FOOTBALL-DEFENSE.COM

4-3 DEFENSE PLAYBOOK
4-3 DEFENSE PLAYBOOK

Table of Contents

3. Basics: Alignment, Number Receivers, Huddle
5. Identifying Offensive Formations and Backfields
7. Alignment: 4-3 Over
10. Alignment: 4-3 Under
13. Defensive Line Play
   15. Defensive Line Stunts
17. Linebacker Basics
23. Coverage Packages
   24. Quarters
   34. Dime
41. Zone Blitz Package
60. Man Coverages
62. Glossary of Terms
ALIGNMENT TECHNIQUES

Techniques: We will use these terms to describe where a defensive player should be aligned in relation to the Offensive Linemen and Tight Ends.

*All even numbers:* Head-up alignment
*All Odd numbers:* Outside shade *most of our alignments*
*All even numbers with ’i’ attached:* Inside shade

NUMBERING RECEIVERS

*Receivers are numbered from outside in.*

#1 - Eligible receiver closest to the sidelines.
#2 - Next eligible receiver inside of #1.
#3 - Next eligible receiver inside of #2 (usually aligned in the backfield, except in Trips and Empty sets).

Eligible Receivers:
The outside man on the Line of Scrimmage is eligible. Any player inside of him, aligned on the LOS is not eligible and considered “covered up.” All players aligned off the LOS are eligible to receive a pass on that play. No more than 5 players (not including the QB) can be eligible receivers on a play.
When we huddle, the Tackles set the Huddle at 3 yds from the spot of the ball by yelling "HUDDLE HUDDLE HUDDLE!"
Mike Linebacker receives the signal from the coach and makes the play call, "TIGHT OVER QUARTERS, TIGHT OVER QUARTERS, READY!"
All other players answer, "SWARM!" and clap as they break the huddle and run to their alignments.

We will often use a "Hanging Huddle" when the offense does not allow us to huddle up. All players will need to be able to read the signals from the sidelines. Stand near other players - Mike and the DL should be together, Sam and Will with their buddy Safeties and the Left or Right corners. This allows players to confirm or check when they are unsure of the signal call.
We will use the Hanging Huddle any time a team does not huddle, as well as by game plan.
## Offensive Formations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro Left</th>
<th>Pro Left Twins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Twins Left Open</th>
<th>Tights Slot Left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slot Left Open</th>
<th>Double Wings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trips Left Closed</th>
<th>Trey Left Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image8.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doubles</th>
<th>Doubles Tight Left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image9.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image10.png" alt="Formation Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Offensive Backfields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Split Backs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Far</th>
<th>Near</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Queen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stack</th>
<th>Power I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ace</th>
<th>Pistol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
<td>◯ ◯ ◯ ◯</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 7
4-3 Over Alignments

Tight Over vs. Pro Left

\[ \text{Diagram of Tight Over vs. Pro Left} \]

Tight Over vs. Twins Left Open

\[ \text{Diagram of Tight Over vs. Twins Left Open} \]

Tight Over vs. Tight Twins Left

\[ \text{Diagram of Tight Over vs. Tight Twins Left} \]

Split Over vs. Pro Left

\[ \text{Diagram of Split Over vs. Pro Left} \]

Split Over vs. Twins Left Open

\[ \text{Diagram of Split Over vs. Twins Left Open} \]
### Twins Left Open

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Twins Right Closed

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tights Twins Left

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Twins Right Closed

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wing Left Open

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Slot Twins Right Closed

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Doubles

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Trips Left Open

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4-3 Under Alignments

**Tight Under vs. Pro Left**

Sam makes PULL call if aligned to TE

**Tight Under vs. Twins Left Open**

Sam makes PULL call if ALERT coverage

**Tight Under vs. Tight Twins Left**

**Split Under vs. Pro Left**

**Split Under vs. Twins Left Open**

Will makes PULL call if ALERT coverage
SPLIT UNDER vs. Formations

Pro Left

Twins Left Open

Tights Twins Left

Twins Right Closed

Wing Left Open

Slot Twins Right Closed

Doubles

Trips Left Open
DEFENSIVE LINE PLAY
**Defensive Line Base Play**

**Over Front**

Alignment: *Credit Card Alignment*, outside shade  
Get Off: Step with your hips and attack outside shoulder of Offensive Lineman  
Escape: *Post-Rip-Run* on 3rd step  
Bend: Identify backfield flow, and work down the line of scrimmage immediately. Spill any blockers that attack to you.  
Chase: Run down the line of scrimmage to runs away from you, expecting the *Box player* to force the play back to you.

