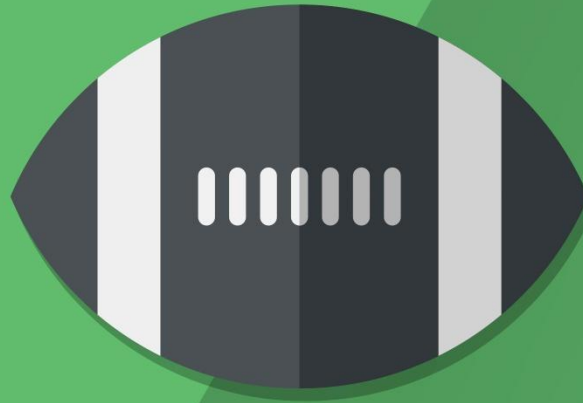




ESSENTIAL FOOTBALL BLOCKING DRILLS

34

FUNDAMENTAL BLOCKING DRILLS
TO OWN THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

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INTRODUCTION

Good blocking is essential to your team's ability to both run the ball and pass the ball.

In this mini-book, we have included 34 blocking drills that will improve your players' blocking skills so that they are better able to keep defenders away from the ball so that it can be moved downfield.

If you want a team built on a foundation of solid blocking, these drills are a good place to start.

To help you better understand each drill we have included the skill level of each drill (beginner, intermediate and advanced) as well as its purpose, what is needed to run it, how it works and the expected result of the drill.

We have also included coaching tips to help you get the most out of each of the drills that you choose to run.

Start performing these drills consistently and watch your team's blocking – and ability to move the football – improve dramatically!

FIRST TO THE FLAG DRILL

Level:

Beginner

Purpose:

Teaches offensive lineman how to fire out to make blocks.

What you need:

You can line up 5 offensive linemen at a time, or in smaller groups if you don't have the numbers. You will need a pylon with a flag for each person.

How this drill works:

Players line up in their normal positions. Each player should be across from a pylon with a flag. Using a standard cadence (down, set, hutt), when you get to 'hutt', the linemen need to burst forward and get to the flag and bat it with their hand (the flag should be about 2 to 3 yards away).

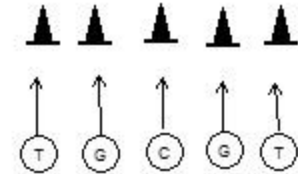
The player that gets out of their stance first and touches the flag gets to sit out the next tries. Then the next fastest gets to sit out... and so on until you get to the last player. The last player should understand that they need to work on bursting out of their stance to get to the flag – similar to firing out at a block during a game. If a false start occurs, the offensive lineman that would be penalized will have to continue in the drill, even if they are the first person to get to the flag.

Result:

This drill reinforces to offensive lineman that they need to fire out of their stance and get to their block fast.

Coaching Tips:

- Make sure players are maintaining good balance as they get up and surge forward, failure to do this could leave them open to getting beat by the defensive player.



On "hutt," offensive lineman fire out and touch top of cones in front of them.

ALL BLOCKS DRILL

Level:

Beginner

Purpose:

Teaches offensive lineman blocking fundamentals.

What you need:

You can match an offensive lineman up with a defensive lineman – or, to start, coaches can hold a dummy while the lineman perfects technique.

How this drill works:

When the coach blows the whistle, the lineman will engage the dummy or the defender.

Result:

This drill allows players to perfect their blocking technique.

Coaching Tips:

- Watch for all of the following during this drill: feet should be shoulder width apart at impact, feet should be moving in short, quick, choppy steps, shoulders should be square and low, neck should be bowed, hips should push up and forward when making contact and, finally, the player should maintain contact until the whistle blows



Offensive player blocks defensive player or tackling dummy while coach critiques his technique and makes recommendations for improvement.

RUN BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Beginner

Purpose:

Teaches young players the first of two basic blocks that they should know how to do.

What you need:

Coaches use tackling dummies to start, and then can start pitting players against each other once they understand what they are doing.

How this drill works:

On the coach's go, the player drive blocks into the dummy or defensive player, using leverage to drive the opponent back.

Result:

Kids basically learn to drive block in this drill, which means that they need to learn the basics of leveraging their body to open up running lanes for their running backs.

Coaching Tips:

- Body should have a good base, with the feet just under shoulder width apart.
- Lineman should engage their opponent with their head up, and their feet under the core of their body.
- Player should engage the defensive player by driving his hands underneath the chest part of the shoulder pads and then using his body to drive the player away from the hole.



