

# YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL COACHING MANUAL



MOORHEAD  
M I N N E S O T A

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Parks and Recreation

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## **Volunteer Coaches Position Description**

Under the direction and supervision of the Recreation Program Supervisor and/or the Youth Flag Football Coordinator, assigned volunteer coaches will organize and direct players during games and practices.

### **Volunteer Coaching Statement:**

As a volunteer with the Moorhead Parks and Recreation Department, you are expected to give the public the most efficient service possible. The public will scrutinize your conduct, comments, appearance, organization and ability. Remember, the public, especially the children, look to you for guidance and follow your example. Display a proper and friendly attitude at all times.

### **Examples of Duties**

- Understanding and explaining rules to players.
- Demonstrating and teaching the fundamental methods of play.
- Contacting and communicating with players and parents concerning issues that may arise, game or practice changes and other areas of communication as assigned by the Youth Flag Football Coordinator.
- Must organize and supervise all players during games and practices.
- Must supervise assigned teams.
- Must participate in pre-season meetings.
- The coach must exhibit and encourage enthusiasm and drive to the team members.
- You may coach more than one age level.
- Must complete application, background check, and concussion training.

### **Knowledge, Abilities and Skills**

Must have a thorough knowledge of the sport and must be able to demonstrate and teach various aspects of play. Must be able to supervise effectively and maintain order at all times. Must be able to relate to and work with children. Must be able to communicate well and must be personable at all times. Must be able to keep adequate records.

Must be sincerely interested in the sport and the communities youth recreation program. Must be willing to help promote youth flag football in the community.

### **Goal**

The goal of the Moorhead Parks and Recreation youth sports programs is to provide an opportunity for participation in an enjoyable recreation-orientated program which fosters the development of good sportsmanship, attitudes and conduct, skills and friendly competition, as well as other values attributed to sports participation.

### **General Objectives**

- A. The best leadership possible is provided in guiding and coaching the youth in the program.
- B. That there is much to be said about the saying, "It is not so much of importance who wins the game but how they played the game."
- C. That no player be cut from the program and that all players receive equal playing time and a chance to play all positions.

### **Registration**

- A. To participate in the youth flag football program, each child must be properly registered and have paid fees with the Moorhead Parks and Recreation Department.
- B. Upon registration, participants are put on teams by the school they attend.
- C. Any youth who is not properly registered by the designated registration cut off date, loses his/her identity within his/her home area and is subject to assignment by the Recreation Program Supervisor.

### **Alcoholic Beverages**

Employees/Volunteers are expressly forbidden to possess or drink alcoholic beverages or to have the odor of alcoholic beverages on their breath while on duty. Violation of this rule is cause for immediate dismissal.

### **Foul or Abusive Language**

Employees/Volunteers are expressly forbidden to use foul or abusive language while on duty. Violation of this rule is cause for immediate dismissal.

### **Termination of Employment**

The Youth Flag Football Coordinator will have a conference with those employees/volunteers who are not meeting their responsibilities and duties. If satisfactory improvements are not made, their services shall be terminated.

### **Attendance**

You are to complete the Participation Report Forms in full. Make sure all categories are completed. These forms will be available at the coaches meeting.

### **Hours of Duty**

Coaches are expected to be at his/her designated site 15 minutes before scheduled time to allow proper amount of time for preparation.

### **Dress**

All coaches are expected to be clean, neat and dress appropriately for their responsibilities. No frayed or ragged shirts, gym shorts are allowed. Athletic shoes must be worn.

### **Tobacco**

Employees/Volunteers are not permitted to use tobacco while on the job.

## **COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Supervision**

All program staff/volunteers shall report to the Youth Flag Football Coordinator and Recreation Program Supervisor in all matters pertaining to their position.

### **Staff Meeting**

There may be staff/volunteer meetings scheduled periodical throughout the program. You will be required to attend these meetings.

### **Volunteer Coaches and Program Staff**

- A. Is prompt.
- B. Is neat personally and also in his/her work.
- C. Is constantly alert to the person who needs attention and encouragement.
- D. Develops original ideas and puts them into practice.
- E. Is able to get along with his/her co-coaches and program staff.
- F. Would rather do a little too much than too little.
- G. Is conscious of the safety factor in all activities.
- H. Recognizes the need for good public relations.
- I. Recognizes that sportsmanship is more important than winning.

### **Discipline**

The best way to avoid discipline problems is to keep everyone busy. If a child is displaying a disruptive attitude, the following successive levels of action may become necessary:

- A. Ask the child to stop.
- B. Ask the child to go to the side and sit out part of the practice or game until the attitude improves.
- C. If a child is continuously disruptive, you can address the issue with the parent(s). Notify the Recreation Program Supervisor if this becomes necessary.

### **Coaching Objectives and Goals**

- A. The primary objective should be to provide an atmosphere in which the players will enjoy learning and want to participate.
- B. Teach the players the necessary skills for enjoyment of the game (beginning players learn most from doing, not watching or listening.)

### **Goals**

- A. Teach the rules of the game.
- B. Teach the fundamentals: Throwing/Passing, Catching/Receiving, Carrying Ball, QB/Center Exchange, QB/RB Exchange, and ready stance.

- C. Teach the basic strategy of the game.  
Note: Coach must be familiar with these areas themselves. Demonstrations at the beginning of practice should be short and to the point (actual playing develops beginning players faster than any other method).
- D. Instill honesty, sportsmanship, self-reliance and teamwork in players. Set an example by displaying these characteristics at all times. The emphasis should not be on winning but on the job of playing and self-improvement.
- E. Encourage the players to develop the necessary skills and knowledge of the sport and to enjoy it to its fullest.
- F. Make sure the kids have fun!

### **Coaching Suggestions**

- A. Be aware of the stage of physical and mental development of each of the players.
- B. Plan practice sessions according to players' ages and abilities.
- C. Keep competition into perspective to the players' ages, their accomplishments and abilities.
- D. Do not talk down to players, but communicate as part of the team by knowing what their interests are.
- E. Be firm and supportive, never negative.
- F. Be open, friendly and cheerful to parents, players and opponents.
- G. Go out of your way to keep both players and parents informed. If you have to make a call, make it. Parents are very receptive to their children's involvement.
- H. At the conclusion of the first practice have a short 5-10 minute meeting with Parents and players. Hand out jerseys, picture forms, concussion information, and exchange contact info if needed.
- I. Most important, be organized. Know what you are going to do every day. Never be late or miss practice.

## **YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **Eligibility**

- A. Children entering Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade
- B. Children entering 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade
- C. Children entering 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
- D. Children entering 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

### **Team Rosters**

Each coach will be given a roster listing each person's name and contact information that has registered for the program. Only the Youth Flag Football Coordinator, with permission from the Recreation Program Supervisor, can make additions to the roster. Only those listed on a roster may play in games or practices. Any withdrawals from the program should be reported to the Youth Flag Football Coordinator as soon as possible.

### **Equipment**

The Moorhead Parks and Recreation Department will provide an equipment bag with balls, belts, flags, cones, and first aid for each team. The coach is responsible for all equipment issued to the teams. The coach should check all equipment periodically for safety purposes and return any deficient equipment to the Youth Flag Football Coordinator. However, any team member may bring his/her own football to practice (make sure their name is on personal belongings). All players will be issued a youth flag football jersey that is theirs to keep at the end of the season. Coaches are responsible for returning all equipment at the end of the season.

### **Practices and Games**

Each team will practice once a week and will play a game one time per week. Practices and games will be 1 hour in length.