**Under**

Alignment: *Credit Card Alignment*, outside shade  
Get Off: Step with your hips and attack outside shoulder of Offensive Lineman  
Escape: *Post-Rip-Run* on 3rd step  
Bend: Identify backfield flow, and work down the line of scrimmage immediately. Spill any blockers that attack to you.  
Chase: Run down the line of scrimmage to runs away from you, expecting the *Box player* to force the play back to you.
Defensive Line Stunts

**EAT**: End and Tackle cross

End goes first, cuts inside to B-Gap (as in *Echo*). Tackle second, takes lateral steps to cross behind End, squares shoulders back to line of scrimmage as End passes, attacks to LOS to spill C-Gap.

Can be run **Strong** or **Weak**.

**TEX**: Tackle and End cross

Tackle goes first, cuts outside to B-Gap. End comes second, takes lateral steps to cross behind Tackle, squares shoulders back to line of scrimmage as Tackle passes, attacks to LOS to spill A-Gap.

Can be run **Strong** or **Weak**.

**TATTOO**: Tackles cross and take A-Gaps

A-Gap Tackle goes first, cuts across Center’s face into opposite A-gap. B-Gap Tackle goes second, takes lateral steps to cross behind Tackle, squares shoulders back to line of scrimmage as first Tackle passes, attacks LOS to spill opposite A-Gap.
### Defensive Line Stunts (cont.)

| **TAKE:** | **Tackles in A-Gap**
|---|---
| | Both Tackles will stunt through A-Gap, B-Gap Tackle uses Cut steps.
| | A-Gap Tackle may loosen up to the middle of A-gap and shoot through.
| | Used to control both A-gaps. Mike must Spill B-Gap on Hard Flow.

| **TAKE:** | **Tackles in A-Gap**
|---|---
| | Both Tackles will stunt through A-Gap, B-Gap Tackle uses Cut steps.
| | A-Gap Tackle may loosen up to the middle of A-gap and shoot through.
| | Used to control both A-gaps. Mike must Spill B-Gap on Hard Flow.

| **EL:** | **End Loop outside and become box player.**
|---|---
| | Defensive End takes lateral step outside before working upfield.
| | Becomes Box player on run to his side. Attack everything with your inside arm on the outside of offensive players. Keep outside arm and leg free.

| **ECHO:** | **End Cuts inside to B or C gap (depending on original alignment)**
|---|---
| | End makes cut inside to spill B-gap. Will is responsible for spill C-gap, Mike scrapes over top of End on Flood read.
| | Call made to Strong or Weak side

Defensive Line Stunts (cont.)
LINEBACKER
PLAY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FLOW AND FLOOD READS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **HARD FLOW:** Both backs running downhill, inside of tackles to the strong side. Showing their jersey numbers, there is a possibility of cutback.  
*Footwork:* Shuffle |
| ![Diagram](image1) |
| **FAST FLOW:** Both backs crossover-run to the strong side, outside. Jersey numbers are not showing, no threat of a cutback.  
*Footwork:* Lateral-Run |
| ![Diagram](image2) |
| **SPLIT FLOW:** Fullback goes to the weak side and tailback attacking to strong side. Most common in counter plays, accompanied by linemen pulling in the direction of the play.  
*Footwork:* Counter Step-Shuffle |
| ![Diagram](image3) |
| **HARD FLOOD:** Both backs running downhill, inside of tackles to the weak side. Showing their jersey numbers, there is a possibility of cutback.  
*Footwork:* Shuffle |
| ![Diagram](image4) |
| **FAST FLOOD:** Both backs crossover-run to the weak side, outside. Jersey numbers are not showing, no threat of a cutback.  
*Footwork:* Lateral-Run |
| ![Diagram](image5) |
| **SPLIT FLOOD:** Fullback goes to the strong side and tailback attacking to weak side. Most common in counter plays, accompanied by linemen pulling in the direction of the play.  
*Footwork:* Counter Step-Shuffle |
| ![Diagram](image6) |
Linebacker Gap Responsibilities