Player fires out and uses leverage to drive the defensive player back in this quick-hitting drill.

PASS BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Beginner

Purpose:

Players learn the second basic block that they must know to succeed as an offensive lineman.

What you need:

Coaches with tackling dummies to start, and then you can use pass rushing players once the players understand the technique.

How this drill works:

Coaches with tackling dummies try to penetrate into the backfield, while the young players practice their pass blocking technique. At some point, you can add in real defenders.

Result:

Players learn how to pass block, which is a protection or defending block instead of an attacking block like the run block.

Coaching Tips:

- Players should maintain a strong base to block from then use that base to repel the oncoming defender by standing his ground, using his arms to keep the defender at bay, or by pushing them around the quarterback (the pocket).



Players learn the basics of pass blocking in this fast action drill.

HILL DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Teaches offensive lineman to fire out and driving their blocks. Also, a great conditioning drill.

What you need:

First, as the name implies, you will need a hill. You also need an offensive lineman and 2 defensive linemen. If you don't want your defensive linemen in this drill, any players with arm shield (blocking dummies) will suffice.

How this drill works:

When coach says "Go," the offensive lineman fires out and drives the first defender up the hill. The defender resists, but does not fight by the O-lineman. After driving for about 5 yards, the D-lineman releases, and then the O-lineman engages the next blocker by firing out and driving them up the remainder of the hill.

Result:

This is a fantastic conditioning drill for your offensive linemen. Not only that, but it provides a great deal of resistance that will build power in their drive blocks.

Coaching Tips:

- Make sure your offensive lineman maintains good form with head up and feet inside shoulder width apart as he drives up the hill.



O-lineman build speed, strength and agility in this challenging drill.

PASS FOOTWORK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Players learn proper footwork and setup.

What you need:

You can create two lines of linemen, and a coach has a tackling dummy in one hand. A pylon should be set up no more than three to five yards behind the player.

How this drill works:

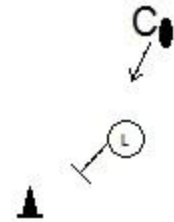
On the snap of the ball, the coach moves forward with the tackling dummy as though he is a defensive lineman. The lineman react with proper pass blocking technique and shuffle back to the pylon. The lineman should be focused on creating a pocket for the quarterback, preventing penetration and riding the defensive lineman to the outside.

Result:

Players learn proper footwork and improve their pass blocking skills.

Coaching Tips:

-Players should have a solid base with feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent. The foot closest to the center position should be slightly forward. Their bottom should be dropped, the waist bent slightly forward and the weight of the body centered over the balls of the feet. Arms should be up in a prepared position as the player shuffles back.



Players practice proper pass footwork in this drill.

10-YARD DRIVE DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Players learn to drive block and to continue driving for the entire play.

What you need:

You only need the offensive lineman and a coach or player holding a tackling dummy.

How this drill works:

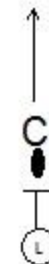
The offensive lineman fires out and drive blocks the tackling dummy. He holds his block and drives at least 10 yards before letting go. Coaches should offer a little resistance on the bag, to give the lineman the feeling of having to 'drive' a player off the ball.

Result:

Offensive lineman learn that blocking is not just about hitting a player once and then letting them go. It is about engaging, maintaining and driving that block out of the hole.

Coaching Tips:

- Make sure players maintain proper drive block form (head up, feet shoulder width apart, feet moving and hands in tight underneath shoulder pads).



Young players learn the importance of holding their block through the entire play in this drill.

PANCAKE DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive linemen learn to execute a drive block with a pancake finish.

What you need:

You can have two lines of offensive linemen with a coach and a tackling dummy at each line. You can add defensive players once the offensive linemen master the pancake.

How this drill works:

On the snap of the ball, the offensive lineman will drive forward and engage the tackling dummy. After driving the tackling dummy for five yards, the coach should release the dummy to give the player the feeling of 'pancaking' the dummy, which means driving the dummy to the ground.

Result:

Offensive linemen learn and understand the essential elements of run blocking and dominating the defensive player.

Coaching Tips:

- Look for a solid base from each o-lineman. Too far forward and the lineman's momentum can be used against them; too far back and they won't get the leverage they need.
- Players arms should be extended, but in tight (inside of shoulder pads on defensive linemen).
- Feet should be moving forward at all times, while the arms are engaged with the tackling dummy.



Players learn how to "pancake" the defender in this drill.

DRIVE BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive lineman learn skills necessary for creating running lanes for the running back.

