



PRINT n' GO

FLAG FOOTBALL

PRACTICE PLANS

RUNNING GAME SKILLS

**19 Skill-Building Drills for for a
Dominant Running Offense**



**Includes 5
Printable Practice
Plans**

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1.

DYNAMIC WARMUP

Complete each exercise for 2 sets of 10-20 yards



High Knee Run



Buttkicker Run



Frankenstein Walk



Walking Lunge & Twist



Walking Knee Hug

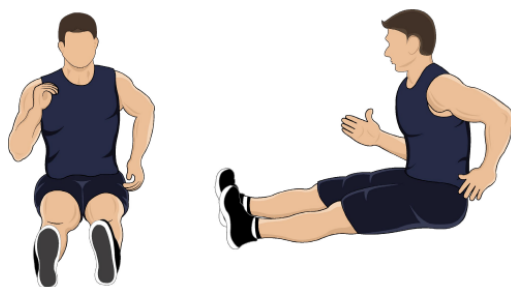


Straight Leg Run

2.

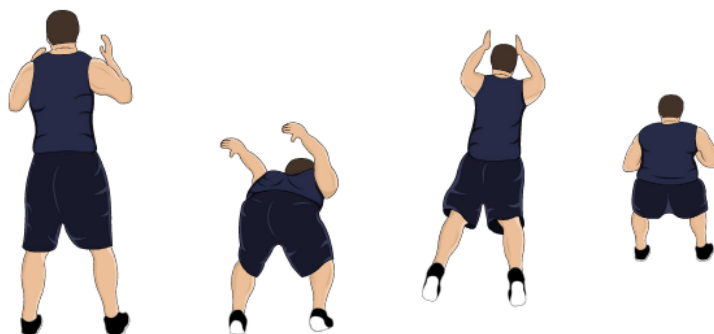
5 MINUTE POWER CIRCUIT

Complete each exercise for 3 sets of 10-20 yards



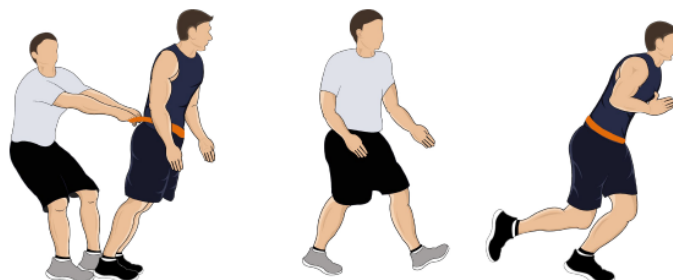
Seated Arm Swings

Sit on the ground with straight legs. Raise arms into running position. Pump arms back and forth at 50%, 75%, then 100% speed. Do 3 sets of 15 seconds.



Frog Jumps

Gather for the jump by squatting down and swinging arms back. Explode into a frog jump and try to maximize distance. Land softly in a squat. Do 3 sets of 5 jumps.



Let Go's

Partner holds onto the back of runner's flag belt or shirt. Runner leans forward keeping back straight. Partner releases belt and runner explodes into a sprint. Do 3 x 10-yard sprints each.

3.

FLAG TAG

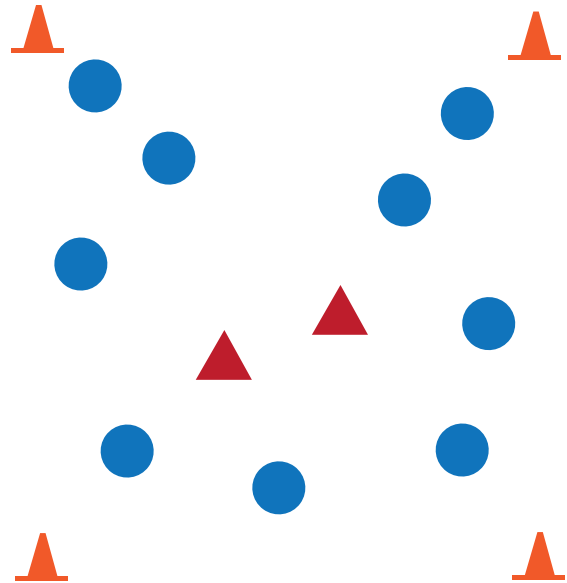


PURPOSE:

Players improve flag pulling skills and learn to avoid having their flags pulled.