**Tight Over vs. Flow Read**

C-Gap Spill

A-Gap Spill

B-Gap Cutback

**Tight Over vs. Flood Read**

A-Gap Cutback

B-Gap Spill

D-Gap Spill
Linebacker Gap Responsibilities

**Split Over vs. Flow Read**

- B-Gap Cutback
- A-Gap Spill
- D-Gap Spill

**Split Over vs. Flood Read**

- D-Gap Spill
- B-Gap Spill
- A-Gap Cutback
Linebacker Gap Responsibilities

Tight Under vs. Flow Read

Tight Under vs. Flood Read
Linebacker Gap Responsibilities

**Split Under vs. Flow Read**

- D-Gap Cutback
- A-Gap Cutback
- B-Gap Spill

**Split Under vs. Flood Read**

- D-Gap Spill
- A-Gap Spill
- B-Gap Cutback
COVERAGES
Quarters refers to the deep coverage zones being divided into four quarters. We will use a variety of coverage checks, called by the safeties on the field, to cover these four quarters and the three underneath zones in the most effective ways.

Making Decisions: Safeties will make checks based on general rules and game plan. General rules can be overruled by a game plan decision. While some checks are better than others depending on situation, all checks are a form of Quarters and are effective against any offense! Safeties should not be concerned about making the wrong check, but work to learn and understand how to make the right call.

Communicate: Calls affect the safety, corner, and outside backer to that side. It is very likely that the other side of the field is using a different check. We do this to put ourselves in the best situation and create confusion for the offense. The corner and OLB will repeat the call back to the Safety after he makes it.

Weakness: The weakness of the Quarters coverage is normally the flats. We are willing to give up short throws to the flats, swarm to the football and make good tackles. We will maintain a 5 yard "No Cover Zone" in Quarters.

"No Cover Zone": Do not chase receivers closer than 5 yards to the Line of Scrimmage. Stay back in your zone but be ready to break if the ball is thrown to a receiver behind the 5 yard "No Cover Zone."
'READ': Used with only one or no receivers removed to your side. Strong coverage vs. the run.

'ALERT': Used with two or more removed receivers to your side. Strong pass coverage, Safety must stay deeper than the deepest receiver.

'FLAT': Is a version of Alert used when the inside receiver is less than 7 yards from the EMOLS, threatening to run an immediate Flat route. Safety must stay deeper than the deepest receiver.

'CLOUD': Is used only when there is a Tight End and one receiver removed to the boundary side of the field. Only coverage in which Corner has primary run support as the Box player. Safety must stay deeper than the deepest receiver.

'CLUE': Is a version of Man-coverage based on the release of the #2 receiver. The Safety and Corner are responsible for two removed receivers on their own with no help from the Outside Backers. Used if the offense is only splitting receivers out to get linebackers out of the box for run game. Linebackers stay in the box and ignore removed receivers.

'SWAP': Used when there are no receivers removed and only a Tight End. Usually away from Twins or Trips. Strong Safety and Corner swap responsibility and play same coverage rules as 'CLOUD.' Helps get Safety more involved in run game.

'SURVIVOR': Used vs. Trips. Trips side safety must make "SURVIVOR" call to opposite safety. Backside Corner is on an island against the single receiver.
SAFETY

Alignment: 8-10 yards, outside shade of End Man on Line of Scrimmage or Inside Shade of removed #2 Receiver

Technique: Bounce and read End Man on Line of Scrimmage (Tackle or TE)

RUN: Attack to LOS, Box player, attack to outside shoulder of ball carrier and force back inside to help.

PASS: Read #2 Receiver.
#2 Receiver goes Out: Underneath of #1 Receiver
#2 Receiver goes In: Play your quarter, look to #1 receiver expecting Post route
#2 Receiver goes Vertical: Inside of #2 Receiver, man coverage on #2

CORNER

Alignment: 6-8 yards, outside shade of #1 Receiver

Technique: Open 3-Step Slide, read QB through 3-step drop, eyes to #1 receiver, stay over top of #1 receiver.

RUN: Secondary contain, primary pass player, be sure of run before leaving #1. Fight through blocks and take everything on with inside shoulder. Nothing can get outside of you!