What you need:

You can have two lines of offensive linemen with a coach and a tackling dummy at each line.

How this drill works:

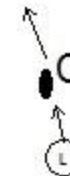
When the coach blows his whistle, the lineman will step straight toward the defender or the dummy. At this point, the feet must be planted and the body lean forward. The palms of the hands should strike the center of the chest. The elbows remain close to the body to maintain control of the defender and the hands should slide up under the defenders pads. The lineman should continue pushing the defender back with the hands engaged, until the whistle blows.

Result:

Players learn better technique on drive blocks to help your running game rip off big gains in games.

Coaching Tips:

- The key here is for the offensive lineman to keep their feet moving, their hands engaged (without holding), and to drive the dummy out of the hole.



In this drill, players improve their drive blocking skills.

PUNCH STRENGTH DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

O-line players work on punch technique and also build strength in their punches.

What you need:

Set up two or three lines of offensive linemen. Each line has a set of two weights between 5 and 15 pounds (lighter for younger players heavier for older players).

How this drill works:

This drill starts with the offensive lineman setting up in a proper pass blocking frame. Each player at the beginning of a line will grab the two weights, with one in each hand. On the coaches' whistle, the players will chop their feet up and down, and they will punch the air as though they are pass blocking against a defender.

Result:

This drill not only works on pass blocking form, but builds increased strength in the O-linemen's arms so they can impact and punch block more effectively.

Coaching Tips:

- You should watch that the offensive linemen have good form and don't hesitate to stop and instruct during the drill when needed as proper form is essential to good blocking.



Player at the front of the line steps forward, grabs the two weights and punches the air as if they are pass blocking

WIDE-OUT STOCK BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Teaches receivers how to perform good run blocking.

What you need:

Put a wide receiver up against a defensive back. You can add a runner to the drill if you want.

How this drill works:

When the coach blows the whistle, the wide receiver will attempt to block out the defensive back. While this is not a drive block, like an offensive lineman would execute, the essential tactic for the wide receiver is to get in front of the defensive back and screen him out of the play – without holding him.

Result:

Wide receivers learn to block which helps prevent defensive backs from making plays on the ball and ruining potential big gains.

Coaching Tips:

- Receivers must try to stay engaged with the defensive back for at least 7 seconds – the estimated amount of time it would take for the running play to get to that side and past the defensive back.
- The defensive back should try to fight off the wide receiver and make the play.



Having good blocking receivers can take your run game to the next level. Here, receivers learn to block defensive backs.

OUTSIDE PUSH DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive lineman learn to push out defenders when in pass protection.

What you need:

You can start this drill with a full offense and then add the defense in later for half speed drills.

How this drill works:

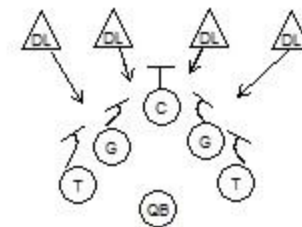
The offensive line protects the gap inside them first, and then pushes everything to the outside.

Result:

Defenders will look to go inside to get to the QB the quickest, this drill teaches offensive lineman to block that move first and then push everything outside so the quarterback remains protected.

Coaching Tips:

- Stress to your offensive linemen that pass protection should always be thought of as being inside out – protect everything inside first.



Players focus on closing the inside gap and then pushing defenders outside to protect the quarterback.

TENNIS BALL BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive player learns to block according to the reaction of the linebacker.

What you need:

Offensive lineman and linebackers will do this drill. You will also need a tennis ball.

How this drill works:

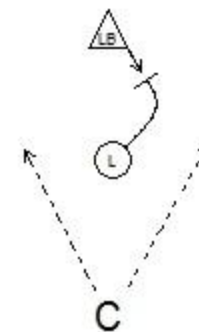
The object of this drill is for the offensive lineman to prevent the linebacker from picking up the tennis ball. The tennis ball in this drill is the runner. The coach (small square) will roll the ball to different areas of the field. The offensive lineman will know where the ball is going to be rolled, and then needs to make a good first power step toward his block, and then make sure he gets to the linebacker before the backer scoops up the ball.

Result:

Offensive linemen learn how to perform solid run blocking on linebackers.

Coaching Tips:

- You can also do this drill with more offensive lineman, as they can mimic the blocks they would have to make on certain offensive plays.
- You don't want the lineman to throw the block too early, because the ball could still be rolling and the linebacker may wait to get the ball and avoid the block just to make the tackle.



The Tennis Ball Block Drill is great for improving offensive linemen's agility and ability to make blocks even when out of position.