### **Participation**

Players will receive equal playing time and will have a chance to play each position throughout the season.

### **Player Conduct**

Players are urged to conduct themselves with a high level of sportsmanship. Profanity and abusive language will not be tolerated and continued use may result in ejection from the game or league.

### **Number of Players**

Team rosters will have no more than 14 players. Special exceptions may be made exclusively by the Recreation Program Supervisor. (Ex: 30 kids register for one school. They will be split 15 and 15)

### **Instruction for Coaches**

- A. Coaches will advise their players from the first day of practice that they will be referred to as “Coach ‘Blank’”. Ex: “Coach Clementson”, “Coach Jordan”, or “Coach C”.
- B. Practice sessions are to be held for each team at the scheduled time and location, not at the convenience of the coach. Any scheduling adjustments must be approved by Recreation Program Supervisor.
  1. Practice sessions are to be one hour in length.
  2. Coaches will follow the rules set by the Parks and Recreation Department for practice and enforce them.
- C. In case of inclement weather, the Youth Flag Football Coordinator will inspect the fields. He/she will notify the Parks and Recreation Department Office. If decision is made by 4:30 pm, parks and recreation staff will send emails to all program participants. The decision will also be posted on the Moorhead Parks Facebook page and the Moorhead Parks Hotline. If the decision is made after 4:30pm the Youth Flag Football Coordinator will contact each coach. Coaches are in turn responsible to notify their players.
- D. Coaches and teams should be at the field 15 minutes before game time. Line-ups will be made beforehand. Also, substitutes will be listed in line-ups by game time.
- E. There will be no questioning of a referee’s decision or judgment. A coach may, in a polite manner, question the interpretation of a rule, but in no case is a player to do so.
  1. There will be no harassment from the bench. Coaches will be the spokesperson and keep players quiet.
- F. Both players and coaches will conduct themselves appropriately and exhibit good sportsmanship at all times.
  1. There will be absolutely no name calling, taunting, or razzing of any teams or players.
    - a. It is the Coaches responsibility to see that this never happens. The coaches are setting the examples for the players.
- G. Make-up Games
  1. There is one week set aside for rained out games.



- H. Coaches will never reprimand a player, in front of the whole team, who has made a mistake. The player should be called aside and spoken to privately after the play or series.
1. However, if a player gets out of hand emotionally, he/she should be removed from play immediately using the best judgment on how to do so. No physical handling of an individual is allowed. The player can return to the game after they have regained their composure.

### **Refereeing**

One referee will be assigned to each game. Coaches should assist in addressing penalties that their players commit. Please understand that one referee will not be able to see everything that happens.

### **Spectator Control**

- A. At all times, be courteous to spectators. The Youth Flag Football Officials and the referees have the authority to forfeit the game because of uncontrollable conduct by spectators. To do so the following steps must be taken:
1. Politely, but firmly, warn the individual(s) causing problems.
  2. Warn the coach of the actions and possible forfeit. Ask him/her to talk to offender(s).
  3. After warnings have been made, eject offender(s) from the complex.
  4. If offender(s) won't leave, forfeit game.

## **YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL SKILLS**

The following is a list of skills that are to be taught to Moorhead Parks and Recreation youth flag football players during the season. Those marked with an asterisk (\*) are definitely to be covered during the first week. The coach determines the methodology or technique of teaching as long as it is within the guidelines of the youth program.

### **A. Passing/Throwing\***

1. Stance- Feet shoulder width apart
2. Grip- hands over laces
3. Point non-throwing shoulder towards target
4. Pump- Throwing arm back behind body
5. Step with opposite foot towards target
6. Follow through by letting your throwing arm come across your body
7. End with throwing arm pointing at target

### **B. Catching/Receiving\***

1. Make triangle with both hands, between index fingers and thumbs
2. Keep eye on the ball at all times
3. Keep arms away from body
4. Point of ball should go through triangle
5. Absorb ball into body
6. Tuck ball away into "carry position"(see below)

### **C. Carrying Ball**

1. Place point of ball into palm of dominant hand
2. Put finger on tip of football, bring ball to rest against forearm
3. Curve wrist, so side of ball is resting against it
4. Tuck ball above abdomen, but below pectorals
5. Keep elbow close to your body

### **D. QB/Center Exchange**

1. Center lines up over ball
  - A. Knees bent, head up and behind ball
2. QB lines up under center and calls hike
3. Center hands ball between legs, while rotating the ball 90\*
  - A. Center only holds balls for QB to take.
  - B. Make sure laces are facing up
4. QB takes ball by placing the heels of his/her palms together and wrapping hands and fingers around center on ball.
  - A. One hand on top, one hand on bottom
5. QB drops back and raises the ball to mid chest still holding ball with two hands.

**E. QB/RB Exchange**

1. Complete QB/Center Exchange
2. RB is lined up 5-7 yards behind the QB on either the left or right side
3. As QB calls hike, RB moves forward to take handoff
4. QB takes step pivots in direction of hand off
5. RB forms a "pocket"
  - A. Pocket is formed by holding one arm across chest with palm facing down, the other arm goes across abdomen with arm up
6. QB places ball in pocket
7. RB transfers ball to "carry position"

**F. Proper Ready Stance**

1. Get into a two point stance before each play
  - A. Players stand with feet shoulder width apart
  - B. Put palms on knees and hunch over so arms are slightly bent
2. Receivers can use a modified two point stance
  - A. One leg further back than the other
3. Three or four point stances will not be used.

## Moorhead Parks and Recreation Flag Football K-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Rules

### No Contact!

- Please discourage contact from the start of the season. We want to avoid as many injuries as possible. Let your kids know that tackling and rough play is against the rules and will not be tolerated.

### THE BASICS

- Game is played 7 on 7.
- At the start of each game the coach will select two “captains” to handle coin toss.
- A coin toss/paper rock scissors determines first possession.
- Home team wears the color side of the jersey.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have four plays to score a touchdown.
- Possession changes to loser of coin toss at beginning of the second half.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense’s 5-yard line.(if one team goes through their four downs the ball will be spotted at the nearest 5 yard line for the other team to start their offensive series.
- Games are (2) twenty-five minute halves (running time).
- Coaches are on the field with their team.
- This is a recreation league. Moorhead Parks and Recreation does not keep score.
- There are no kickoffs or punts, and no blocking is allowed.
- After a touchdown is scored, there is an extra play (mimicking a 2 point conversion) starting on the 5-yard line. It must be a passing play.

### TIMING

- Each team has one 30-second time-out per half.
- Each team will have up to 60 seconds to snap the ball after the previous play ends.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion (i.e. injuries)

### OFFENSE

- The quarterback cannot run the ball
- Direct handoffs or laterals behind the line of scrimmage are permitted.
- Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- “No-running zones” located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- Shovel passes are allowed.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
- No shotgun formations will be allowed.

### **DEAD BALLS**

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - Touchdown or safety is scored
  - At the point of an interception (interception returns are not allowed)
  - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
  - Ball carrier's flag falls out

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. There will be a loss of down, but not possession.