PASS: Read #1 Receiver.
#1 Receiver goes Out: Stay over top of #1 Receiver
#1 Receiver goes In: Stay over top of #1 Receiver
#1 Receiver goes In shallow: Play your quarter, eyes to #2 receiver
#1 Receiver goes Vertical: Stay over top of #1 Receiver

OUTSIDE BACKERS

Alignment: Depends on called Front

Technique: Read tailback. Step to backfield action first, play run first.

RUN: Spill on run to, cutback on run away.

PASS: Open hips and drop with eyes on #2 receiver. Must get outside of #2 receiver on drop.
#2 Receiver goes Out: Run with #2 to flats, if he turns upfield (Wheel), run with in trail technique.
#2 Receiver goes in: Check for #3 receiver out of backfield or #1 receiver coming in.
#2 Receiver goes vertical: Carry to 10 yards, looking for #3 receiver out of backfield or #1 receiver coming in.
QUARTERS 'ALERT'

**SAFETY**

*Alignment:* 12-14 yards, inside shade of #2 receiver.

* Technique:* Slow backpedal reading QB for run/pass read.

*RUN:* Be sure of run, you are a pass-first player. Attack to LOS, *alley player*, fit between OLB and End.

*PASS:* Eyes to #2 receiver.
  - **#2 Receiver goes Out:** Widen until #1 receiver crosses vertical line, stay over top of deepest receiver.
  - **#2 Receiver goes In:** Eyes to #1 receiver, stay over top of deepest receiver.
  - **#2 Receiver goes vertical:** Stay over top of #2 receiver.

**CORNER**

*Alignment:* 5-7 yards, outside shade of #1 Receiver

* Technique:* Open 3-Step Slide, read QB through 3-step drop, eyes to #1 receiver, stay over top of #1 receiver.

*RUN:* Secondary contain, primary pass player, be sure of run before leaving #1. Fight through blocks and take everything on with inside shoulder. *Nothing can get outside of you!*

*PASS:*
  - **#1 Receiver goes Out:** Open hips to receiver and settle to 10 yards, stay over top of #1.
  - **#1 Receiver goes In:** Stay over top of #1 Receiver until #2 receiver crosses your vertical line.
  - **#1 Receiver goes Vertical:** Stay over top of #1 Receiver.

**OUTSIDE BACKERS**

*Alignment:* 5 yds, split the difference between #2 receiver and EMOLS.

* Technique:* Read tailback. Step to backfield action first, play run first.

*RUN:* Box player on run to, normal cutback on run away.

*PASS:* Open hips and drop with eyes on #2 receiver. Wall any receiver attempting to come inside.
  - **#2 Receiver goes Out:** Widen with #2, expecting to wall #1 receiver coming in.
  - **#2 Receiver goes in:** Wall #2 to the hash, check for #3 coming out to flats.
  - **#2 Receiver goes vertical:** Carry to 10 yards, looking for #3 receiver out of backfield or #1 receiver coming in.
**QUARTERS 'FLAT'**

**SAFETY**

**Alignment:** 12-14 yards, inside shade of #2 receiver.

**Technique:** Slow backpedal reading QB for run/pass read.

**RUN:** Be sure of run, you are a pass-first player. Attack to LOS, _alley player_, fit between OLB and End.

**PASS:** Eyes to #2 receiver.

- #2 Receiver goes Out: Immediately over top of #1 receiver, Corner takes #2 receiver.
- #2 Receiver goes In: Eyes to #1 receiver, stay over top of deepest receiver.
- #2 Receiver goes vertical: Stay over top of #2 receiver.

**CORNER**

**Alignment:** 5-7 yards, outside shade of #1 Receiver

**Technique:** Open 3-Step Slide, read QB through 3-step drop, eyes to #2 receiver through #1.

**RUN:** Secondary contain, primary pass player, be sure of run before leaving #1. Fight through blocks and take everything on with inside shoulder. _Nothing can get outside of you!_

**PASS:** Same as ALERT! except:

- If #2 Receiver goes Out: Immediately over top of #1 receiver and take direct line to #2 receiver.