BREAK THE DOUBLE TEAM DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive linemen learn to double team a defensive lineman and the DL learns how to beat a double team.

What you need:

Two offensive linemen battling against one defensive lineman.

How this drill works:

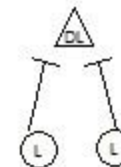
The two OL will prevent the DL from coming through the line on a pass block. It is up to the DL to break the double team using whatever legal movement he can.

Result:

Works on both the linemen's ability to double team, and it will force the DL to think of innovative ways to crack the double team he is facing.

Coaching Tips:

- This can be a very competitive drill but to take the competition up to another level, punish the OL each time they let the DL through.



Offensive linemen double team a defensive lineman who attempts to break through in the competitive drill.

PUNCH THEN BACKER ENGAGE DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive linemen does a quick hit, then goes after the linebacker to open the hole. Helps linemen learn to read where to go.

What you need:

Set up a half offensive line against two defensive line positions with a LB.

How this drill works:

On each play, two linemen are going to engage the defensive linemen and the third O-lineman will 'punch' the DL in aid of one of his teammates, before heading out to hit the linebacker to open up the hole.

Result:

Improves teamwork and communication between lineman, thus improving your team's overall run blocking.

Coaching Tips:

- You can switch up the assignment of the offensive linemen and their blocking responsibilities by changing the direction of the running play, and by changing where the defensive lineman are lined up.
- To make this drill more complex, you can add in another defender (linebacker) and you can put in another offensive player – probably a tight end.



The offensive lineman does a quick-hit punch to help a teammate then moves upfield to block the linebacker and open the hole.

CAMERA ON YOUR BACK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Helps linemen understand how far their blocking assignments should be taken.

What you need:

You can set up an offensive line against tackling dummies first, and you can put a running back in the backfield. Later, you can add in the real defensive line.

How this drill works:

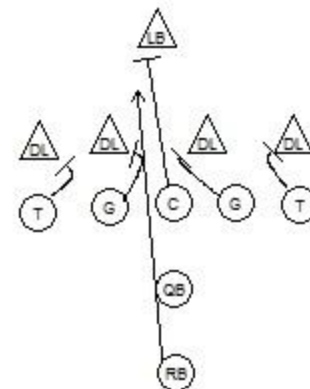
First, you have to explain how the linemen have a national television camera on the back of their jerseys, and the only way for the world to see how good they blocked (and how good the RB is) is to maintain their block, and to turn their body to seal the hole for the running back – so the camera stays on the running back.

Result:

The running back has a clear hole to run through, and the offensive line stays with their blocks until the play has ended.

Coaching Tips:

- What to watch for: Once the linemen open the hole, they should stay with their blocks and seal them off so the running back doesn't have to worry about players catching him from behind.



Offensive linemen imagine they have cameras on their backs and they need to maintain proper position to film the running back in this drill.

FIRE OUT FROM THE 30 DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Rewards the offensive linemen that fire out of their stance and drive their block for 10 yards.

What you need:

Line up all of your offensive and even defensive linemen across the 30 yard line and have them face toward the goal line.

How this drill works:

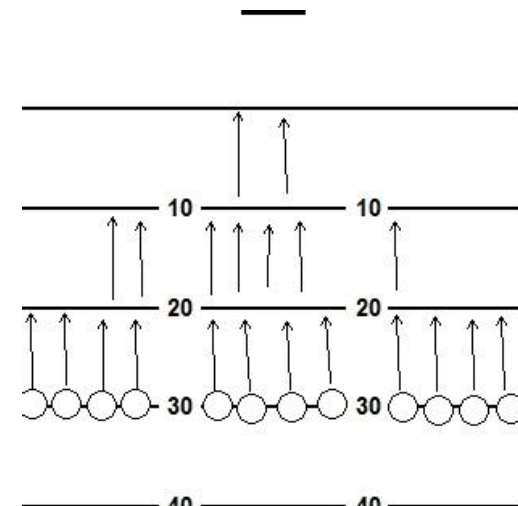
This drill starts with each player in a 3-pt stance on the 30 yard line. When the whistle is blown, each player must burst forward and sprint for 10 yards, and then get back into a 3 point stance on the 20 yard line. The first five to complete this will get to sit out the rest of the drill. The remaining players must stay in their 3-pt stance until the next cadence and 'snap' of the ball. The players burst out again, and they must drive for 10 yards. First five get to sit out the next one. And so on.

Result:

Each player will begin to understand the importance of firing out quickly when they have to continue running in this drill.