SETUP:

Mark off an area that is 40 yards by 40 yards with cones. Players must stay in this area during this game. All players (or split into two groups) will participate. Two players will be 'it.'



A fun variation of tag that teaches flag pulling and dodging

HOW IT WORKS:

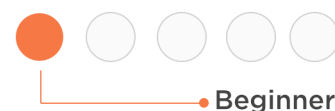
1. The players must avoid having their flags pulled, while the two "It" players attempt to pull flags.
2. As the players' flags are pulled, they also become flag pullers until all of the players in the square have been converted.

COACHING TIPS:

- Coaches should watch for proper flag-pulling technique – players should stay on their feet, go through the offensive player, use both hands, focus on the hips and swipe down.
- Players trying to avoid having their flag pulled cannot spin or knock away the flag puller's hands.

4.

HANDOFF DRILL

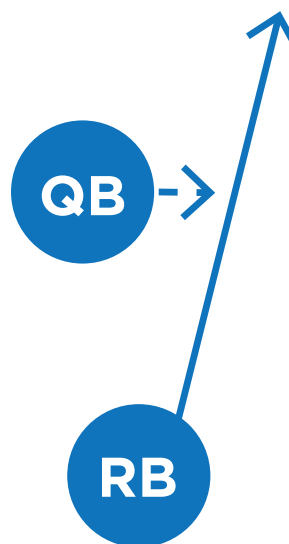


PURPOSE:

Players learn the proper way to make and receive a handoff.

SETUP:

Drill can be run anywhere on the field. You can have any number of groups; pair up offensive players like receivers and QBs or QBs and RBs. Each pair should have a ball.



A simple way to practice basic handoff technique

HOW IT WORKS:

1. The player handing the ball off will stand in front with his back to the potential ball carrier.
2. On the snap, the running back (ball carrier) will go straight ahead, either to the left or right side of the player handing off.
3. The player receiving the ball should have the inside arm on the top, across the body, and the outside arm low across the body.
4. The QB (player handing the ball off) will open up to the runner and put the ball right on his belly.

COACHING TIPS:

- The ball carrier's hands should instantly secure the ball upon contact. His eyes should be scanning downfield and not looking at the ball.
- The quarterback should place the ball into the ball carrier's pocket firmly but gently and he should let go of the ball as the ball carrier is securing it.

5.

TOSS DRILL

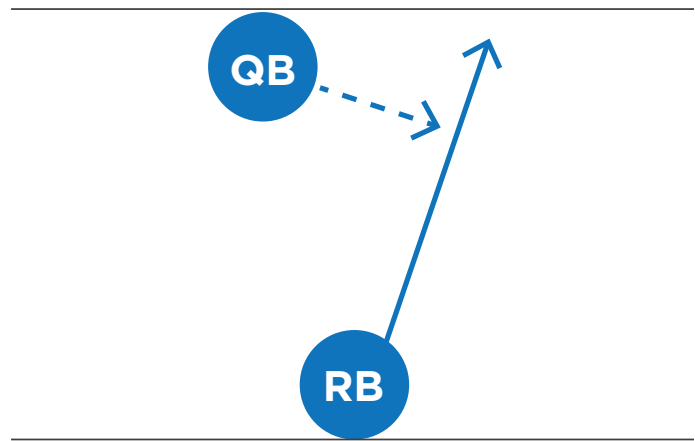


PURPOSE:

Develops proper tosses or pitches.

SETUP:

Divide teams into even groups. First player from running backs group lines up behind the first player from the quarterbacks group.



QB's and RB's practice tosses.

HOW IT WORKS:

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

COACHING TIPS:

- The QB should look at the stomach area of the RB when making the pitch.
- Be sure to run the drill to both the right and left sides.

6.