**OUTSIDE BACKERS**

**Alignment:** 5 yds, split the difference between #2 receiver and EMOLS.

**Technique:** Read tailback. Step to backfield action first, play run first.

**RUN:** _Box player_ on run to, normal cutback on run away.

**PASS:** Open hips and drop with eyes on #2 receiver. Wall any receiver attempting to come inside.

- #2 Receiver goes Out: Widen with #2, expecting to wall #1 receiver coming in.
- #2 Receiver goes in: Wall #2 to the hash, check for #3 coming out to flats.
- #2 Receiver goes vertical: Carry to 10 yards, looking for #3 receiver out of backfield or #1 receiver coming in.
**QUARTERS 'CLOUD'**

**SAFETY**

**Alignment:** 12-14 yards, outside shade of #2 receiver.

**Technique:** Slow backpedal reading QB for run/pass read.

**RUN:** Be sure of run, you are a pass-first player. Attack to LOS, alley player, fit between Corner and OLB.

**PASS:** Read #2 receiver to #1 receiver.

- **#2 Receiver goes Out:** Immediately over top of #1 receiver.
- **#2 Receiver goes In:** Eyes to #1 receiver, stay over top of deepest receiver.
- **#2 Receiver goes vertical:** Stay over top of #2 receiver, expand vision to #1. If #1 goes vertical, stay between #1 and #2 receivers.

---

**CORNER**

**Alignment:** Press, outside shade of #1 Receiver

**Technique:** Force #1 receiver inside with eyes on #2 receiver for Pass/Run read.

**RUN:** Box player, take everything on with inside shoulder and force ball inside or force to bounce outside.

**PASS:** Feel #1 with hands as eyes key #2. If #1 Receiver goes Out: Do not allow outside release. If #1 gets quick release to outside, man turn and run with him. If #1 Receiver goes In: Squeeze #1 inside and stay over top until #2 crosses vertical line. If #1 Receiver goes vertical: Squeeze #1 inside and carry to 10 yards or until #2 receiver crosses vertical line.

---

**OUTSIDE BACKERS**

**Alignment:** Depends on called front.

**Technique:** Read tailback. Step to backfield action first, play run first.

**RUN:** Spill player on run to, cutback on run away.

**PASS:** Open hips and drop with eyes on #2 receiver. Wall any receiver attempting to come inside. #2 Receiver goes Out: Widen with #2, expecting to wall #1 receiver coming in. #2 Receiver goes in: Wall #2 to the hash, check for #3 coming out to flats or get underneath #1. #2 Receiver goes vertical: Carry to 10 yards, looking for #3 receiver out of backfield or #1 receiver coming in.
SAFETY

**Alignment:** 8-10 yards, inside shade of #2 receiver.

**Technique:** Slow backpedal reading #2 receiver.

**RUN:** Be sure of run, you are a pass-first player. Attack to LOS, *alley player*, fit between OLB and End.

**PASS:** Read release of #2 receiver.
- #2 Receiver goes Out: Eyes to #1 receiver, if coming in or going vertical take him immediately.
- #2 Receiver goes In: Man on #2 Receiver
- #2 Receiver goes vertical: Stay over top of #2 receiver.

CORNER

**Alignment:** 6-8 yards, outside shade of #1 Receiver

**Technique:** Slow backpedal reading #2 Receiver

**RUN:** Secondary contain, primary pass player, be sure of run before leaving receivers.

**PASS:** Read release of #2 receiver.
- #2 Receiver goes Out: Expect to be man on #2 receiver as he crosses route of #1.
- #2 Receiver goes In: Stay over top of #1 Receiver.
- #2 Receiver goes Vertical: Stay over top of #1 Receiver.

OUTSIDE BACKERS

**Alignment:** Depends on called front.

**Technique:** Read tailback. Step to backfield action first, play run first.

**RUN:** *Box player* on run to, normal cutback on run away.

**PASS:** Eyes on #3 receiver first, if he releases to your side play man on #3 receiver.
- If #3 does not release: Drop with eyes outside, look to wall and receiver coming inside.
**QUARTERS 'SWAP'**

**SAFETY**
- **Alignment:** 3 yds outside TE, 3 yds deep.
- **Technique:** Bounce and read EMOLS for pass/run read.
- **RUN:** Box player on run to, play for Counter/Reverse/Bootleg on run away.
- **PASS:** Wall TE to prevent outside release and funnel to Corner. Pick up any #2 receiver coming out of the backfield.

**CORNER**
- **Alignment:** 9-11 yds, outside shade of #1 receiver.
- **Technique:** Bounce and read #1 for pass/run read.
- **RUN:** Be sure of run, you are pass player first. *Alley fill* between safety and OLBs.
- **PASS:** Eyes on #1 for pass/run read. Stay over top of #1 receiver at all times.

