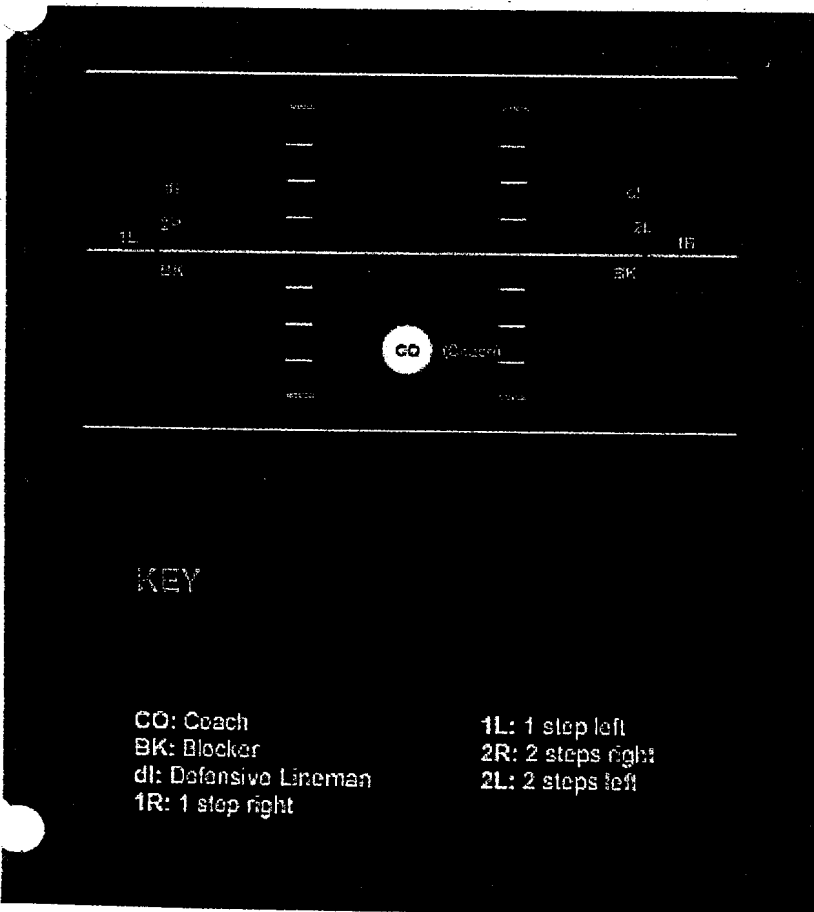
**Drill 2**

**HOOK BLOCK** - for offensive linemen and tight ends.

Purpose of the "Hook" block:

There will be times in the game when an offensive blocker will be asked to block a defensive player who is lined up in front of him or to his outside. This requires the blocker getting his helmet on the outside hip of the defensive man.

In using a "Hook" block, we are trying to stop the defensive player's penetration across the line of scrimmage at the same time the blocker is attacking the outside hip of the defensive man's body, driving him back to the inside, stopping his pursuit to the area where the ball will be run.



In this drill, the coach can call the cadence and have one blocker go at a time. When the offensive player has completed the block, he can assume the position of the defensive player.

Make certain to have your tight ends also participate in the drill.

#### Technique - "Hook" Block:

- Take a short lateral step with foot on the side of the defender you are assigned to block.
- Stay low and aim to position your helmet to the outside hip of the defensive player's body.
- Keep your body under defender's shoulder pads.
- Take your second step directly at defender.
- Drive the palm of the hand of your far arm directly into defender's chest.
- Drive your inside hand into the shoulder area of the defensive man.
- Push up and forward with your hips to lift defender.
- Continue to drive your feet in short powerful steps.
- Stop defender's forward movement across the line.
- Move to the outside of the defensive player and stop his pursuit to the outside.
- Keep driving your legs all through the block and move the defender back and to the inside.

Remember this block is best used for blocking defensive men located head up or outside of the blocker either on or off the line of scrimmage.

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## SKILLS & DRILLS - PASS RUSHING

by: Coach Tom Bass; Photos: Gary Payne; Diagrams: Gabriel Berlin



Defensive linemen live to tackle quarterbacks. Sacking the quarterback before he can pass the ball isn't just good for your team, it is fun.

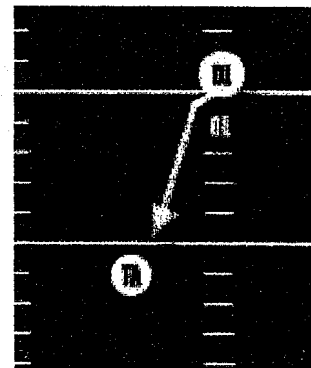
When you play the defensive line against a running play, you have to react to the block the offensive lineman is using. This all changes when the offensive lineman sets up to pass block. Now you are in control. You are the one who makes the moves, and the offensive lineman is put in the position of reacting to what you decide to do. You have the advantage.

### Drill 1 Arm-Over Pass Rush



#### PURPOSE

To learn how to use an arm-over pass rush technique to reach the quarterback at the target area (TA). This drill requires one defensive lineman (DL) and one offensive lineman (OL). The defensive lineman lines up in his stance on the outside shoulder of the offensive lineman. The coach tells the offensive lineman the snap count. The instant the offensive lineman sets up to pass block, the defensive lineman starts across the line and begins his pass rush. This technique is good to use when you are the same height or taller than the offensive lineman. This drill should be run at half speed in the beginning.



#### TECHNIQUE

- Step quickly with your inside foot, stay low and attack across the line.
- Take a long step with your outside foot, and try to be in position to touch the blocker.
- As your second step lands:

Take your outside forearm and drive down on the outside forearm and wrist of the blocker.

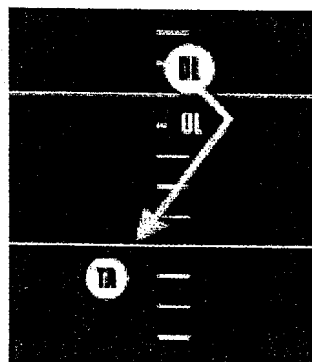
- Drive his arm and hand down and into his chest.
- Reach over the outside shoulder of the blocker with your inside arm.
- Drive your elbow into the blocker's back.
- Drive your inside leg to the outside and past the offensive man.
- Keep moving forward and attack the quarterback at the target area.