TEAM HANDOFF EXCHANGE

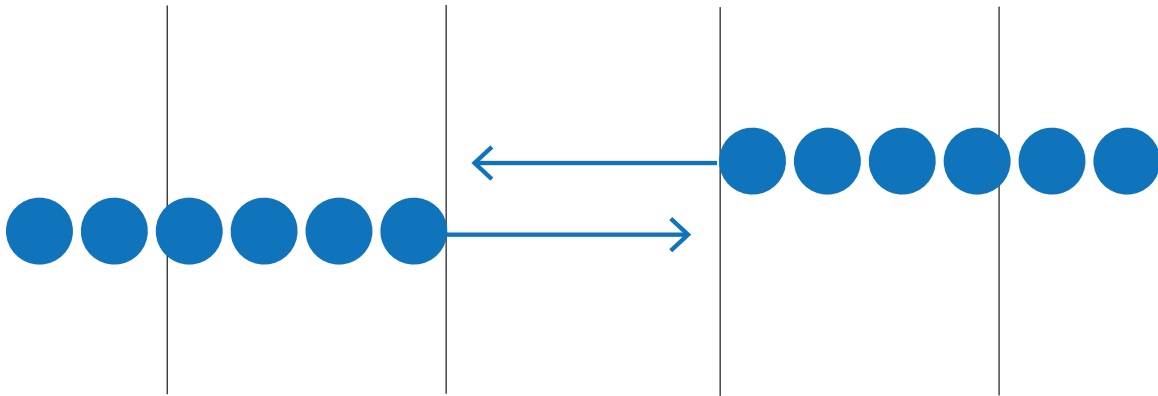


PURPOSE:

Helps teach basic handoff fundamentals

SETUP:

Divide your players into 2 lines approximately 10 yards away from each other. A player from one line starts with the ball.



HOW IT WORKS:

1. On the coach's whistle, the ball carrier sprints toward the opposite line.
2. Once he reaches the first player in the other line, he hands it off
3. That player is now the ball carrier and he sprints in the opposite direction and repeats
4. Continue until every player has given and received a handoff

COACHING TIPS:

- Emphasize holding the ball properly when running and making a good hand-off exchange. The ball should not hit the ground!
- The receiving player should create a target by making a placing both hands into a "basket" just above his belly button
- This is a great drill to use if you are employing reverse, double or triple reverse plays that rely on a smooth hand-off to be effective

7.

BAG COURSE DRILL

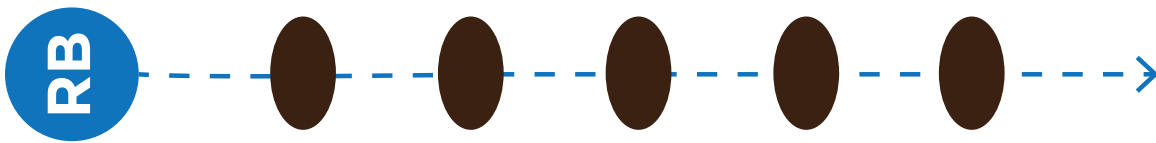


PURPOSE:

Focuses on footwork, agility and speed

SETUP:

Line up five bags, cones or hurdles roughly 1 yard apart. Coach stands at the first bag with several balls. Running backs line up behind the first bag.



Players should keep their knees high when running through the bags.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. Coach simulates a snap, then hands off to the running back
2. The running back explodes towards the bags, then, using high knees, runs over the bags through the end of the course
3. At the end of the bags, the runner sprints an extra 5 yards, then returns to the back of the line
4. Complete the course running straight ahead, then running laterally (stepping sideways over each bag)

COACHING TIPS:

- The runner's arms and legs should be pumping, with the knees extended up toward the chest on each stride. Head and eyes should be up
- Avoid taking any false steps at the beginning of the course
- You can add a defender at the end of the course, which the defender has to beat
- Try varying the distance between each bag to make this more challenging.

8.

5 CONE RELAY RACE

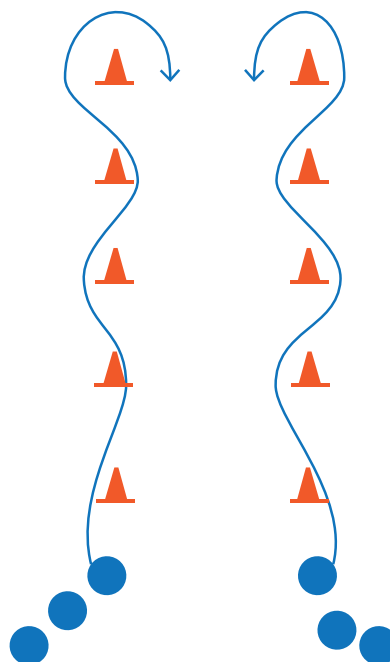


PURPOSE:

Develops speed, communication, handoffs, and agility

SETUP:

Set up two rows of five cones, approximately 5 yards apart. One ball per team. If cones are limited, use t-shirts, shoes, or tape on the ground as markers



Players practice running and cutting in this competitive relay race

HOW IT WORKS:

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

COACHING TIPS:

- Players should switch arms carrying the football, with the football always carried in the arm nearest the sideline.
- Players cut on their outside foot and do not cross their legs over when they go around a cone.