### **RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK (2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade only, no rushing in K-1)**

- All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 10 yards back from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Before each play the referee, will designate 10 yards from the line of scrimmage. A maximum of two players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
  - Rushers can start rushing when QB has the ball in their hands, not on verbal hut or hike.
  - Once the ball leaves the QB's possession either through a hand off or a pass, all other defensive players can cross the line of scrimmage and can pursue the ball carrier.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

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

**PENALTIES: \*All penalties will be assessed 7 yards and the down will be replayed\***

**Defense:**

- **Off sides**
- **Interference**
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.)
- **Illegal FLAG pull** (before receiver has ball)
- **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

**Offense:**

- **Illegal motion** (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
- **Illegal forward pass** (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage)
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.)
- **Offensive pass interference** (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
- **Flag guarding**
- **Delay of Game**
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarifications and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.

**ATTIRE**

- Cleats are allowed except for metal spikes.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- Shoe and mouth guard inspections will be made before each game.
- **Official Flag Football jerseys must be worn during play and the jerseys must be tucked into pants/shorts as to not cover the players' belts and flags.**

**PLAYING RULES**

**4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**(Fargo, Moorhead, & West Fargo)**

**No Contact!**

- Please discourage contact from the start of the season. We want to avoid as many injuries as possible. Let your kids know that tackling and rough play is against the rules and will not be tolerated.

**THE BASICS**

- Game is played 7 on 7.
- Each team will use their own ball when on offense since each program uses different brands and the sizes don't always match up.
- Away teams will use the home team's belts/flags to keep it fair .
- At the start of each game the coach will select two "captains" to handle coin toss.
- A coin toss/paper rock scissors determines first possession.

- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have four plays to score a touchdown.
- Possession changes to loser of coin toss at beginning of the second half.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.(if one team goes through their four downs the ball will be spotted at the nearest 5 yard line for the other team to start their offensive series.
- Games are (2) twenty-five minute halves (running time).
- Coaches are on the field with their team.
- This is a recreation league. Moorhead Parks and Recreation does not keep score.
- There are no kickoffs or punts, and no blocking is allowed.
- After a touchdown is scored, there is an extra play (mimicking a 2 point conversion) starting on the 5-yard line. It must be a passing play.

### **TIMING**

- Each team has one 30-second time-out per half.
- Each team will have up to 60 seconds to snap the ball after the previous play ends.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion (i.e. injuries)

### **OFFENSE**

- The quarterback cannot run the ball
- Direct handoffs or laterals behind the line of scrimmage are permitted.
- Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- "No-running zones" located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- Shovel passes are allowed.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.

### **DEAD BALLS**

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled

- Ball carrier steps out of bounds
- Touchdown or safety is scored
- At the point of an interception (interception returns are not allowed)
- Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
- Ball carrier's flag falls out

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. There will be a loss of down, but not possession.

### **RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK (2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade only, no rushing in K-1)**

- **All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 10 yards back from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Before each play the referee, will designate 10 yards from the line of scrimmage. A maximum of two players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.**
  - Rushers can start rushing when QB has the ball in their hands, not on verbal hut or hike.
  - Once the ball leaves the QB's possession either through a hand off or a pass, all other defensive players can cross the line of scrimmage and can pursue the ball carrier.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

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

### **PENALTIES:**

#### **Defense:**

- **Off sides** Five yards and automatic first down
- **Interference** 10 yards and automatic first down
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down
- **Illegal FLAG pull** (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down
- **Illegal rushing** (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) 10 yards and automatic first down

#### **Offense:**

- **Illegal motion** (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) five yards
- **Illegal forward pass** (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage) five yards and loss of down
- **Illegal contact** (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and loss of down
- **Offensive pass interference** (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) 10 yards and loss of down
- **Flag guarding** 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down.
- **Delay of Game** – five yards
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.



- Only the team coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarifications and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.

Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

**ATTIRE**

- Cleats are allowed except for metal spikes.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.
- Shoe and mouth guard inspections will be made before each game.
- Official Flag Football jerseys must be worn during play and the jerseys must be tucked into pants/shorts as to not cover the players' belts and flags.

## PHONE LISTINGS

Contact the Recreation Program Supervisor if the Youth Flag Football Coordinator is not available.

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police	911
Fire	911
Ambulance	911

### NON-EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police	218-299-5111
Fire	218-299-5354
Moorhead Parks and Recreation Office	218-299-5340
<b>Weather Hotline</b>	<b>218-236-0627</b>
Jordan Clementson, Recreation Program Supervisor (Cell Phone)	701-318-3551
(Office Phone)	218-299-5078

## Youth Flag Football WEEKLY PRACTICE FORMAT

Practice sessions: your relationship with the team as coach/manager and your personal example sets the tone for the entire season. Weekly lesson plans are suggested for practice sessions. Additional resources are available from the Parks and Recreation Office. Teams should not hold more than one practice session per week. Each practice session should include four elements:

### Warm-up (Mental and Physical) 5 minutes

- Do exercise to warm-up.
- Share leadership by having each child pick an exercise or take a week to lead.
- Warm-up attitudes by reminding everyone of a couple of house rules.
- Suggest positive thoughts during exercise like “jog one lap and think about the best thing that happened today”.

### Skill Focus-3 skills at 10 min/skill (35 min)

- Introduce a new skill every practice.
- Reinforce skills previously covered.
- Use the field to have more than one thing going on at a time – to involve more children and allow for more personal attention.
- Ask children to set their own goals related to a skill or exercise and evaluate them.
- Ask the children what skills they need to work on based on the last game, thus developing self-evaluation and direction.

### Play/Scrimmage- Last 20 minutes

- Play simplifications of the game/activity.
- Play for specific period, not score.
- Play focusing on one or two rules at a time.
- Play focusing on one or two skills at a time.
- Foster teamwork in playtime.
- Make play exciting and increase chance of “success” by structure of the game/activity.

### Fair Play Discussion-Incorporate this throughout the entire practice

- Coach asks questions.
- Divide team into pairs or threes for more discussion at the same time
- Share feeling, ideas with not “right or wrong” answers
- Use trigger stories to introduce situations real to the game
- Share leadership with the children

## **PRACTICE #1 RULES/POSITIONS**

### **Warm-Up** (5 minutes)

Have your team jog or run around the field two times. Pick a player or two to help lead calisthenics. For example: jumping jacks, arm circles, high knees/butt kicks, arm and leg stretch.

### **Skill Focus**

#### A. Positions (5 minutes)

Who can name an offensive position? Defensive position?

What is special about the QB, RB, WR, and Center?

#### 1. QB/Center Exchange (see page 31) (5 minutes)

- Quick demonstration by coaches
- Split team into pairs and practice exchange
- Switch positions periodically so they get to try both
- Focus on Center holding ball for QB and QB taking ball from Center
- Make sure QB says “hike”-focus on not handing off until then

#### 2. QB/RB Exchange (see page 33) (5 minutes)

- Quick demonstration by coaches
- Split team into pairs and practice exchange
- Switch positions periodically
- Focus on QB placing ball into the “pocket”
- Focus on RB having arms in “pocket” position
  - Try handoffs to the right and the left

#### 3. Putting it all Together (10 minutes)

- Now run through the full Center/QB exchange, QB/RB
- Split into groups of 3 and have kids take turns at each position
- Reinforce the skills just taught

#### B. Rules (see pages 12-14) (5 minutes)

- Have Fun, No contact!
- Focus on flag pulling only! No tackling, clothes grabbing, etc.
- Discuss Penalties and demonstrate a few

### **Controlled Scrimmage** (20 minutes)

- Focus on ready stance (see page 31)
- Focus on Line of scrimmage (No rushing k-1 and 7 yard rule for 2-3 grade)
- Focus on where each position lines up
- Run a few sample plays to the right and left
- Reinforce skills and roles
- Switch offense and defense half way through and rotate positions every 2 plays

### **Team Huddle**

Pass out jerseys and picture forms

## **PRACTICE #2**

### **Carrying Ball/Passing/Catching**

#### **Warm-up** (5 minutes)

Have your team jog or run around the field two times. Pick a player or two to help lead calisthenics. For example: jumping jacks, arm circles, high knees/butt kicks, arm and leg stretch.