### Drill 2 (Deck) Rip-And-Run Pass Rush

#### PURPOSE

To learn to use a rip-and-run pass rush technique to reach the quarterback at the target area (TA). This drill requires one defensive lineman (DL) and one offensive lineman (OL). The defensive lineman lines up in his stance directly in front of the offensive lineman. The coach tells the offensive lineman the snap count. The instant the offensive lineman sets up to pass block, the defensive lineman starts across the line and begins his pass rush. This technique works well when you are the same height or shorter than the offensive lineman.



When rushing this way, you attack the inside of the offensive lineman. Only your rip arm will come in contact with the offensive lineman. This is often the shortest and quickest path to the quarterback.

**TECHNIQUE**

The instant the center moves the ball:

- Take a long step with your outside blocker's body.
- Drop your outside shoulder as you take the first step.
- Drive your outside shoulder under the inside armpit of the blocker.
- Propel yourself by the blocker by bringing your outside arm up and back.
- Drive your feet and hips toward the QB in the target area.

*Coach Tom Bass is a former NFL coach with more than 20 years of experience with the Cincinnati Bengals, San Diego Chargers and Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He is the author of Play Football the NFL Way, as well as Coach Bass Sport Maps (available at [www.coachbass.com](http://www.coachbass.com)). Coach Bass does a popular twice-weekly question-and-answer column on the NFL's High School Football site ([www.nfhs.com](http://www.nfhs.com)).*



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## Football Fundamentals - Blocking

Blocking is the cornerstone of a good offensive football team. Teams use block move a defensive man out of an area where they want to run the football and defenders from getting to the quarterback. All players including the quarterback be used as a blocker at times.

### Drive Block

The drive block is a one-on-one block used most often when a defender is lined directly over an offensive lineman and must be moved in order for the play to succeed. Emphasize the following points to your players.

- Explode from the stance with the foot closest to the opponent and drive hips forward on the third and fourth steps.
- Use short choppy steps and keep the feet moving.
- Keep the feet wide when delivering the block, keeping the head up and shoulders square.
- Punch hands or forearms into the opponent to establish momentum, and deliver the blow on impact.
- Keep your head on the side of the opponent toward the hole, and follow through with short, choppy steps.

### Pass Protection Block

The pass protection block keeps the defender from getting to the quarterback so he can deliver the ball to a receiver.

The initial move and setup technique is extremely important in pass blocking. Lineman must set up quickly, stepping with his inside foot first. The lineman pushes up into a two point stance with his down hand. The movement projects the offensive lineman into a position with his head up, eyes open, back straight, rear end down, hand and arms up, and feet positioned to move back or laterally in a split second.

The lineman must position himself between the quarterback and the defensive rusher. He can do this by backing off the line of scrimmage quickly after the snap. Make sure that your linemen know that they should never get beat to their inside.

The blockers must be patient when pass blocking, keeping the legs under him. They always remain in a good blocking position. They are not the aggressors while pass blocking.

[Go to drills database.](#)

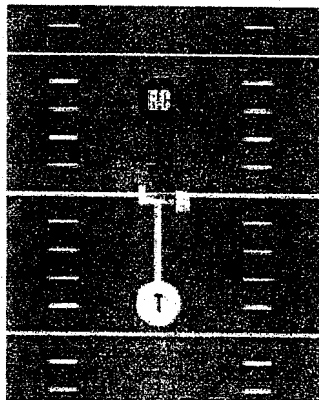
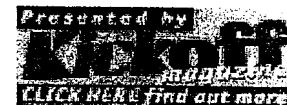
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About Coach Bass

## SKILLS & DRILLS - TACKLING

by: Coach Tom Bass; Photos: Gary Payne; Diagrams: Gabriel Berlin



Tackling is the skill most associated with football. Knowing how to tackle is a must for every defensive player, but it is also important that every other player on the team know how to tackle. Offensive players need to be able to tackle when there is an interception or a fumble recovery. Special teams players assigned to kickoff and punt coverage also have to be good tacklers.

Tacklers need to be aggressive. Desire and wanting to make the hit are important parts of being a good tackler. When you first start playing football, you may be afraid to make tackles. That's natural. You will find that practicing how to tackle safely, with proper technique, will make you more sure of yourself. Pretty soon, you will be bringing down ball carriers without a second thought. Practicing with a friend will help you become a better tackler, but make sure an adult is present when practicing these drills.

### Drill 1 - Front Tackling Drill

Purpose: In this drill the ball carrier (BC) runs at half speed, straight at the tackler (T) and jumps up into the air as the tackle is made. Work on form and not contact. This is the type of tackle you will use during games when a ball carrier is coming straight at you, and he doesn't have room to cut to his right or left.



#### TECHNIQUE

As you near the ball carrier, in order to make the tackle you:

- Shorten your stride and widen your base.
- Lower your hips by bending your knees.
- Keep your back straight and your head up. Your eyes should be focused on the center of the ball carrier's chest.
- Explode off the foot on the side of the shoulder making contact.
- Hit with your shoulder pad and NOT your helmet.
- Drive your shoulder pad up and through the ball carrier's chest.
- Keep your head up and allow it to slide to the side of the ball carrier.
- Wrap both arms around the ball carrier and grab his jersey.
- Continue driving with your legs. Lift and carry the ball carrier back a few steps. In a game, you would take the ball carrier to the ground.

### Drill 2 - Angle Tackling Drill

Purpose: Players usually tackle ball carriers from the side, so it is important to learn how to make tackles when you are coming at a ball carrier from the left or the right. In this drill, the ball carrier (BC) and the tackler (T) run straight at each other at half speed for five yards. The ball carrier then cuts at an angle to either his right or his left. This is the type of tackle you will use during games when the ball carrier has cut to his right or left, or when he is running between you and the sideline.



#### TECHNIQUE

As you near the ball carrier, in order to make the tackle you:

- Shorten your stride and widen your base.
- Lower your hips by bending your knees.
- Keep your back straight and your head up. Your eyes should be focused on the center of the ball carrier's chest.
- Explode off the foot closest to the ball carrier.