Coaching Tips:

- For a pull block to be successful, the guard must open their step parallel to the line in the direction they are pulling. The other linemen must drive forward, and the guard then runs parallel to the line of scrimmage and engages the open defensive lineman.



In addition to helping offensive lineman learn to fire out quickly, this is a great conditioning drill.

PULL BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive linemen learn to pull and block effectively.

What you need:

At first you can set up a full offensive line, and a 4 man defensive front. The blocked defender can either be a rush end, or an outside linebacker. The coaching staff may want to try and run both – depending on the play called.

How this drill works:

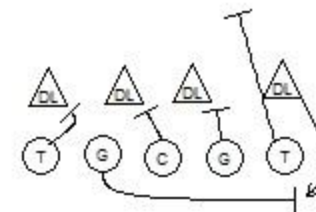
Most pull blocks that happen on the interior will involve the guards, anything outside may involve the tackles. To keep things simple to start, let's say you are running the ball to the right and the far side guard is pulling and making the pull block. Each of the other offensive linemen will block down one to the left, leaving one defensive player on the line unblocked. This will be the target of the pulling guard.

Result:

Linemen learn how to pull block successfully, without getting caught up in the rest of the lineman or with other offensive players.

Coaching Tips:

- Emphasize to players who are struggling in this drill that getting off the ball quickly significantly increases their chances of reaching the 10 yards before others.



In this basic trap play, the pulling guard attempts to crush the defensive lineman that is trying to rush into the backfield.

REACH BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Teaches offensive linemen how to block with the defensive lineman are not lined up directly across from them.

What you need:

Line up full offensive and defensive lines for this drill. For younger players you might want to start off with tackling dummies so the offensive linemen can learn to execute this type of block.

How this drill works:

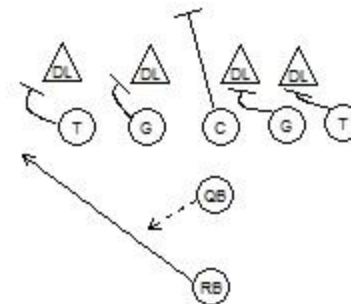
Players must first identify who they need to block and then perform a reach block to get to that player. A reach block is a quick first step to try and get across and in front of the defensive lineman.

Result:

Offensive line players will learn to recognize which blocks they should make and then execute a reach block successfully to block the defensive player.

Coaching Tips:

- Make sure players take a quick step, reach toward the defender they are to engage and then execute a regular drive block.



O-linemen learn to block defensive linemen who are not lined up directly in front of them in this drill.

OFF THE SNAP DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Stresses the importance of getting off the line of scrimmage quickly.

What you need:

Line up the offensive against the defensive line. Coach then simulates the quarterback's cadence so the lines can work on getting quick starts.

How this drill works:

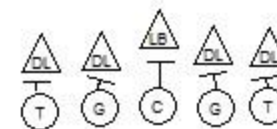
The coach will go through the cadence (which only the offensive line will know), and when the coach hikes the ball, both lines will explode into one another.

Result:

Players learn to get a jump on the snap count and to explode from their stance when the ball is put into play.

Coaching Tips:

- Players cannot get a jump on the snap of the ball or it is a penalty. The offense will have an advantage because they know the snap count, but they should be penalized in practice for moving early.



Players work on getting off the ball quickly.

OPEN THE HOLE DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Offensive linemen learn to open holes, defensive linemen learn to close holes.

What you need:

Put an entire offensive line against an entire defensive line. You also need one QB and a running back.

How this drill works:

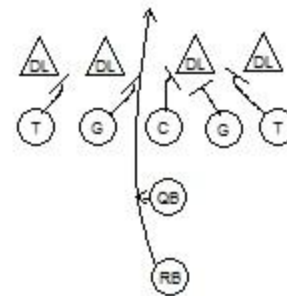
The coach will stand in the defensive backfield, and the offensive line, QB and RB will be shown which hole the coach wants the play run. So, the offense knows what they are doing and so they have the responsibility of opening up the hole for the RB to run through.

Result:

Both lines get to work on their technique and their blocking and tackling skills.

Coaching Tips:

- What to watch for: Since the defensive line doesn't know where the play is going, they need to be aware of which way the o-lineman are pushing them and fight against that direction to make the tackle.



O-linemen try to create a lane for the running back in the Open The Hole Drill.

PROTECT THE FLAG DRILL

Level:

Intermediate

Purpose:

Lineman learn how to hold a block both when run blocking and pass blocking.