#### **Skill Focus** (5 minutes)

- Recap the previous practice. Discuss and ask the kids questions about the skills learned. (QB/Center exchange and QB/RB exchange)

#### **Carrying the Ball** (10 minutes)

- Teach the proper carrying technique (see page 31)
- Have kids practice it by setting up cones to zig-zag through or sweep right or left
- Split into groups of 3 and have them practice all skills up to this point
- Have kids run routes focusing on carrying the ball properly
- Have stations to go through or change route every 2 reps each
- Add in defenseman to practice grabbing flags

#### **Passing** (5 minutes)

- Introduce the proper throwing technique (see page 32)
- Focus on grip, stance, step
- Quick coaches demonstration
- Partner up or form a line (depending upon ball availability)
  - Have kids throw to coach or each other

#### **Catching** (5 minutes)

- Introduce catching technique (see page 32)
- Quick coaches demonstration
- Focus on keeping your eyes on the ball and arms out
- Partner up or form a line to practice (depending upon ball availability)

#### **Controlled Scrimmage** (25 minutes)

- Split into offense and defense (example 8 kids=4 vs 4)
- Line up and discuss strategies for both sides of the ball (2 run plays and 1 pass)
- Incorporate the “ready stance” into scrimmage
- Incorporate the use of first downs
- Change possession after 4 attempts or a TD
- \*\*2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade practice the 7 yard rushing rule\*\*

#### **Recap** (5 minutes)

- Talk about what they learned in practice
- Maybe do a question and answer for what they learned

## PRACTICE #3 Defense

### Warm up (5 minutes)

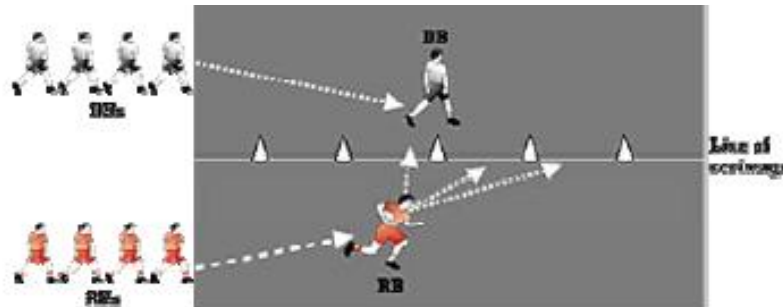
Have your team jog or run around the field two times. Partner up and pass back and forth.

### Skill Focus (5 minutes)

- Learning about defensive back position and responsibilities
- Who does a Defensive Back cover? Where do they line up?
- Purpose of backpedaling
- Backpedal to sprint transition

### Develop defensive back skills (10 minutes)

- Set out a 10 x 20-yard area. Place the cones five yards apart. One football is needed. The entire team can participate in this drill which, can be duplicated for more players if space permits.
- 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 1vs1 flag capture. Progress to 2 defensive players.
- Focus on RB keeping head up and the football firmly tucked away.
- DB must keep shoulders square and pull flag only



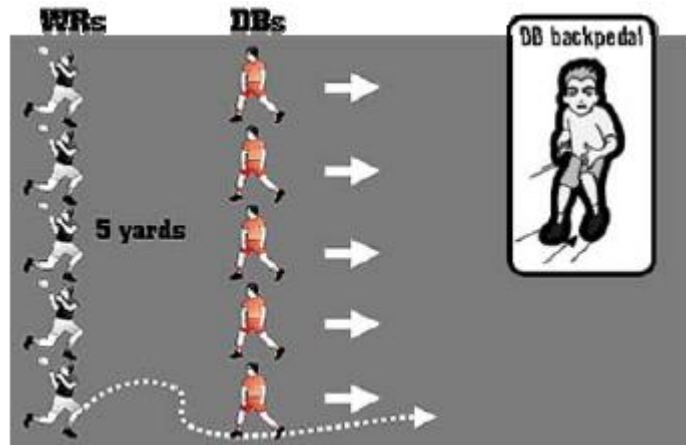
### Flag Pulling Game – Sharks vs. Minnows (10 Minutes)

- Set up a 20 x 20- yard area.
- Designate 2 “sharks” and the rest of the kids will be “minnows”
- The sharks are playing defense and the minnows offense.
- Sharks have to chase the minnows around the playing field and they are trying to pull the minnow’s flags to get them out.
- The last two minnows then turn into the sharks for the next go around.
- Kids must stay within the boundaries or they are out.
- Focus on proper flag pulling

### PRACTICE #3 (CONTINUED)

#### Defensive Back Drill (10 Minutes)

- Set out a 20 x 20-yard area.
- Pair up kids - one group is WRs, the other DBs.
- Each DB will backpedal and "mirror" the WR. DB's work on transition to forward sprint when WR runs past them. 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.



#### **Scrimmage (20 minutes)**

- Focus on reinforcing the defensive back skills learned in practice.
- Backpedaling, transition to forward sprint, proper flag pulling, positioning on the line, etc.

## **PRACTICE #4**

### **Offensive and Defensive Line**

#### **Warm-up** (5 minutes)

Have your team jog or run around the field two times. Partner up and pass back and forth.

#### **Skill Focus** (5 minutes)

##### A. Offensive Line

- Ready Stance, line of scrimmage
- Proper blocking technique (hands up and not out), protecting QB
- Creating holes for RB

##### B. Defensive Line

- Proper Ready Stance, line of scrimmage
- Proper arm positioning (arms up, pass block)
- Wait for hand off to attack

#### **Shuffle** (5 minutes)

Find a large area and have everyone space out between each other. They will be facing the coach. The coach will have a ball. The coach will then point the ball in the direction that the players need to shuffle. Coach will alternate sides after varying time lengths. Players need to focus on keeping heads up looking at coach and keeping their arms up and not out.

**Progression:** The coach can add in a pump fake to simulate a throw. On the pump fake the players need to jump straight up with their arms high to simulate trying to block a pass.

#### **Creating a Hole/Defending the Run** (15 minutes)

Split into two groups of seven. In each group have three offensive linemen, one running back, and three defensive linemen. Coach instructs offense on which side the run will go to. If it's to the left have offensive line shift their bodies to the right. Focus on keeping hands up and not out. If run is to the right the OL will shift bodies to the left.

Progress into running up the middle between right OL and C and left OL and C. If the run is going to left, the left OL will shift body to left and the C will shift right. If the run is going to the right the right OL will shift right and the C will shift left.

The defensive linemen should try to read the body language of the offense to see which direction the run is going to. The DL needs to try to get good body position on the OL to break up the play. DL needs to focus on not crossing the line of scrimmage until ball is handed off to RB, or in this case not cross until the coach's whistle.

#### **Scrimmage** (25 minutes)



## **PRACTICE #5-8**

The first four practice plans have been designed to cover the basic fundamentals that each player needs. From this point on we are going to give a list of different drills that will help build on the skills previously learned. Using the same format we want each team to focus on what they need to improve on as a team and individually. Remember to reinforce skills learned at practice throughout the scrimmage. Please find list of drills starting on page 27.