- Hit with your shoulder pad and NOT your helmet. ~~A~~
- Keep your helmet in front of the ball carrier's chest.
- Drive your shoulder pad up and through the ball carrier's side.
- Hit across the ball carrier's chest with your front arm.
- Make contact with the ball carrier's lower back with your back arm.
- Wrap both arms around the ball carrier and grab his jersey. Continue driving with your legs.
- Lift and carry the ball carrier back a few steps. In a game, you would take the ball carrier to the ground.

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## **Warm Up**

Drill #1

## **Centre/Quarterback Exchange**

Drill #2

## **Passing**

Drill #3

Drill #4

## **Individual Pass Patterns**

Drill #5

## **Passing and Receiving**

Drill #6

Drill #7

Drill #8

Drill #9

Drill #10

## **Pass Pattern Combinations**

Drill #11

## **Tosses**

Drill #12

## **Running with the Ball**

Drill #13

Drill #14

Drill #15

## **Defensive**

Drill #16

Drill #17

Drill #18

Drill #19

## **NFL Ultimate**

Drill #20

# Drill #1: Warm-Up Drill: "Jingle-Jangle"

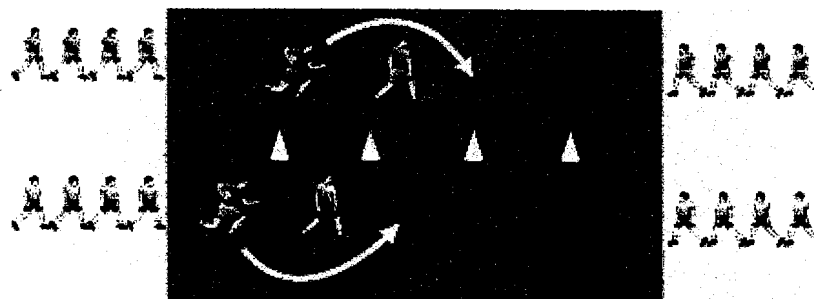
This is a good way to begin practice. After a short stretching period, this drill gets players loose and warmed up, while also helping them practice their agility and footwork.

**Purpose:** Improve balance, footwork, and change of direction.

## Drill Outline :

- Place cones at corners of 15-yard square. Line up players at one corner of square. Players then:
  1. sprint to first cone
  2. side-step to second cone
  3. backpedal to third cone
  4. sprint back to beginning of line.
- Throw a football to each player as he or she finishes the drill. Repeat drill to other side after everyone has had a turn.

# Drill #2: Center QB Exchange



**Purpose:** To develop proper snapping technique.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Divide teams into even groups and place in even lines. Place cones in middle of drill four yards apart. One football per team; the entire class can participate.

## Drill Outline:

- This is a relay race.
- The quarterback (A) and center (B) on each team start the race.
- The center (B) snaps directly to the QB(A). The center will stand still while the QB runs to the next cone.
- The previous (A) snaps to (B), then (B) snaps to (A) and so on, until course is completed.
- The race is continued until each participant gets a turn.

**Progression:** Shotgun snap.

## Key Coaching Points:

- Center must place the ball on the ground before snapping.

## Drill #3: Passing Drill: Progressive QB

This drill helps refine and improve passing technique by concentrating on proper arm and hand movement.

### Development Goals

Perfect throwing motion while using only the throwing arm.

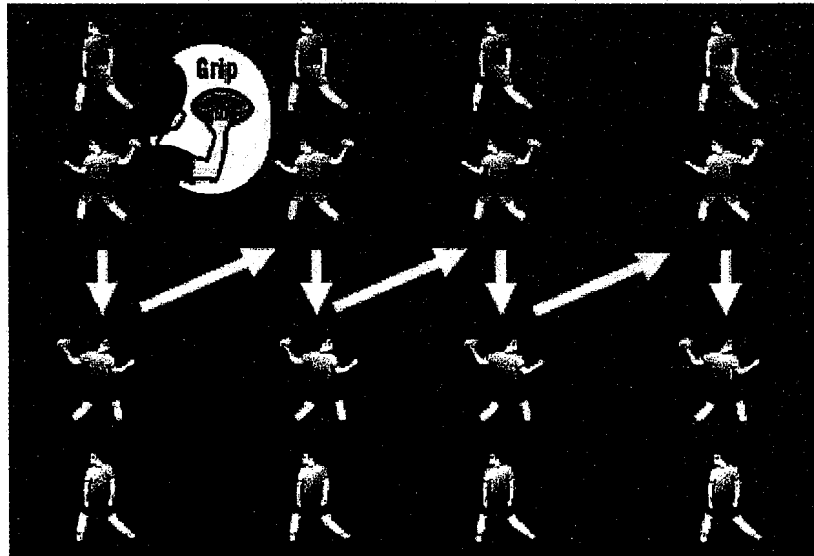
### Coaching Points

Pair off participants into two parallel lines. Players start on both knees, throwing to their partners five yards away. Show players how to follow through with their arm, so that their thumbs end up pointing down. Have each player begin with football held above his or her waist. Demonstrate how to throw from no higher than their ear.

### Progressions

After several throws, have players switch to kneeling on right knee. Then after several throws that way, have them switch to left knee. Next, have them throw standing up with feet together. Finally, have them practice a three-step drop, then a five-step drop before throwing.

## Drill #4: Passing



**Purpose:** To develop proper passing technique.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Divide teams into even groups and place players opposite from each other about 3 yards apart. The entire class can participate if there are enough footballs. With a limited amount of footballs, place students behind each other and have them wait for a turn or pass the footballs available in a zig-zag pattern. (Shown above.)

**Drill Outline:** Participants pass the football back and forth to their partner.

### Progression:

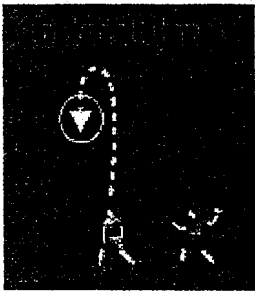
- Begin with the participants on both knees facing each other.
- Kids throwing from their knees will focus on the throwing motion without the use of their legs.
- Progress to right knee up and then switch to left knee up.

- Next, have players stand straight up and pass with feet apart.