What you need:

This is a drill that can pit offensive and defensive lineman against each other. However, if you are trying to teach the basics of sustaining a block, you might want to try it with a coach or with other offensive linemen.

How this drill works:

To start, the defensive lineman (or coach) should line up opposite the offensive lineman. When the whistle is blown, the offensive lineman engages the defensive lineman and must protect the flag that is set up on a pylon behind him. The offensive lineman continues to block and pancake the defender as long as he is coming after the flag. This will continue until the coach blows the whistle, or the defensive player gets the flag.

Result:

Offensive lineman learn to maintain the block and stay prepared – even if their man is down on the ground.

Coaching Tips:

- The offensive lineman must follow the defensive lineman wherever he goes in order to protect the flag.
- You can pit the offensive and defensive linemen against each other in a competition with this drill.



Having an offensive lineman protect the flag for 10 seconds is a great way to reinforce the importance of holding a block.

STUNT AND READ DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Lets defense work on stunts and offense work on stunt protection.

What you need:

Line up an offensive line against a defensive front four (or front seven if you want to make the drill more complex for O-linemen).

How this drill works:

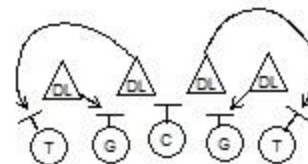
In this drill, the defense will decide on a line stunt before the snap of the ball. Both offense and defense will approach the line like they would at the beginning of any play. Upon the snap of the ball two things are going to happen: the defense will execute the stunt and the offensive line will have to read it and pick up the stunt.

Result:

Defensive linemen are going to learn to stunt effectively and to disguise their stunts, while your offensive linemen are going to learn how to defend against line stunts.

Coaching Tips:

- Stunt protection requires discipline and communication on the part of the offensive line. They need to play their positions when pass blocking, making sure they don't get caught out of position allowing D-lineman into the backfield.



O-lineman practice reading and picking up defensive stunts.

INSIDE AND OUT DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

In grains an inside-out blocking mentality in O-linemen to help prevent sacks from up the middle and to create a better pocket for the QB.

What you need:

Set up an offensive line (with TE if you need to), and also have either two defensive linemen, or two coaches with tackling dummies. The defensive linemen will start at the gaps between center and the two guards.

How this drill works:

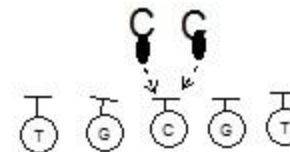
On the snap of the ball, the defensive linemen will pop up and engage the center, then back away quickly, and then engage the guards, then the tackles, etc. The object of this drill is for the offensive line to get in the habit of looking inside on pass protection to the outside. The primary pass blocking scheme is for players to prevent penetration up the middle and to shed everything on to the outside of the line. This gives the quarterback more time to get the pass off.

Result:

Offensive linemen learn to think first of their inside responsibility.

Coaching Tips:

- You can make this drill more difficult if you add a single blitzing linebacker or if you have the defensive linemen stunt.



The object of this drill is for the offensive line to get in the habit of looking inside on pass protection to the outside.

PUSH OF WAR DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

This drill pits the bull rush against the pancake block.

What you need:

Create an area about 7 yards wide and 10 yards long. Match up offensive and defensive linemen of similar size and strength.

How this drill works:

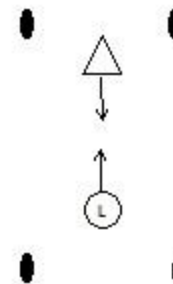
On the coaches whistle the two big men will engage. One must push the other across the line in front of them (behind as well). This is a straight ahead drive blocking / bull rushing drill. There are no moves (no spins, swims, chops, etc) – this is strength on strength to see who can get the better position and who can drive harder to push the other over the edge. The players continue to push for 10 seconds before calling it a stalemate.

Result:

The bull rush and the pancake drive block are two important elements of blocking and rushing the QB. This drill works on them both and provides for a competitive element between opposing linemen.

Coaching Tips:

- Watch for proper technique from both the offensive and defensive player.



Players go strength against strength in this one-on-one matchup drill.

WIDE BOARD BLOCKING DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Helps offensive lineman keep proper distance between their feet so that they maintain a stable blocking platform.

What you need:

You will need a 2x12" plank that is about 10 or 12 feet long. You can match up offensive lineman and defensive players on this drill, but this drill is primarily for the offensive lineman.