### **Warm-Up (5 minutes)**

### **Skill Focus (35 minutes)**

### **Scrimmage (20 Minutes)**

## **PRACTICE #5-8**

The first four practice plans have been designed to cover the basic fundamentals that each player needs. From this point on we are going to give a list of different drills that will help build on the skills previously learned. Using the same format we want each team to focus on what they need to improve on as a team and individually. Remember to reinforce skills learned at practice throughout the scrimmage. Please find list of drills starting on page 27.

### **Warm-Up (5 minutes)**

### **Skill Focus (35 minutes)**

### **Scrimmage (20 Minutes)**

## **PRACTICE #5-8**

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### **Warm-Up (5 minutes)**

### **Skill Focus (35 minutes)**

### **Scrimmage (20 Minutes)**

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### **Warm-Up (5 minutes)**

### **Skill Focus (35 minutes)**

### **Scrimmage (20 Minutes)**

## **PRACTICE #5-8**

The first four practice plans have been designed to cover the basic fundamentals that each player needs. From this point on we are going to give a list of different drills that will help build on the skills previously learned. Using the same format we want each team to focus on what they need to improve on as a team and individually. Remember to reinforce skills learned at practice throughout the scrimmage. Please find list of drills starting on page 27.

### **Warm-Up (5 minutes)**

### **Skill Focus (35 minutes)**

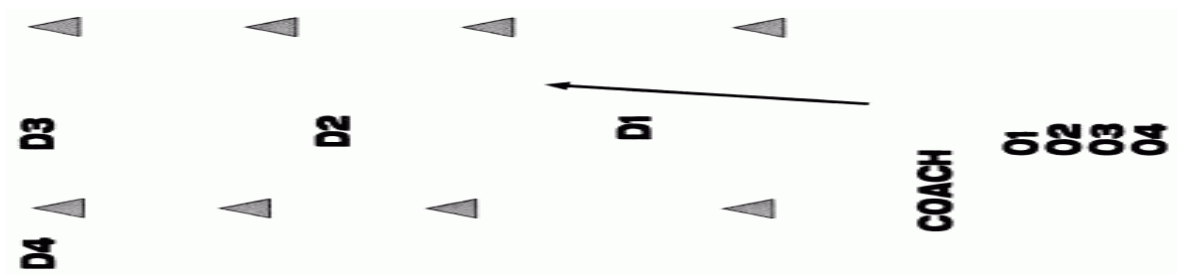
### **Scrimmage (20 Minutes)**

## Drills

**Back pedal:** From a good position, knees bent at a 45 degree angle, head up, back straight, arms hanging loose in front of the body, weight on the balls of the feet, push off the front foot and begin backpedaling for ten yards. Keep chest over the feet, feet close to the ground, and pump arms.

**Distraction Drill:** Create a 5 by 5 yard box with cones. One player is the defender and the other is the receiver. The defender can distract the receiver in any way they can. The receiver must stay square, but try to move to insure the reception. Stay focused on the quarterback.

**The Gauntlet:** The coach hands off to the offensive player. The offensive player tries to make it through the gauntlet by running as much vertically as possible. Focus on running hard and not looking down or hesitating when flags are pulled on. Defenders should work on getting the proper angle on the runner and getting in front of them. O1 moves to D4 after running. D1 goes to O4, D4 moves into Gauntlet and other D players move up a position in Gauntlet



**Jingle Jangle:** Place cones to create a 15 x 15 square. Line up all your players and one cone. Players sprint to first cone, side step shuffle to the second cone (make sure players don't cross their feet), backpedal to the third cone and sprint back to the starting cone. Modify drill: Throw a football to each player as they cross the finish line.

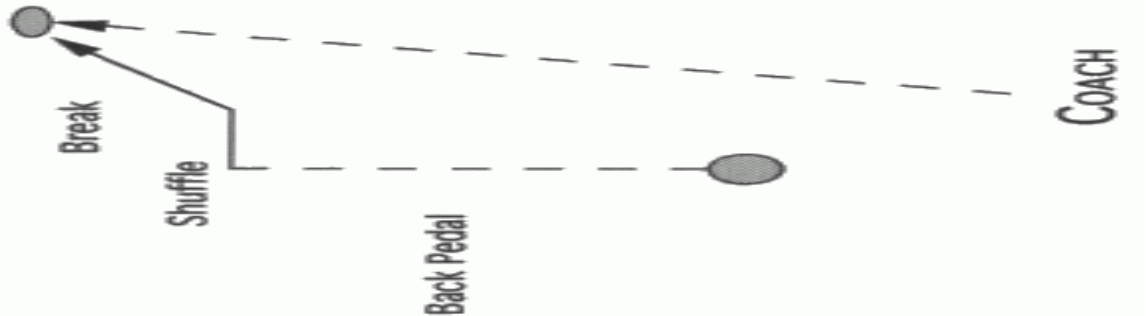
### **NFL Ultimate:**

Use as much of your field area as possible. If you have too many players then divide your players in to three teams and rotate teams with the winning team staying on. The concept is simple. The team with the ball must pass the ball to teammates without dropping it while moving towards the end zone. The player with the football has 8 seconds to pass or pitch the ball to a teammate. The ball can be passed forward or pitched sideways or backwards only. The player with the ball can take only two steps after catching it. The offensive players without the ball can move anywhere on the field to get open. 6 Points are awarded for a touchdown and after the touchdown the ball to the defensive team or the team rotating in. The ball starts on the 5 yard line. If the ball is dropped or intercepted, play continues with the team in possession at the point of the turnover. The defenders must stay at arm's length from the player with the ball.

## Drills Continued

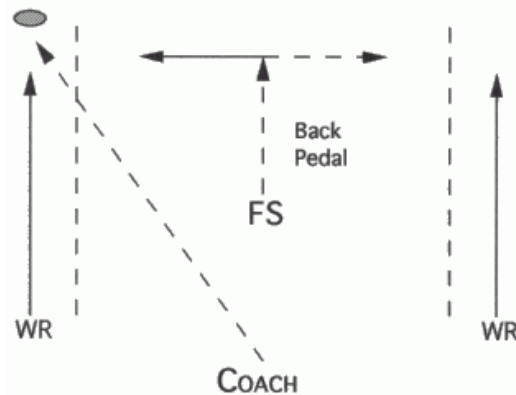
**Pass Coverage 1 on 1:** From the back pedal go into a shuffle for two to three steps to get the knees turned in order to be able to run with the receiver.

Turn both feet at a 45 degree angle to the inside and go into a shuffle or slide step. Defensive back breaks on the ball on the release from the quarterback or coach.

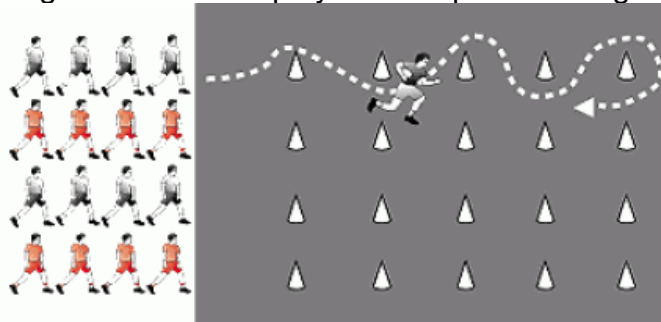


**Read and React:** Form two lines for receivers and have them run a vertical route. The free safety back pedals and then breaks to the route being thrown to.

Continue to widen receivers as the defensive back gains ball reaction and confidence.