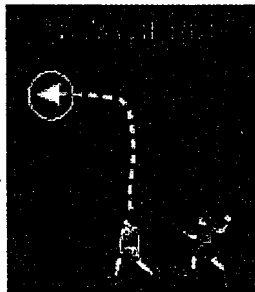
### Key Coaching Points:

- Passing motion is the same as throwing a baseball, javelin, or handball.
- The hand without the football points to the target or the receiver.
- Make sure kids follow through on their throws.
- Point – step – throw.
- The receiver forms a target with both hands, palms facing out with thumbs and pointing fingers touching.
- The receiver's fingers should form a triangle

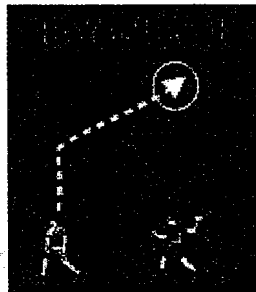
## Drill #5: Individual Pass Patterns



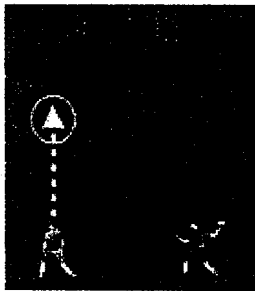
**5 Yard Curl:** The WR runs up the field 5 yards, stops, and returns back towards the QB.



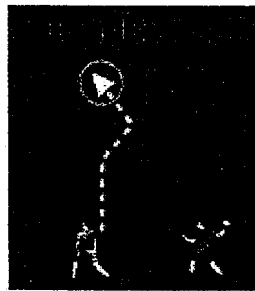
**5 Yard Out:** The WR runs up the field 5 yards and cuts to the sideline.



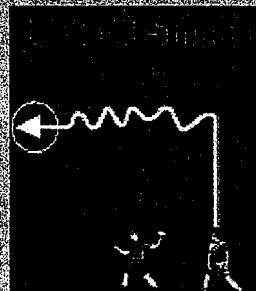
**8 Yard Post:** A WR runs up field 8 yards and cuts toward the centre of the field on a 45-degree angle



**Streak:** The WR runs straight up the field as fast as possible.



**Post Corner:** The WR runs up the field. At 8 yards he cuts toward the centre of the field and after 2 yards runs towards the corner of the end zone.



**5 Yard Smash:** The WR runs up the field 5 yards and then turns toward the QB and side shuffles with body facing the QB

## Drill #6: Passing and Receiving: Run & Shoot

This drill helps players understand simple passing routes, from the perspective of both quarterback and receiver.

### Development Goals

Passers: accuracy and how to lead receivers

Receivers: how to run pass routes

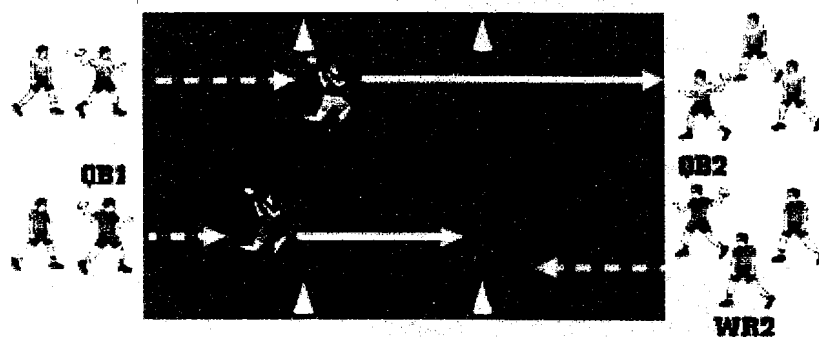
Defensive Backs: how to watch receivers and cut to the ball.

### Coaching Points

Divide your team into three groups. The first player in line is the first passer; the second goes out to play defensive back; the third is the receiver. The outside groups run simple 10-yard square-out patterns, while the middle group runs 10-yard turn-ins or buttonhooks.

Rotate each line this way: After passing, the quarterback becomes the next receiver; the next player in line becomes the passer; the first receiver becomes the defensive back; and the first defensive back moves on to the next group. Make sure players get chances at all three positions.

## Drill #7: Passing & Receiving



**Purpose:** To develop running, passing, and receiving skills.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area and divide the team into even groups. Set cones 5 yards from each end line and 10 yards apart. Each team requires one football so the entire class can participate.

### Drill Outline:

- This is a relay race.
- The object is for QB 1 to pass to WR 1, who has run to cone (A) to catch the ball.
- The second participant in line is WR 2.
- WR-2 runs to cone (B) and repeats the drill.
- The drill is repeated until every participant has a turn.
- If the ball is dropped, the WR picks it up and continues with the drill.

### Key Coaching Points:

- WR must stop and completely turn around giving the QB a big target.
- WR must give a solid handoff to the QB when returning to line.
- After each relay race, a WR becomes the new QB.

# Drill #8: Passing & Receiving



**Purpose:** For a WR to find an open area in order to catch a pass.

**Organization:** Set out a 10 x 10-yard area. Divide the players into groups of six, five players on offense and a single player on defense. Station four players in the corners of the area and a lone receiver, shadowed by a defender inside the area. This can be duplicated to allow full participation for entire class. One football is needed per group.

## **Drill Outline:**

- The object is for the QB's to pass the football around until an opportunity arises to throw the football to the WR.
- The length of the drill is 30 seconds. Six points are awarded for each reception and the defense is awarded three points for an interception.
- Either switch to a whole new group of players at QB, WR, and DB. Or, switch kids on the field into new positions or bring new kids into game.

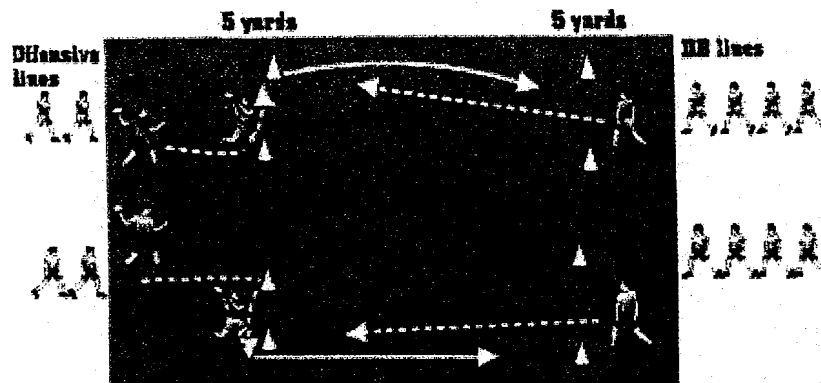
## **Progression:**

- Lower drill time to (20) seconds in length.
- Add an additional DB to the field.
- If the football is intercepted, put the QB who threw the interception on defense.