How this drill works:

Starting in a 3-point stance, straddling the 2x12, the offensive lineman will fire out at the defensive player and engage them. This whole time they need to make sure they are keeping their feet outside the plank. Once they bring their feet too close together, they are going to fall, slip, or be knocked over by the defensive player.

Result:

Players develop the better footwork they need to be better blockers.

Coaching Tips:

- This drill can also be adapted to work with pass blocking as maintaining a good base is essential to pass blocking as well.



Players practice maintaining a wide, solid base in this unique drill.

BLITZ READ DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Offensive line and running backs learn to read and pick up blitzing players.

What you need:

Line up a full offense and full defense for this drill (or front 7 versus front 7).

How this drill works:

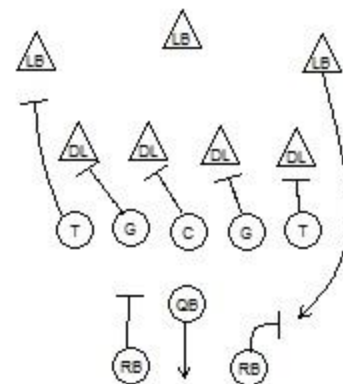
The defense will call a blitz for their play, and the offense will just line up on the ball with no play called. When the ball is snapped, the blitzer will find his way into the backfield to try and make a play. The second line of defense is the RB, who must read what the OL is doing and then react to any blitzers that have made it through.

Result:

Offensive players learn to read and react to any blitz pressure that is put on their team.

Coaching Tips:

- Start this one off half speed so players know what to expect. To begin with, the OL should be trying to recognize where the play is coming from and then react to the blitzing player or players.



Offensive players learn to read and react to various blitzes from the defense.

RECEIVER CRACK BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Teaches receivers to legally block down.

What you need:

You can start this drill with groups of receivers and a coach or a player with a dummy, acting as a linebacker.

How this drill works:

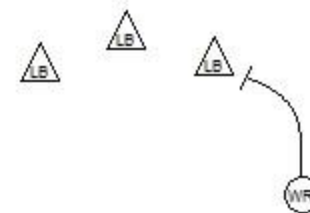
On the snap of the ball, the slot receiver, or the wide receiver will execute a legal seal block on the linebackers. The block is always above the waist and never from behind.

Result:

Receivers learn how to block down on linebackers and defensive lineman without getting “blown up” themselves or committing a penalty.

Coaching Tips:

- The best crack blocks engage the linebacker in the midsection. Receivers should keep their heads up and should basically just be looking to get in the linebacker’s way.



Properly executed the receiver crack block can be a valuable addition to your offensive scheme.

BLITZ PICKUP DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

This drill helps running backs learn how to pick up the blitz while also teaching linebackers how to avoid being blocked.

What you need:

One linebacker and one running back per play, to start. You can set up an imaginary line of 5 dummies, in order to signify the blitzing lanes that the LB might come through.

How this drill works:

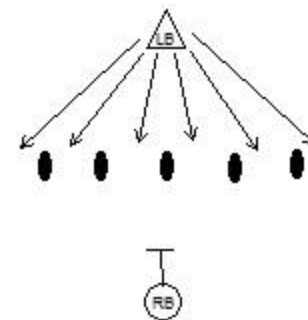
On the snap of the ball, the running back must read where the blitz is going to go. The linebacker will pick one of the lanes between the dummies and blitz through there.

Result:

RB's are going to learn their blocking assignment against blitzing linebackers and the LB's will learn to shed the block on the way to the QB.

Coaching Tips:

- To make this drill more challenging, have two LB's, switch the one that is blitzing, so the RB has to read the play.



Running backs learn to block a blitzing linebacker in the challenging drill. RBs have the same blocking responsibility as O-lineman – inside then out.

BLOCK THE BACKER DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Teaches offensive linemen how to block a linebacker.

What you need:

Have two tackling dummies about 3 yards apart, with the lineman in the middle. There will be a single RB in the backfield and a coach will stand in the defensive backfield. The linebacker will be directly ahead of the OL, but about 5 yards in front.

How this drill works:

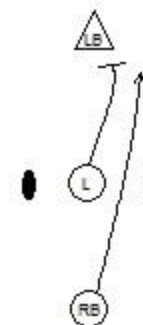
The coach will indicate from behind the linebacker which side of the lineman he wants the RB to run. The RB must stay within the two tackling dummies in order for this drill to work. When the ball is snapped, the RB will go in the hole where he has been instructed and the OL will block for that hole. So, if the RB is told to go off the OL left hip, then the OL tries to meet the linebacker and drive him in the opposite direction. The linebacker is going to attempt to shed the block (or avoid it) and make the tackle.