**Running Back Cut (relay race):** Set up cones a line of 6 to 8 cones 8 yards apart. Set up multiple lines of cones depending on the number of players you have. This is run as a relay race to keep it moving fast. The first player in each line will run around each cone and then come back around each cone to the beginning of his or her line. They will then hand off the ball to the next player in line and return to the back of the line. Key points - make sure running backs switch the football to the arm nearest the sideline. Players should cut on the outside foot and make sure they don't cross legs when changing direction. Progression - Have players backpedal through cones.

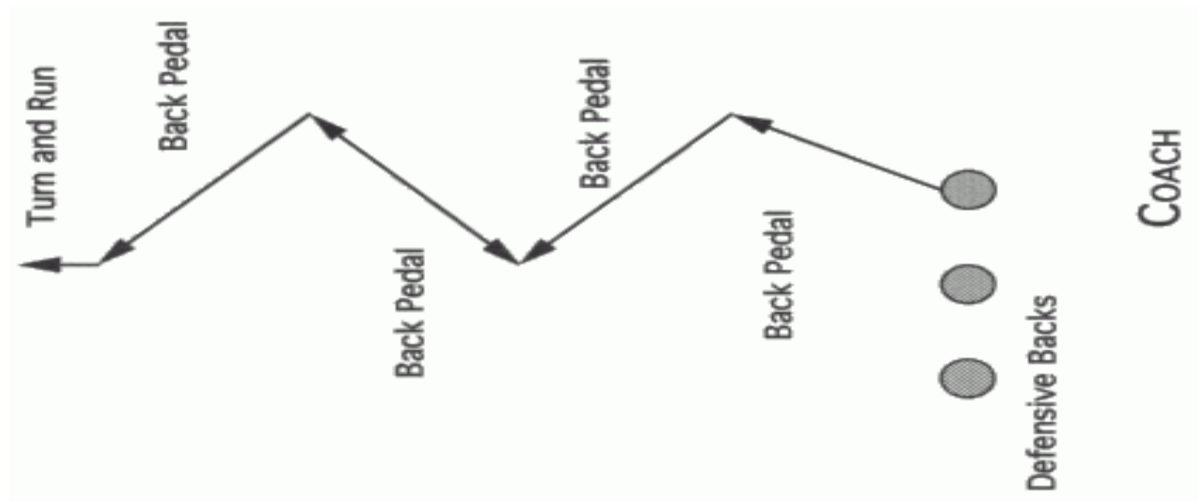


## Drills Continued

**Sharks and Minnows:** Set up an area 20 yards wide and 30 yards long (the zone). One player is the shark and their job is to pull everyone's flag before they can make it from one end of the zone to the other. The other players (minnows) all line up at one end and on the coaches command try to make it from one end of the zone to the other without getting their flag pulled. Once their flag is pulled they are out until the next round.

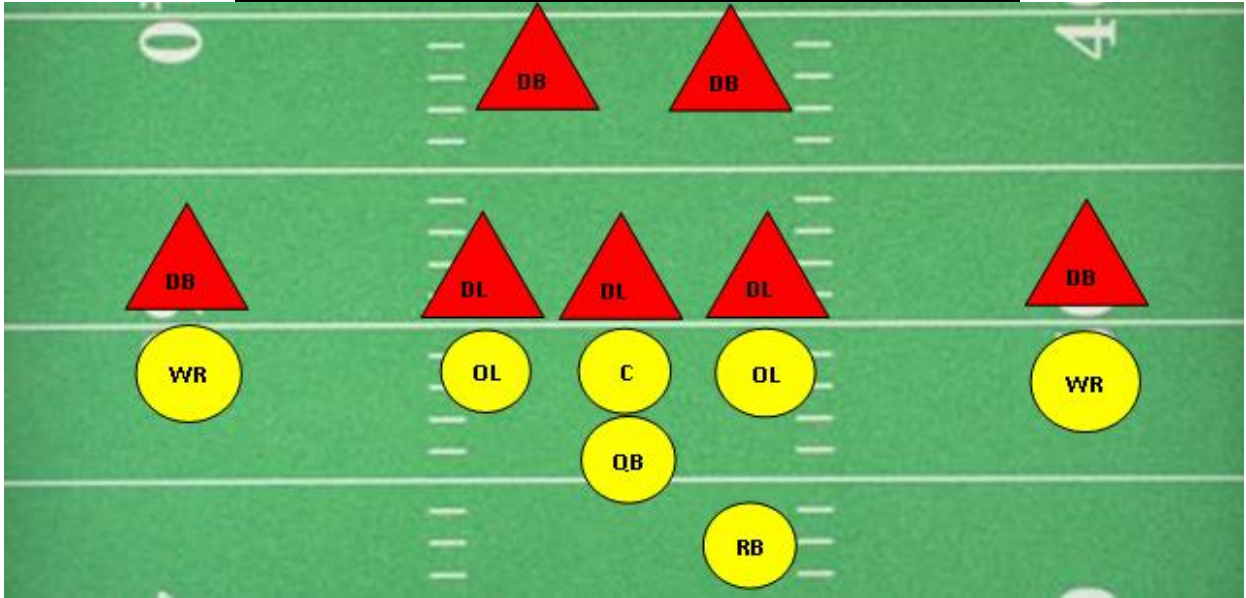
**Swarm:** Set up your players in two or three rows (depending on how many players you have all facing in the direction of the coach. There should be 5 to 8 feet between each player. The coach holds a football, when he points the football left the players move left, points right they move right. Puts his arm back to pass they move back. When he yells swarm they all swarm the coach and everyone must touch him or her with one hand.

**Weave:** On the coaches command with football in hand and ready to throw, will signal by pointing the ball in the direction that he wants the defender to plant and change directions. On command the coach will signal the defender to turn and run. Finish the drill by turning and running a hard ten yards. The defender must keep his eyes on the coach.





## Flag Football Positions and Responsibilities



### **Offense (circles)**

- Quarterback (QB)
  - Offensive leader. Plays start when they call hike. They accept ball from center and then hand off to RB or pass to WR.
- Running Back (RB)
  - Run in lanes created by offensive line, also act as decoys for passing plays.
- Wide Receiver (WR)
  - To run routes for options for the QB to throw to, act as decoys on running plays to deceive the defense, and to block for running backs.
- Offensive Line (OL)
  - The offensive line is responsible for protecting the quarterback and creating running lanes for the running back.
- Center (C)
  - Same responsibilities as the offensive line. In addition they are responsible for hiking the ball to the quarterback.

### **Defense (triangles)**

- Defensive Line (DL)
  - The defensive line is responsible for preventing the running back from advancing as well as using arms to block passes from the quarterback.
- Defensive Back (DB)
  - To cover the wide receivers trying to block/tip/intercept passes. They also are the second line of defense if the running back makes it past the defensive line. In the 2-3 grade level if a defensive back is 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage they can rush the quarterback off of the snap. Maximum of two defensive backs are eligible to rush on each play.