**OUTSIDE BACKERS**
- **Alignment:** Depends on called front.
- **Technique:** Read tailback. Step to backfield action first, play run first.
- **RUN:** *Spill player* on run to, *cutback* on run away.
- **PASS:** Take eyes immediately to TE, attempt to wall outside to Corner. Pick up any #3 coming out of the backfield hooking inside.
Quarters 'SURVIVOR' vs. Trips Open

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corner to Trips</td>
<td>Play #1 and #2 receivers as called by Safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety to Trips</td>
<td>Make coverage check based on #1 and #2 receivers, ignore #3 when making checks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLB to Trips</td>
<td>Split the difference between #2 and #3, play coverage called by Safety on #1 and #2 receivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS Corner</td>
<td>Move to inside shade of #1 receiver on open side of Trips formation. Play man technique on #1 receiver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS Safety</td>
<td>Show coverage to backside, move late to get over top of #3 receiver to Trips side. Show as late as possible to help the corner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS OLB</td>
<td>Read run/pass first, if pass check for back releasing to open side and play man on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>Read run/pass first, if pass work to get underneath of #3 receiver to Trips side.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"ZONE IT" Call: Secondary drops to Deep Quarters. Outside Backers drop to flats. Mike plays Middle of Field. Prevent Coverage. Pick up any receiver in your zone.
Dime gives us three deep zones, and four underneath zones. Dime is a strong defense against the run and gives a change-up to Quarters coverages. Dime gives us another way to create confusion for the offense.

Making Decisions: In regular Dime, the safety to the passing strength (most receivers, or wide side) will make a "CRASH" call. The Crash safety will roll down to play the Curl to Flat zone to his side. The linebackers will play the other 3 underneath zones while the corners and other safety will play the 3 deep zones. Tags can be used to pre-determine who the CRASH player is.

Communicate: Once the safeties have identified passing strength, they must raise thier hand and yell loudly "CRASH! CRASH!" The Crash call determines zone responsibilities for the linebackers and other safety, so the call must be made loudly and quickly.

Weakness: The seams (along the hash marks) are weakest. The seam behind the safety who is leaving to cover the deep 1/3 is most vulnerable.

"No Cover Zone": Do not chase receivers closer than 5 yards to the Line of Scrimmage. Stay back in your zone but be ready to break when if the ball is thrown to a receiver behind the 5 yard "No Cover Zone."
DIME 'FOX'

CRASH: Free Safety, only in Under

5 Yard "No Cover Zone"

Passing Strength

Passing Strength (Wide Side)
**DIME 'COBRA'

**CRASH: Weak Corner**

**5 Yard "No Cover Zone"**

---

**1/3**

**2-1**

FS

SS

C

W

M

S

---

**1/3**

**2-1**

FS

SS

C

W

M

S

---

**1/3**

**2-1**

FS

SS

C

W

M

S

---

**Passing Strength**

---

**Passing Strength**

---

**Passing Strength (Wide Side)**

---

Page 41
DIME 'CROCODILE'

CRASH: Both Corners

5 Yard "No Cover Zone"

Passing Strength (Wide Side)

DIME 'CROCODILE'
3 is used in Zone Blitzes to give us three deep zones and 3 underneath zones. Because of the pressure we are putting on, the ball should be thrown quickly. Deep 1/3 players cannot allow anyone behind them. Underneath zone players should work to get in passing lanes to intercept a hurried pass.

**Making Decisions:** In 3, the safety closest to the SMOKE call will buzz down to take an underneath zone that the blitzing player would have occupied. Corners have deep 1/3 in all Zone Blitzes unless they are the blitzer.

**Communicate:** Once they receive the SMOKE call, the Safety buzzing down will look at the other safety and make a "ME! ME! ME!" call, and point to himself. The other safety responds with a "YOU! YOU! YOU!" call and points to the other safety. If there is confusion about the decision, it is better for both safeties to drop than both safeties to buzz!

**Weakness:** The flats are very vulnerable in 3 coverage. We are bringing pressure and taking a risk to make something happen. If the QB makes a quick decision and throws the ball to the flats, we must swarm to the football and make the tackle for a minimal gain.