## **Key Coaching Points:**

- How WR and QB communicate.
- Defenders should focus on WR hips not shoulders.

# Drill #9: Passing & Receiving



**Purpose:** To develop proper pass patterns and defensive skills.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area and place two sets of cones on either end of the drill, 5 yards off the end line. Divide into two equal teams. One half of each team starts on offense, the other half starts on defense. Each team has a football. Use the entire class in one drill.

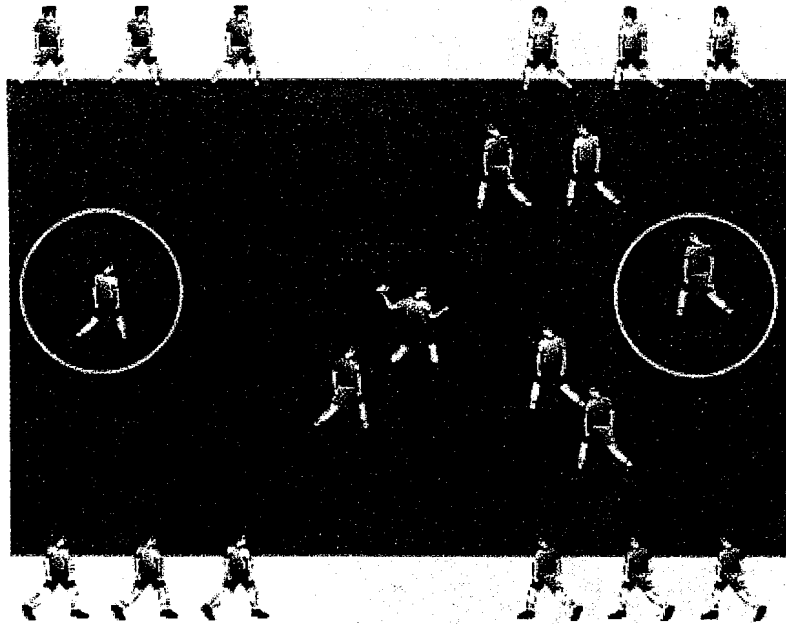
## Drill Outline:

- The WR snaps the football to the QB and the WR runs a 5-yard "out" pattern. The cones are set out to indicate direction.
- When the ball is snapped, the DB runs to the area where the WR will try to catch the football.
- If a catch is made, the WR must then try to run past the DB and score without having his/her flag pulled.
- The WR then goes to the end of the DB line and the DB goes to end of the offensive line on their own team.
- The WR will give the football to the DB after the drill. The DB will hand the football to the QB in the DB's new line.
- 6 points are awarded for each TD. The coach keeps score.

## Key Coaching Points:

- QB passes to where the WR will be at end of his/her pattern.
- WR looks back for football when he makes the turn to the second cone.
- DB watches WR's hips for any fakes, not the shoulders or head.

# Drill #10: Passing & Receiving



**Purpose:** To develop proper receiving and passing skills. Teach participants how to spread out and use the entire field.

**Organization:** Set out a 40 x 40-yard area. Divide teams into even groups and place players opposite each other across the field. The entire class can participate.

## Drill Outline:

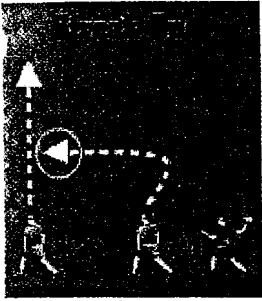
- Eight to ten participants start on the field, the remaining players stand on the sidelines.
- This game concept and playing area is similar to basketball, but without the baskets or dribbling.
- The ball starts with one player at the center of the field.
- The object is to throw the football to a teammate in the circle or goal.
- The player with the ball has to pass to his/her teammates inside the game or can get assistance from teammates on the sidelines.
- The player with the ball can only take two steps, similar to basketball. The players in the playing area without the ball are free to move around.
- The ball must be passed within 10 seconds or the other team gets possession of the ball.
- The idea is to try to knock down or intercept a pass. If the ball is dropped or intercepted, the team on defense is awarded possession of the football.
- 6 points are awarded each time the ball is passed to a player in the goal area. The player in the goal cannot leave that area.

**Progression:** Add players to the field, one per team.

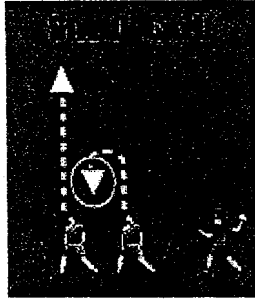
## Key Coaching Points:

- Stress the importance of spreading out and being in position to receive a pass from a teammate.
- It is important to get open and not bunch up because, in a game situation, the offense has an advantage when there is more room to move

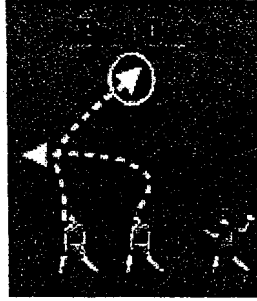
# Drill #11: Pass Pattern Combinations



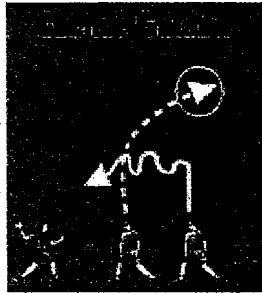
**Streak Out:** #1 WR runs a 5-yard out toward the sideline and WR #2 runs a streak.



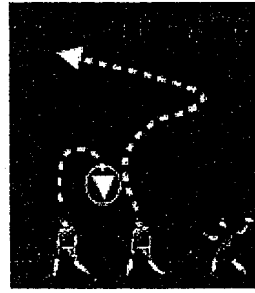
**Streak Curl:** #1 WR runs a streak and #2 WR runs a 5 yard-curl inside.



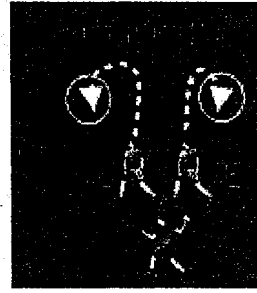
**Post Out:** WR #1 runs a post and WR #2 runs a 5-yard out.