## Technique Pictures

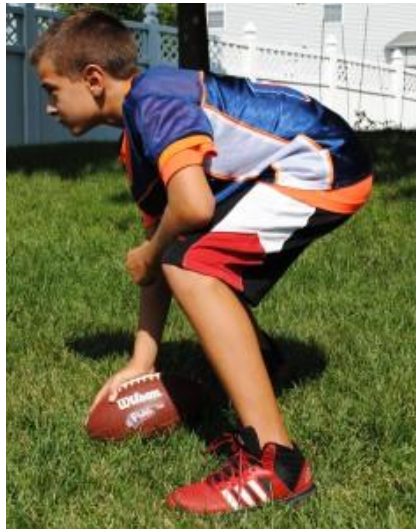
Ready Stance



Wide Receiver Ready Stance



Center Starting Position for snap



Performing the Snap



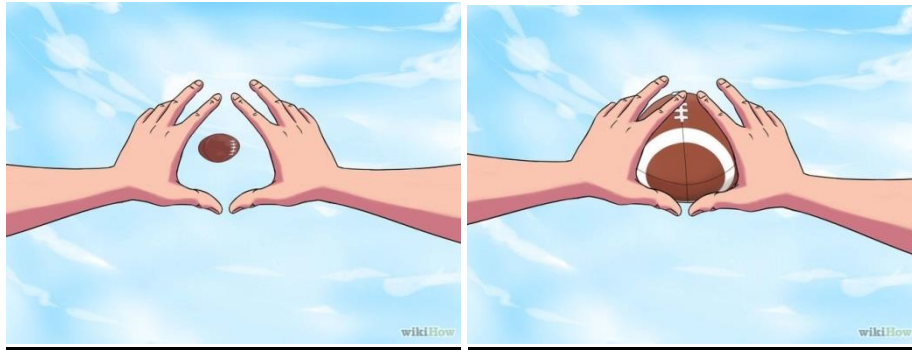
How QB Receives Snap



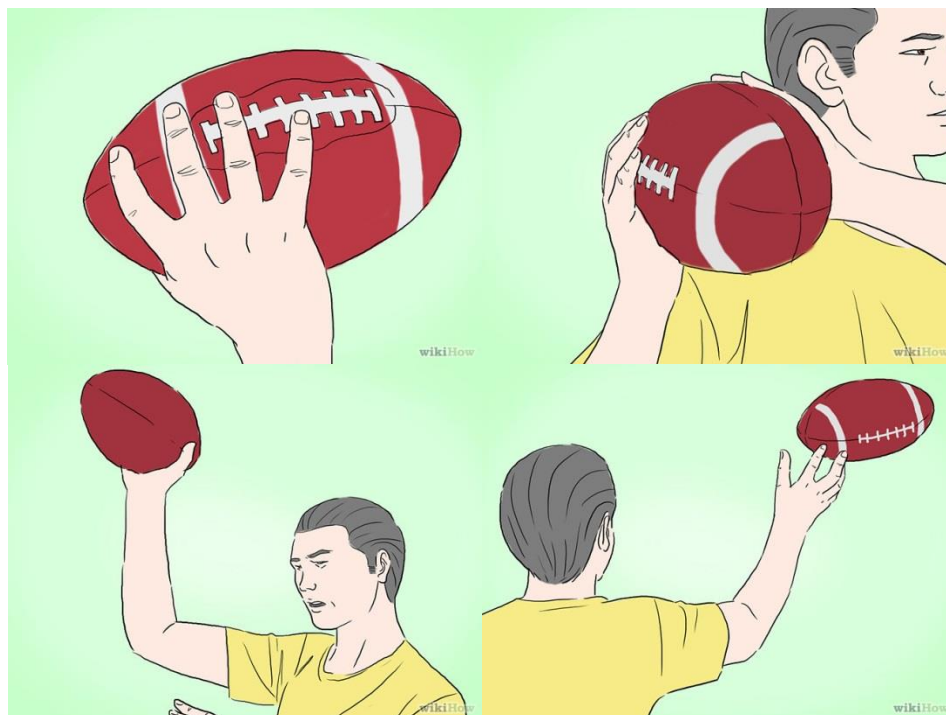
Proper Carrying Technique



## Catching/Receiving



## Passing





## QB/RB Exchange



## References

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<http://usafootball.com/blogs/fundamentals-and-performance/post/8794/don%E2%80%99t-forget-about-the-running-game-when-building-a-flag-football-offense>

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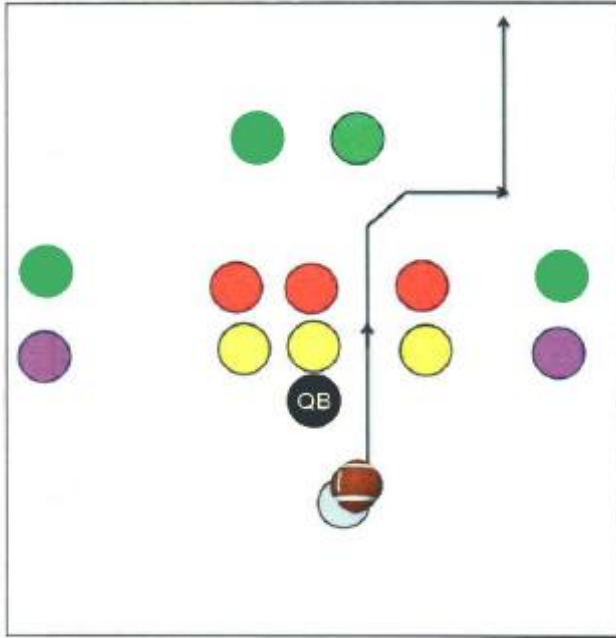
<http://www.wikihow.com/Throw-a-Football>

[http://goodshepherdfootball.org/coach\\_durhams\\_youth\\_football\\_tips\\_hand\\_offs.html](http://goodshepherdfootball.org/coach_durhams_youth_football_tips_hand_offs.html)

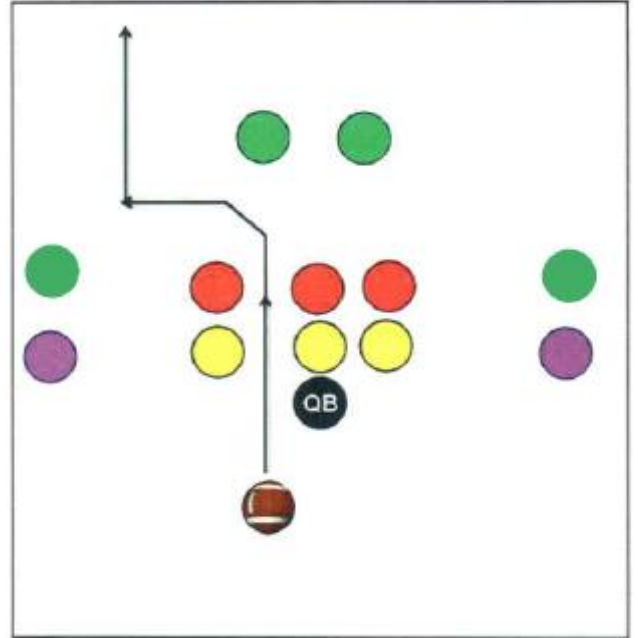
<http://kearneyymca.org/docs/coachescorner/FootballDRILLS.pdf>

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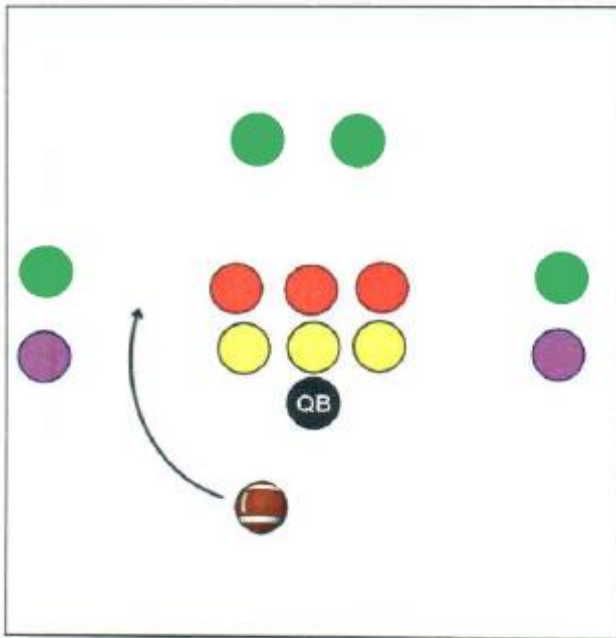
Sample Running Plays