"**No Cover Zone**": Do not chase receivers closer than 5 yards to the Line of Scrimmage. Stay back in your zone but be ready to break when if the ball is thrown to a receiver behind the 5 yard "No Cover Zone." Dropping Defensive Linemen need to get at least 5 yards of depth before they start looking for receivers.
2 is used in Zone Blitzes to give us two deep half players and four underneath zones. Because of blitz pressure we should expect the ball to be thrown quickly. Deep 1/2 players cannot let anyone get behind them. 2 will be used if a team is taking advantage of the flats that are open versus 3 Zone Blitz Coverage.

Making Decisions: When using 2 coverage, only the linebackers and defensive linemen will be used in the blitz. The corners will play a press technique as used in Quarters 'Cloud.' Both safeties will play deep half and must get deeper than the deepest receiver.

Communicate: Linebackers must alert dropping defensive linemen of 2 coverage by yelling "2! 2! 2!" This alerts dropping linemen that they have hook to curl zones and do not need to drop to the flats.

Weakness: The deep middle of the field is the weakest zone in 2. Corners must prevent an outside release by the #1 receiver or the sideline pass is also vulnerable.

"No Cover Zone": Do not chase receivers closer than 5 yards to the Line of Scrimmage. Stay back in your zone but be ready to break when if the ball is thrown to a receiver behind the 5 yard "No Cover Zone." Dropping Defensive Linemen need to get at least 5 yards of depth before they start looking for receivers. Corners should collision once they have forced an inside release, drop off beyond 5 yards in the flat zone.
**DL Technique in Zone Blitz**

**GAP-OUT**
Lateral step toward the gap you are in control of, then shoot straight through the gap, avoid engaging with the offensive line.

Break down at the heels of the linemen and work to the football.

**CUT**
Lateral step in the direction the cut is going, attack at the hip of the next offensive lineman. Cut involves crossing the face of one offensive lineman. Rip through his face as you step past.

Read the OL as you go, if the lineman you are crossing face blocks away, do not cross his face.

**LONG CUT**
The first step of Long Cut is the same as Cut, in the direction of the cut, crossing face of the next OL. Two more steps are needed cross the face of the next offensive lineman. A Long Cut crosses the face of two offensive linemen. After three steps, rip through the face of the OL as you step past to the hip of the next blocker. Long Cut is used with overload stunts where two LBs are blitzing to the same side.

**SLAM**
Slam is used when the person responsible for containing versus pass has a player aligned on the LOS outside of him. The Slam player will slam into the near hip of the next OL outside, fight through and work down the LOS to the outside to maintain contain. Slam players should expect the play to be flushed out from the other side by blitzing linebackers.
MAFIA Zone Blitz

Tight Over MAFIA 3

Split Under MAFIA 3

Split Over MAFIA 3

Tight Under MAFIA 3
MAX Zone Blitz

Tight Over MAX 3

Split Under MAX 3

Split Over MAX 3

Tight Under MAX 3
SAX Zone Blitz

Tight Over SAX 3

Split Under SAX 3

Split Over SAX 3

Tight Under SAX 3
WHIP Zone Blitz

Tight Over WHIP 3

Split Under WHIP 3

Split Over WHIP 3

Tight Under WHIP 3
MOW Zone Blitz

Tight UNDER MOW 3

Split Under MOW 3
SAW Zone Blitz

Tight Over SAW 3

Tight Under SAW 3

Split Over SAW 3

Split Under SAW 3

Tight Over SAW 3 - no TE
SMACK Zone Blitz

Tight Over SMACK 3

Split Under SMACK 3

Split Over SMACK 3

Page 57
FAMOUS Zone Blitz

Tight Over FAMOUS 3

Split Under FAMOUS 3

Split Over FAMOUS 3
SMOTHER Zone Blitz

Tight Over SMOTHER 3

Split Under SMOTHER 3

Split Over SMOTHER 3
1 is used to get man coverage with Free Safety help over the top. 1 can be combined with any of our Zone Blitz package stunts. 1 gives one deep safety with all eligible receivers covered man to man by an underneath defender.

Corners always have man coverage on the #1 receiver to their side. Take a slight inside shade alignment, can be anywhere from 1 yard to 7 yards off of the receiver depending on game plan and ability.

Strong Safety and Will Linebacker have man coverage on the #2 receiver to their side. Take an inside shade alignment on removed receivers, or outside shade on a Tight End, Wing or Slot.