**Corner Smash:** WR #1 runs a corner and WR #2 runs a 5-yard smash.



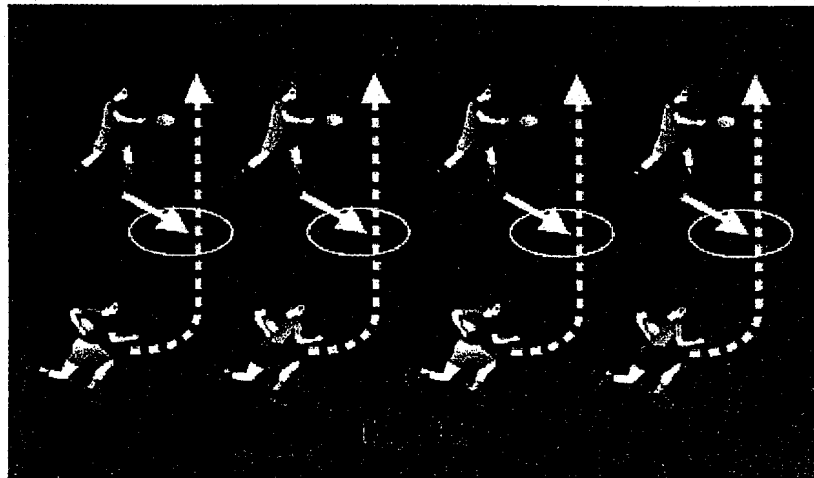
**Curl Post Corner:** WR #1 runs a 5-yard curl and WR #2 runs a post.



**Twin Curl:** WR #1 and WR #2 both run 5-yard curls. This play is used in short-yardage situations.

\*On all these patterns, #1 is an option if #2 is covered, and vice versa.

# Drill #12: Tosses



**Purpose:** To develop proper tosses or pitches.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Divide teams into even groups and place players opposite each other across the line about 5 yards apart. Players on Team A are the quarterbacks. The players on the B team are running backs. They will switch positions after each turn. Footballs for each pair are recommended and the entire class can participate if space permits.

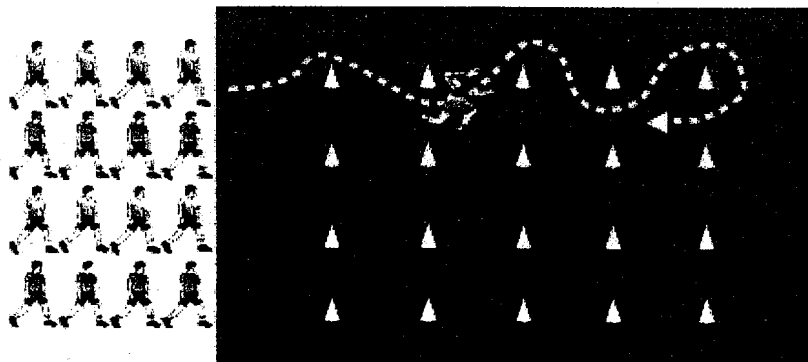
**Drill Outline:**

- The QBs will have their backs to the RBs.
- The first several practices, the instructor will call the cadence, "SET GO." The instructor will then choose a QB to call out the cadence.
- Each QB holds the football in front of them with their knees bent and their feet apart.
- On the QB's "SET GO" the RB moves to the right to take the pitch from the QB at a distance of 3-5 yards.
- The first time through the drill, have players move in slow motion to get the feel of the drill.
- Switch positions; the QBs are now RBs and vice versa.
- The players now run half speed through the drill to the left.
- The players switch positions again and run through the drill at full speed.

**Key Coaching Points:**

- The QB will look at the stomach area of the RB when making the pitch it to that area.
- The toss or pitch is similar to passing in Rugby.

## Drill #13: Running with the Ball



**Purpose:** To develop running skills.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Cones are set 8 yards apart to simulate a mini-end zone. One ball per team. The entire class can participate. If cones are limited, use t-shirts, shoes, or tape on the floor as markers.

**Drill Outline:**

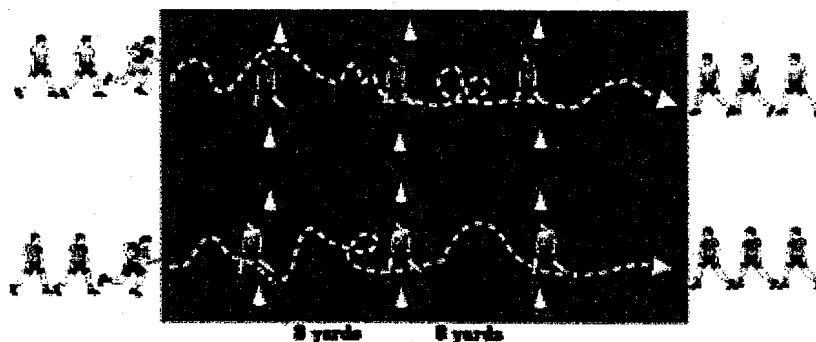
- This is a relay race between teams.
- The first participant in each line has a football and will run with the football around each cone and then come back to the beginning of his/her line.
- When the participant returns to the line, they will hand off to the next participant at the front of the line, then go to the back of the team's line.
- The race is won by the first team to have each participant complete the race.

**Progression:** Have players backpedal or hop over the cones.

**Key Coaching Points:**

- Player switches arms carrying the football, with the football always carried in the arm nearest the sideline.
- Players cut on their outside foot, not crossing their legs over when they go around a cone.

## Drill #14: Running with the Ball



**Purpose:** To develop running skills and avoid having the flag pulled.

**Organization:** Set out a 40 x 40-yard area. Place cones 8 yards apart to simulate a mini-end zone; one ball per team. The entire class can participate in one drill, or duplicate the cone set-up if space permits.