9.

CRISSCROSS HANDOFF DRILL

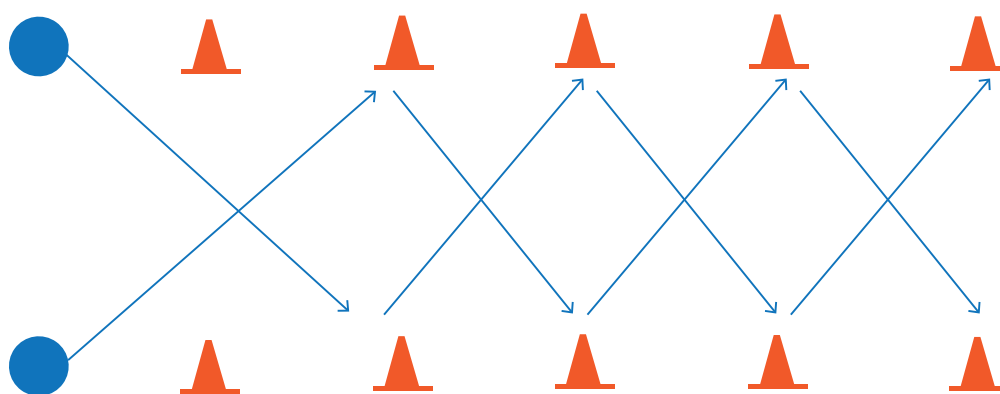


PURPOSE:

Players improve their agility and practice handing the ball off.

SETUP:

Line up 10 cones – pair the cones up about 7 yards apart and at the same 5 yard intervals. Have a line of players at each row of cones.



Players exchange the ball four times during this drill.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. On the coaches' whistle, the players start at the first cone and go diagonally towards the second cone, so they end up on opposite sides.
2. In the middle (they will cross) the players will exchange the ball in a handoff fashion.
3. As they reach the second cone, they will change direction and crisscross to the other side again and make the handoff.
4. There should be 4 handoffs as the players crisscross from one side to the other along the 5 cones on each side.

COACHING TIPS:

- Player should be making a pocket to receive the handoff.
- Eyes should be focused ahead and not on the ball.
- Once player has the ball he should tuck it firmly against forearm and chest.

10.

THE PIT DRILL

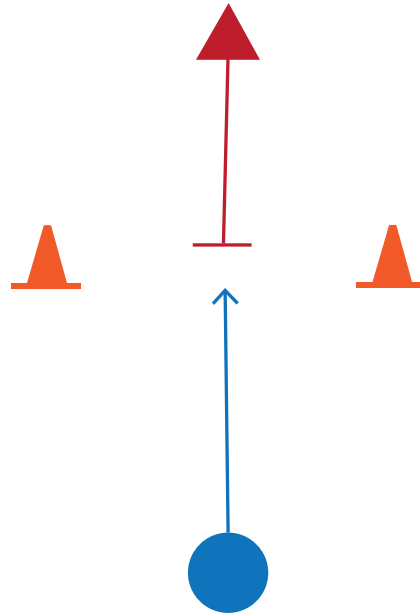


PURPOSE:

Players learn to make a move to prevent their flag from being pulled.

SETUP:

Set up two pylons 5 yards apart. This will be line of scrimmage. The ball carrier and flag-puller will each take two strides from the line in opposite directions so they are approximately 4 to 5 yards apart.



Offensive player tries to get past the defender in this one-on-one drill.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. On the whistle, the runner goes forward and must run in between the two pylons that are 5 yards apart.
2. The ball carrier makes a move to get past the defender.
3. Each time the runner gets by the defender score a point for the offense.
4. Score a point for the defense each time a flag is pulled within 3 yards of the line of scrimmage.
5. Players must stay between the two cones.

COACHING TIPS:

- The ball carrier can juke, jive, shuck or spin to avoid the defender
- The defender must use good form to reach for the flags: keep the head up, keep the shoulder in line with the ball carrier's chest and arms extended towards the waist.

11.