Result:

Linemen learn to get in position to block linebackers and the linebacker learns how to shed the block and go make the tackle.

Coaching Tips:

- Make sure the O-lineman maintains good position and holds his block to the whistle.



In this drill, the offensive lineman takes on the linebacker in an effort to clear a hole for the running back.

LEAD BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Teaches your fullback and your halfback to work together.

What you need:

You can use tackling dummies to create holes that the players must run through, and you can have a linebacker in the hole, about 5 yards from the line of scrimmage.

How this drill works:

On the snap, the fullback and running back will head through a hole, and the fullback engages the linebacker. At this point, the running back needs to make a decision based on the block by the fullback where he is going to run the ball. He can run it straight ahead, or cut to the right or left.

Result:

The fullback/halfback relationship is important , this drill helps develop that relationship and gets them on the same page so that your offense can start generating big gains.

Coaching Tips:

- This drill should be run at half-speed to start, so they FB and the RB can learn what each other is going to do. Then run it at full speed to make this a great competitive drill.



In this drill, your halfback learns to read your fullback's block and cut accordingly.

HAT ON DUMMY - 7 ON 5 DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

This full-speed drill assists offensive linemen in learning to pick up blitzes and stunts.

What you need:

You should have a full complement of offensive lineman, and a defensive line and linebackers (7 players) – either in a 3-4 or 4-3 alignment. A tackling dummy with a hat on it is also needed.

How this drill works:

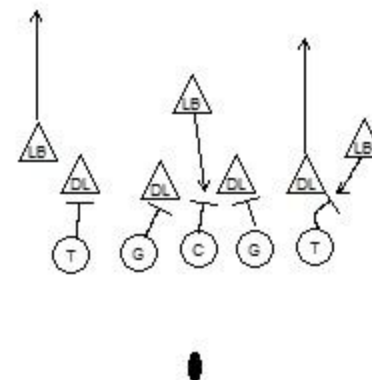
This is a basic rush drill, however, before the play the defense is going to decide the type of stunt or blitz that it is going to run. They do not rush all 7 defenders. This is to help both the offensive line learn to pick up blitzes and for the defense to execute its blitzes well. The ball will be snapped, and the defense will run their stunt. The offensive line will protect the inside lanes first, and then the outside lanes. The object is for the defensive players to get to the hat on the tackling dummy (yellow) within 5 seconds.

Result:

Both the offense and the defense get work on with blitzes and blitz pickups.

Coaching Tips:

- To make this drill more difficult for the defense, and to add another element for the offense, add a TE or a RB into the mix.



Teaching offensive linemen to better pickup blitzes and stunts is the aim of this drill.

BEAR CRAWL BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Offensive lineman learn to block from a four-point stance, which can build agility and strength.

What you need:

Pair up offensive lineman together, one will be the bear and the other will be the pass rusher.

How this drill works:

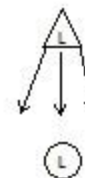
The offensive lineman will be on his hands and feet, but in a slight crouch position. The pass rusher will start about 2 yards away from him. When the coach blows the whistle, to start the pass rusher will just simply go one direction or the other at about half speed. The offensive lineman in the bear crawl position will stay in the bear crawl, but try to get in front of the defensive lineman to prevent penetration.

Result:

Often times linemen will be pushed down, and still be called upon to make a block. This drill will help offensive lineman with those blocks and build the agility to make a block – even when they get knocked down.

Coaching Tips:

- Increase the speed of the rusher as the blocker gets more adept at making good blocks from the bear crawl position.



Players learn to block from a four-point stance in the bear crawl drill.

WIDE OUT BLOCK DRILL

Level:

Advanced

Purpose:

Wide receivers learn to block on running plays.

What you need:

To start, you can just use a tackling dummy held by a coach or player, lined up directly across from the wide receiver.

How this drill works:

If the running play is coming to the WR side, then he needs to be able to block the defensive back out of the play. If they don't make the block, then often times the DB will get into the backfield to drop the RB for a loss. In this drill, the WR simply needs to get their body in the way of the tackling dummy, to literally block their path to get to the runner.

Result:

Receivers will learn to block for the running play called and they will increase their value as a player by being a good blocker on running plays.

Coaching Tips:

- Receivers should follow the same blocking basics: strong base, hands in front and make contact under the shoulder pads at the chest and then keep the person in front of them.



Wide receiver blocks defensive back's path to the runner.

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