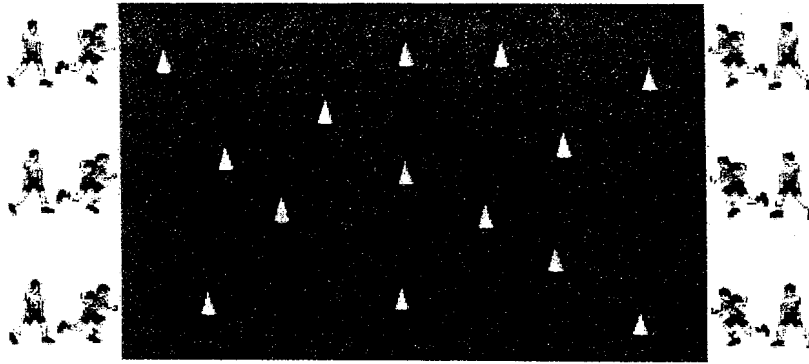
**Drill Outline:**

- Relay race between teams. Drill is completed when all RBs have run through the mini end zone once.
- There are 3 mini-end zones for the RB to run through.
- Offensive team has to play against the other team's defense.
- RB has to run through three mini-end zones and avoid the defenders in each.
- The DB attempts to pull the RB flag and stop him/her from scoring.
- DB's are awarded 3 points for each flag pulled. Points are counted after the race.
- The RB is awarded 6 points for each successful TD.
- The RB must run directly to the end of the line after handing off the football to a teammate on the other side of the drill.
- Offensive and defensive players are switched after each relay race is completed.
- If both RBs flags are removed before reaching the last DB, the RBs run back to the next RB in line and hands off the ball.

**Key Coaching Points:**

- RB plays with head up.
- DB watches the movement of RB's hips, not the head or shoulders.

## Drill #15: Running with the Ball



**Purpose:** To develop running skills and avoid having the flag pulled.

**Organization:** Set out a 40 x 40-yard area. Place cones 2 yards apart to simulate a mini-end zone. Recommended for six pairs of players, the maximum number of kids is 20. If cones are not available, marks on the ground or floor, t-shirts, or tape can be used. Balls are optional.

### Drill Outline:

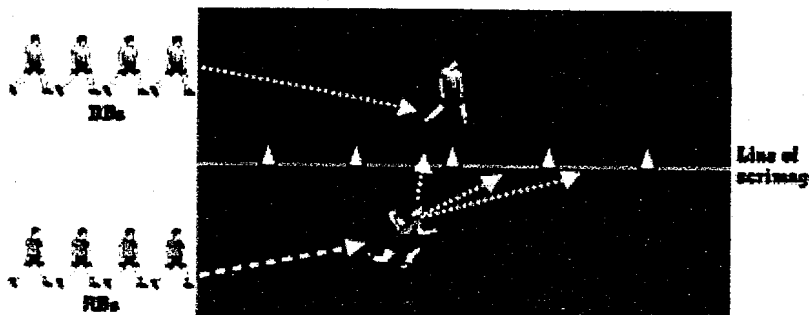
- Pair players up – one as a RB and one as a DB. The DB is in back of the RB and chasing the RB from behind.
- RB's should carry a football (if available).
- Each RB starts off on the end line at either side of the playing area.
- The DBs start 5 yards behind the RBs.
- On the coach's whistle, the RBs attempt to cross through the mini-end zones without getting their flags pulled by the pursuing DBs.
- The DB must chase the RB.
- Both flags are pulled, RB is out. If one flag pulled, the RB keeps going.
- Any end zone can be crossed and there is no order in which the end zones have to be crossed.
- The drill lasts 45 seconds and then you switch RB's to DB and DB's to RB.

**Progression:** Shorten time to 30 seconds.

### Key Coaching Points:

- RBs run plays with their heads up.
- DB watches the movement of RB's hips, not his/her head or shoulders.

## Drill #16: Defense



**Purpose:** To develop defensive back skills.

**Organization:** Set out a 10 x 20-yard area. Place the cones five yards apart. One football is needed. The entire class can participate in this drill which, can be duplicated for more players if space permits.

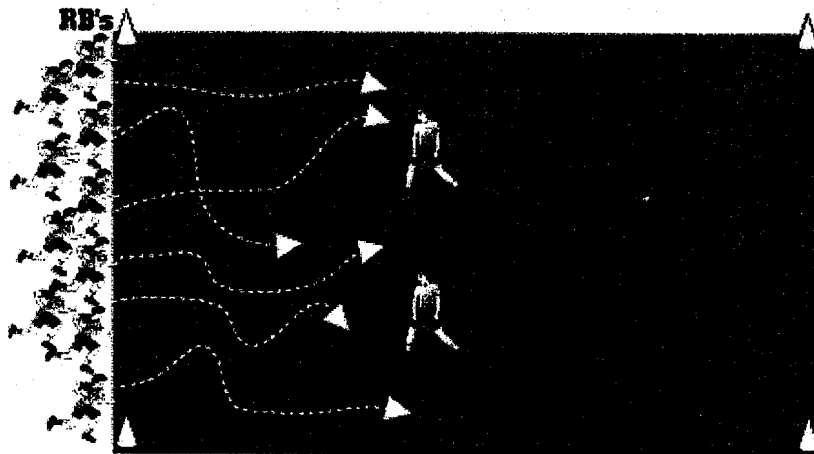
**Drill Outline:**

- The object is for the RB to run along the line of scrimmage and select an area between the cones to run through.
- RB starts with the football. On coach's signal, RB begins running. The DB must mirror the RB and attempt to capture the RB's flag before the RB selects a hole between the cones.
- This drill simulates making a one-on-one flag capture. Progression: Progress to two defensive players.

**Key Coaching Points:**

- RB must keep head up and the football firmly tucked away.
- DB must keep shoulders square and head and eyes looking upfield.
- DB watches the RB's hips.

## Drill #17: Defense



**Purpose:** To develop running skills and avoid the DB. Also teaches RBs to run to an open area.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. 10 players start at one end zone, each with a football (if available). Two DBs are stationed in the middle of the field.

**Drill Outline:**

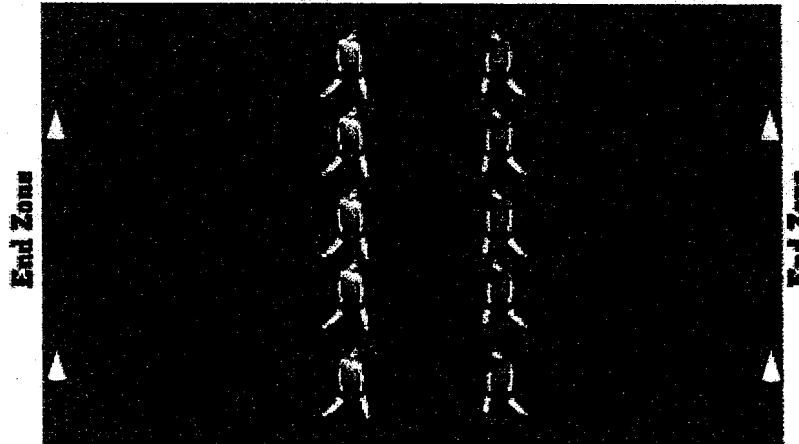
- The object is for the RBs to run past the DBs to the opposite end zone without getting their flags pulled.
- If a RB has his/her flag pulled, he/she sits out.
- Stop the drill after RBs reach the opposite end zone. Identify kids with pulled flags and allow players to catch their breath.
- The drill continues then by changing direction until there is one RB remaining.