JUKE AND SPIN DRILL

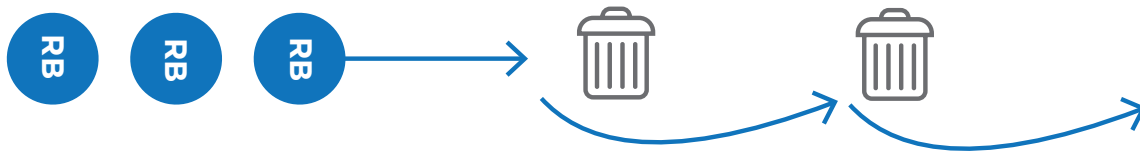


PURPOSE:

Running backs learn two basic moves that they can use to gain extra yards.

SETUP:

Place two trash cans in a single file line, roughly 5 yards apart. Coach starts 5 yards behind the first trash can with a line of runners beside him. If you don't have trash cans, you can use parents, coaches, extra players or any other person-sized obstacle.



HOW IT WORKS:

1. Coach simulates a snap, then hands off to the runner
2. The runner sprints to the first trash can, then makes a juke move, faking left and accelerating to the right
3. The runner sprints to the first trash can, then makes a spin move, dropping the right shoulder, then spinning around the obstacle on the right
4. Finish with a 5 yard sprint
5. Repeat the same two moves, this time going to the opposite side

COACHING TIPS:

- Advanced players can try combination moves, starting with a juke into a spin
- A good juke move employs the head, eyes and shoulders into the original fake, then transitions to the opposite side by planting hard and pushing off the outside foot

12.

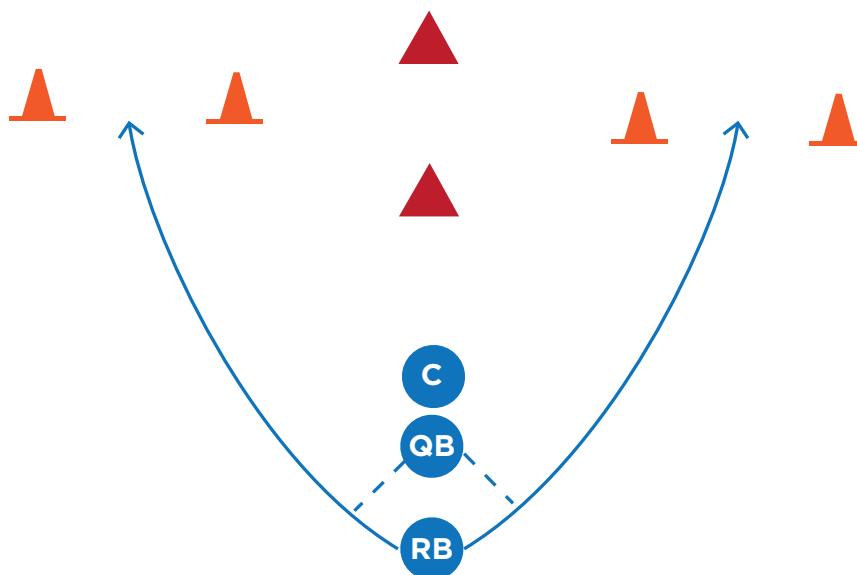
3 ON 2 RUNNING DRILL

**PURPOSE:**

A game-like drill that gets 5 players at a time involved and in a game situation - simulating a running play.

SETUP:

On offense you will have a center, a quarterback and a running back. On defense you will have one lineman and one linebacker. Set up two pairs of cones a few yards apart, about 5 yards down field from the line of scrimmage, one pair left of center and one pair right of center - these are the areas that the Running Back needs to run through.

**HOW IT WORKS:**

1. Coach will call the play for the offense.
2. The center snaps to the quarterback, who hands off to the running back
3. The running back tries to score by running through either of the two pairs of cones

COACHING TIPS:

- This is a great way to practice the Center/QB exchange, the QB/RB exchange (mix it up, left and right) and pursuing the ball carrier and flag pulling.
- You can have 2 of these drills going on at the same time so that everyone on the team is involved.

13.