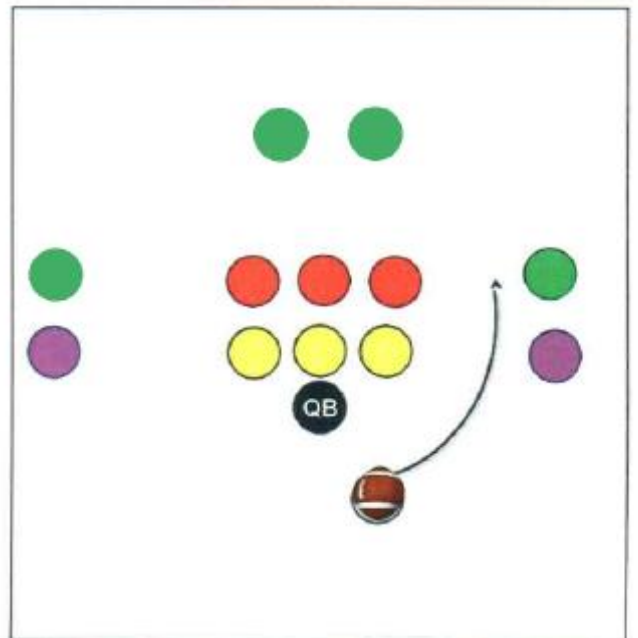
**Dive Right**



**Dive Left**

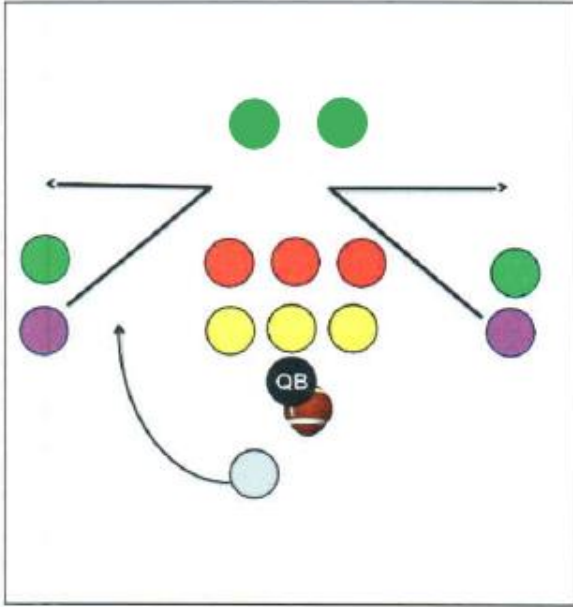


**Sweep Left**

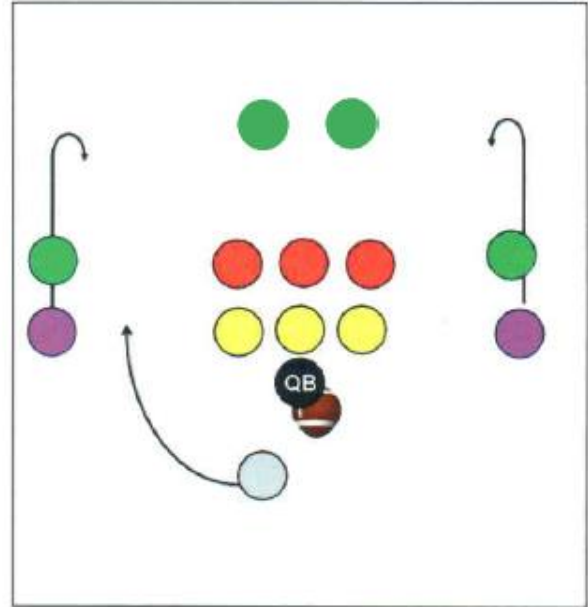


**Sweep Right**

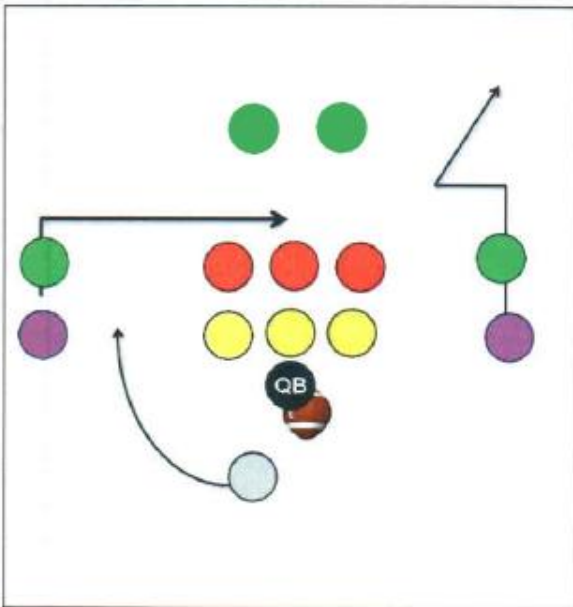
# Sample Passing Plays



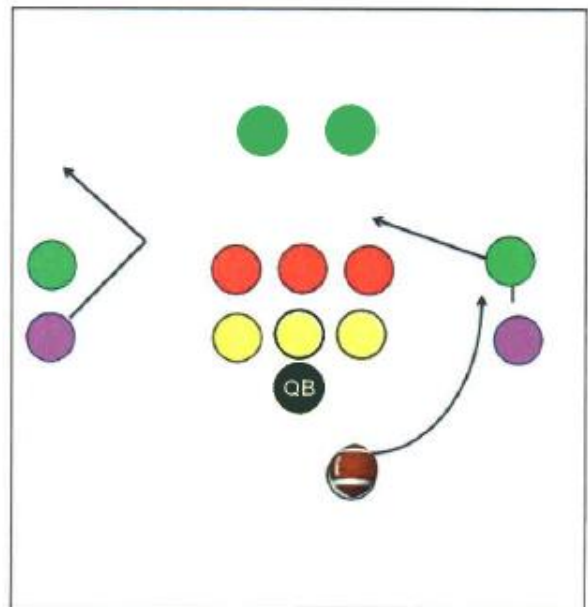
**Outside Cut**



**Curls**



**Pass Right**



**Slants Left**

## PARTICIPATION REPORT FORM

NAME	Game #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								
2.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								
3.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								
4.	OFFENSE								
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	DEFENSE								
12.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								
13.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								
14.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								
15.	OFFENSE								
	DEFENSE								

### Position Abbreviations

**QB**            **RB**            **WR**            **C**            **OL**            **DB**            **DL**

**Coaches:** Please write in the position each player plays on offense and defense for each game. This will hopefully help you keep track and to make sure that everyone gets an equal shot at each position throughout the season. It is recommended for each game to have the kids split into two groups of 7. During the first half group A will play offense and group B will play defense. After the half group A should play defense and group B should play offense.

If you don't have 14 players it will be a little more challenging, but do the best you can to get everyone equal time each game.