**Progression:** Instead a RB sitting out after his/her flag is pulled, have him switch to a DB and assist in pulling other RB's flags.

**Key Coaching Points:**

- DBs should run to where the RB is going, not to where they are.
- Watch RB's waist, not his/her head or shoulders.

## Drill #18: Defense



**Purpose:** To develop the defensive skills of pulling the flag and following a WR.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Pair up 10-12 participants. The coach gives each team a name. The entire class can play, or duplicate drill if space permits.

### Drill Outline:

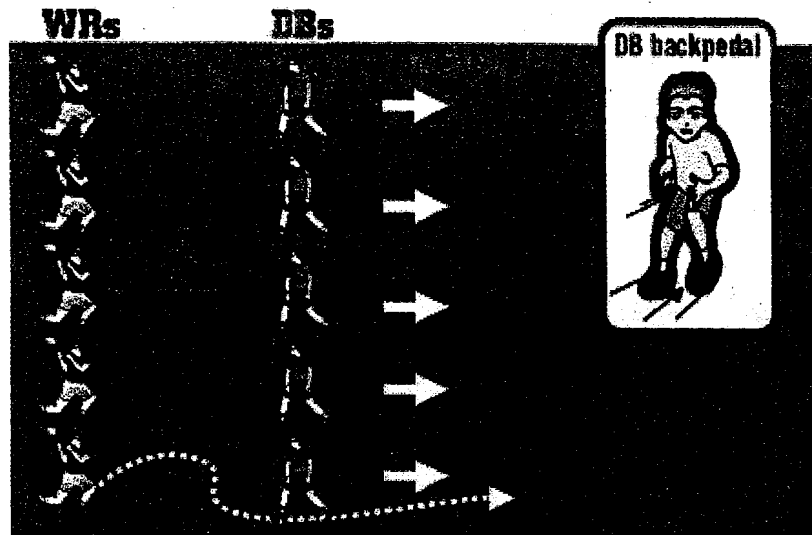
- This is a mirror drill.
- Players must "mirror" and stay with the player lined up across from them.
- When the coach calls out a team name, that team becomes the offense and tries to score in the defensive team's end zone. A score is worth 6 points.
- If a player has his/her flag pulled they are out for that one drill.
- Defensive players can go after other offensive players if they have pulled the flag of their partner.
- Offensive players have 45 seconds to score. Each score is worth 6 points.

**Progression:** Coach will lower the time limit to 30 seconds. Coach keeps track of offensive player scores and subtracts 3 points for players who had their flags pulled.

### Key Coaching Points:

- DB practices staying in front of offensive player.

# Drill #19: Defense



**Purpose:** To develop defensive skills of backpedaling and pulling the flag.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Pair up 10-12 participants or as many as space allows.

## Drill Outline:

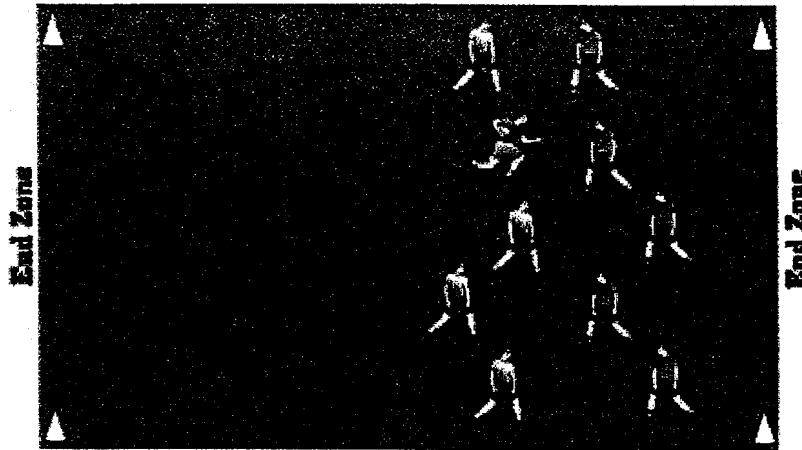
- Pair up kids – one group is WRs, the other DBs.
- Each DB will backpedal and "mirror" the WR. All players will start in slow motion on the instructor's command.
- Switch, making WRs play as DBs. Progress to half speed.
- Switch positions again. Now go to full speed. On the instructor's whistle, the WRs will try to run past the DBs, who are backpedaling.
- During the drill, the instructor calls out "GO", the DB is now allowed to pull the flag of the WR who is still running for the end zone.
- The "GO" simulates the WR catching the football.

**Progression:** The coach will pass a football to an open offensive player when "GO" is called.

## Key Coaching Points:

- DB stays in front of offensive player.
- DB watches WR's waist and hips.

## Drill #20: NFL Ultimate



**Purpose:** To develop an awareness and feel for the flag football concept.

**Organization:** Set out a 20 x 40-yard area. Pair up 10 participants. Rotate players, or duplicate the drill if space permits.

### Drill Outline:

- The concept is for the team with the football to pass the ball to teammates without dropping the ball, all the while moving the ball toward the end zone.
- The player with the football has 10 seconds to pass or pitch the ball to a teammate.
- The ball can be passed or pitched forward, sideways, or backwards.
- The player with the ball can only take 2 steps after catching the ball.
- The offensive players without the ball can move anywhere on the field.
- The ball always has to be passed toward the end zone – 6 points are awarded for a touchdown.
- After a touchdown, the team that was on defense switches to offense and takes possession of the ball on their own 5 yard line.
- If the ball is dropped or intercepted, play continues with the other team in possession of the ball from the point of the turnover.
- Each defensive player must stay at arms length from the player with the ball. The defensive play is similar to that of basketball.

### Key Coaching Points:

- WRs must work to to get open and not bunch up.