Mike and Sam Linebacker take any #3 receiver or Back Out of the backfield to their side. If no #3 receiver releases, they should either drop off and help underneath #2 receivers or, if they have been pulled up on a fake, continue on to pressure the Quarterback.
ZOO Man Blitz, COVER 0

Tight Over ZOO 0

Split Under ZOO 0

Split Over ZOO 0

Sam makes ECHO call to End if no TE

Tight Under ZOO 0
Anchor: Technique used by 9-tech Sam Linebacker in Under front. Take one step and engage TE, reading for run-pass. If run, continue on to spill, if pass drop to coverage zone.

Bend: Defensive line technique after escaping from offensive line block. Always work across the heels of the lineman you are shaded on and down the line of scrimmage. This puts you in the best position to spill blockers or pursue on runs away from you.

Boundary: Short side of the field. Used to declare strength as in "Boundary Over Quarters" where we are declaring the strong side as closest to the sideline.

Box Player: Player who attacks everything with his inside shoulder on the outside shoulder of blockers or ball carriers. Must force runs to either turn back inside to help, or string out to sideline to allow pursuit to get over.

Crash: Call made by the secondary player who is coming down to cover an underneath zone in Dime coverage package. Can be determined by offensive formation or by the call made in the huddle.

Credit Card Alignment: Alignment used by defensive linemen in base front, to get as close as possible to the ball that you could slide a credit card between your hand and the ball. Make sure your head is behind your hand at all times to avoid off-sides.

Curl: Underneath pass coverage zone referring to where a #2 receiver would be if he turned outside from his original alignment. Up to 14 yards.

E.M.O.L.S.: End Man on the Line of Scrimmage, can be the Tight End or Tackle.

Enchilada: Call made by linebacker to End in Zone Blitz to alert him that he is the dropper.

Field: Wide side of the field. Used to declare strength as in "Field Over Quarters" where we are declaring the strong side as the side with the most space between ball and sideline.

Flat: Underneath pass coverage zone referring to the farthest area outside where a receiver would run a short out route, or a back would flare to. Up to 14 yards.

Flood: Tailback is going to the weak side on a run play.

Flow: Tailback is going to the strong side on a run play.

Hook: Underneath pass coverage zone referring to where a #2 receiver would be if he turned inside from his original alignment. Up to 14 yards.

L.O.S.: Line of Scrimmage, running along where the ball spotted.

M.O.F.: Middle of Field, coverage zone usually occupied by Mike Linebacker. Drop back in the middle of the field and look for receivers coming into the zone. Don't be a statue!
**Nacho:** Call used to alert 1-Technique Tackle (Nose) that he is the dropper in Zone Blitzes.

**No Cover Zone:** 5 yard zone from the Line of Scrimmage to 5 yards deep where we will not come up on receivers, but be prepared to break on the ball when thrown to these receivers. We will accept the offense throwing the ball in this zone, but must swarm to the football and make tackles.

**'Pull' Call:** Call made by Outside Linebacker when he must step out to a removed receiver, or when he drops down over top of a Tight End in the Under front. Tells the other Linebackers to step over one man.

**Slot:** Receiver aligned off the ball and 3 yards or less from the hip of the Tackle.

**Smoke:** Call made by Linebacker who is blitzing in Zone Blitz Package. Alerts the Safeties who is blitzing so they can make the decision of who will buzz down to underneath coverage and who will cover the deep 1/3.

**Spill Player:** Attacks the inside shoulder of any blockers with his outside shoulder, forcing the ball carrier to bounce further outside and *spill* to the box player.

**Split:** Receiver on the L.O.S. away from the Tight End. Used to declare strength as in, "Split Over Quarters." Strength will be declared to the receiver away from the Tight End aligned on the Line of Scrimmage.

**Strong:** Side to which the strength is called by Mike Linebacker.

**Swarm:** Getting all 11 defensive players running to the ball at all times. We want to see 11 hats around the football at the end of every play.

**Taco:** Call used to alert 3-Technique Tackle that he is the dropper in Zone Blitzes.

**Tight:** Tight End, eligible receiver on the line of scrimmage aligned within 3 yards of the Tackle. Used to declare strength as in, "Tight Over Quarters." Strength will be declared to the Tight End.

**Weak:** Side away from the strength call made by Mike Linebacker.

**Wing:** Receiver or Running Back aligned off the ball and 3 yards or less from the hip of the Tight End.