POPCORN PITCH DRILL

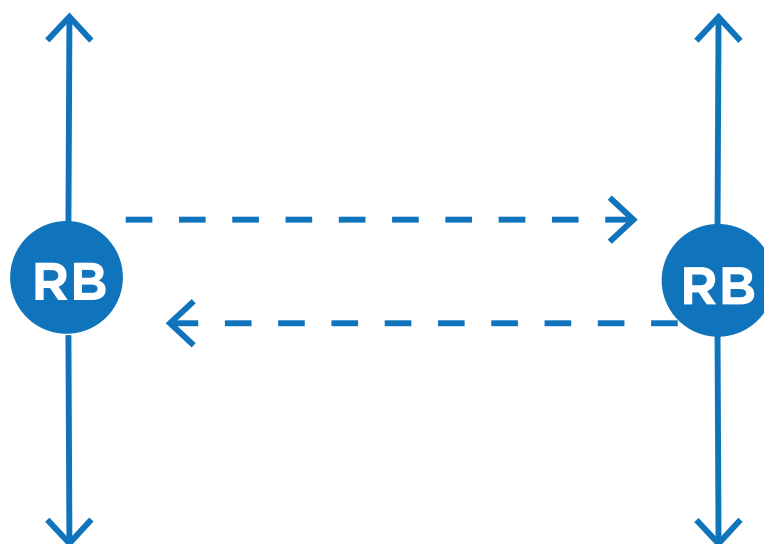


PURPOSE:

This fun drill focuses on developing agility and hand-eye coordination

SETUP:

Two players line up approximately five yards apart anywhere on the field. One player has a ball.



Players pitch the ball back and forth while shuffling side to side

HOW IT WORKS:

1. When the coach says "Go!" - both players begin to shuffle to the left
2. When Coach says "Toss!" - player 1 underhand pitches the ball to his partner, who catches it and immediately pitches it back
3. The players continue to shuffle side to side, around 5 yards in each direction, pitching the ball back and forth.
4. When they get the hang of that, add in an extra ball. This time, the players will simultaneously pitch both balls back and forth while shuffling side to side

COACHING TIPS:

- Make sure players don't "click" their heels or cross over their feet. Maintain at least 6-12 inches between feet at all times
- Players should stay on the yard line as they move back and forth - not stray forward and backward.
- To make it a competitive game, see how many catches each pair can make in 60 seconds

14.

CONES AND CANS DRILL

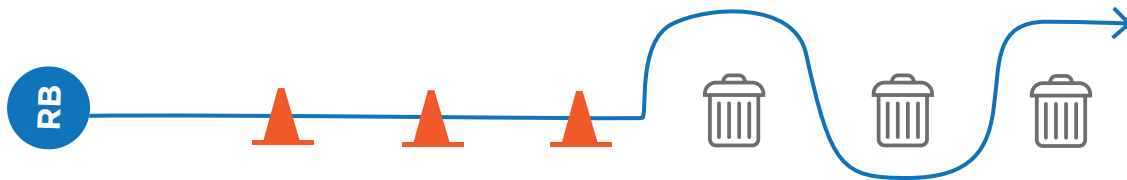


PURPOSE:

Teams can practice their red zone offense and defense

SETUP:

Field a full offense against a full defense. The offense starts 5 yards from the end zone.



Runners high-knee over the cones, then juke around the cans

HOW IT WORKS:

1. Coach simulates a snap, then hands off to the first runner
2. The runner runs with high knees to step over the 3 cones in succession
3. When he reaches the trash cans, he zig-zags through them, planting hard with the outside foot and brushing past each can one a time.
4. At the end of the course sprint 5 extra yards

COACHING TIPS:

- The runner should never cross their feet over when changing direction.
- Emphasize ball security and awareness. The runner's head and eyes should be up throughout
- For extra difficulty, add a defender at the end of the course which the runner has to beat to score

15.

CRISSCROSS LATERAL DRILL

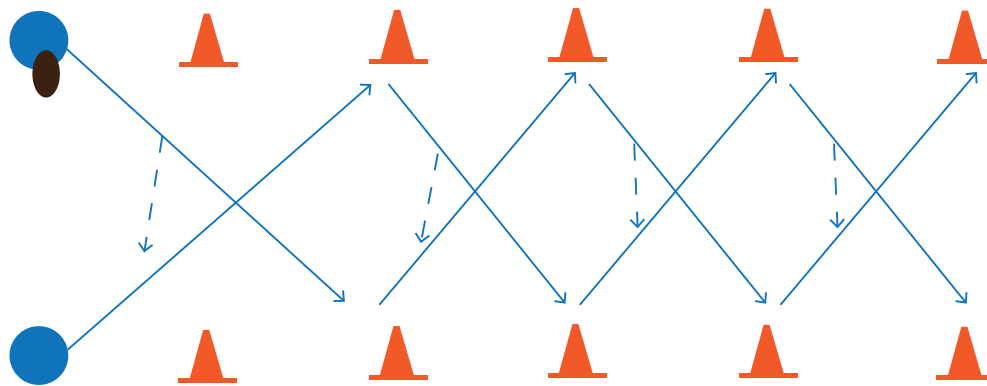


PURPOSE:

Players learn to lateral the ball and receive the lateral while they are on the run.

SETUP:

Line up 10 cones – pair the cones up about 7 yards apart and at the same 5 yard intervals. Have a line of players at each row of cones.



Players alternate lateralling the ball to each other.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. The drill starts with the Player 1 moving forward, and across, to the first cone on the other side
2. Player 2 starts running towards the first cone on the other side, just a half second later, so he runs just behind the first runner
3. Player 1 will lateral the ball across the cone area to the Player 2
4. Both players continue to the cone.
5. Player 2 zigs back across the cone area to the second cone, while Player 1 cuts behind him.
6. Player 2 laterals to Player 1.
7. Repeat, crisscrossing back and forth, making five lateral throws from end to end.
8. 6 points are awarded for each TD. The coach keeps score.

COACHING TIPS:

- When making a lateral, players should be aiming to hit the player in the area between his waistline and shoulders.
- Ball should be flat in the air and not spinning.
- Players should be throwing the lateral and catching it with two hands.

16.

WOLF DRILL



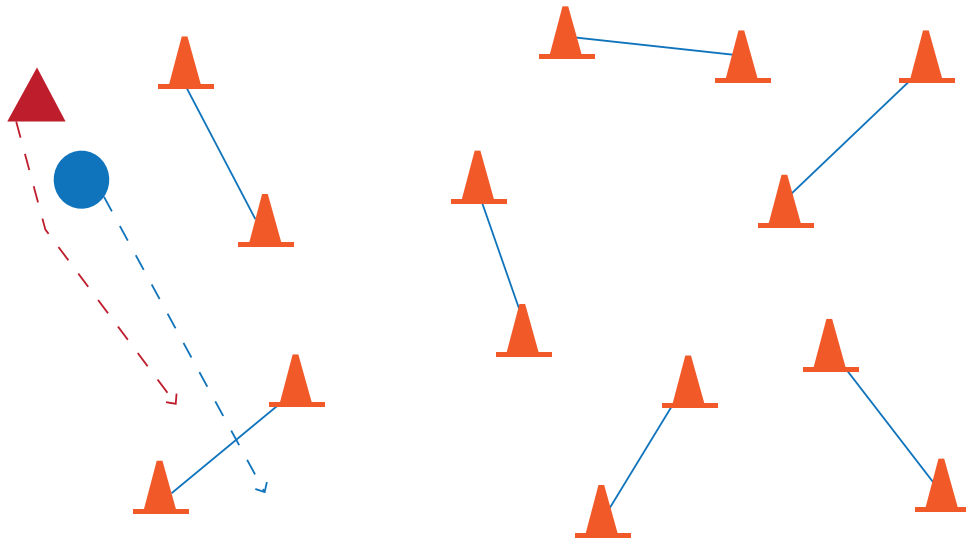
PURPOSE:

Players develop running skills and practice avoiding having their flag pulled.

SETUP:

Using pairs of cones, set up 5-7 "gates" randomly across the field.

Players pair up with someone of similar size and speed – one runner (with the ball) and one wolf.



Players try to run through mini-end zones without getting their flag pulled.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. On the whistle, the runner takes off and runs to whichever "gate" he chooses. After passing through a gate, he immediately runs to another gate, trying to cross all 5 gates before being caught.
2. The wolf's job is to chase down the runner and pull his flag as quickly as possible.
3. The drill continues until the runner's flag is pulled.
4. Each gate counts as one point from the runner
5. The partners switch roles and repeat.

COACHING TIPS:

- The ball carrier should run with their head up.
- The wolf should watch the movement of RB's hips to know where he is going.
- Another variation of this drill would be to shorten the time to 30 seconds.

17.

10 YARD SHOOTOUT



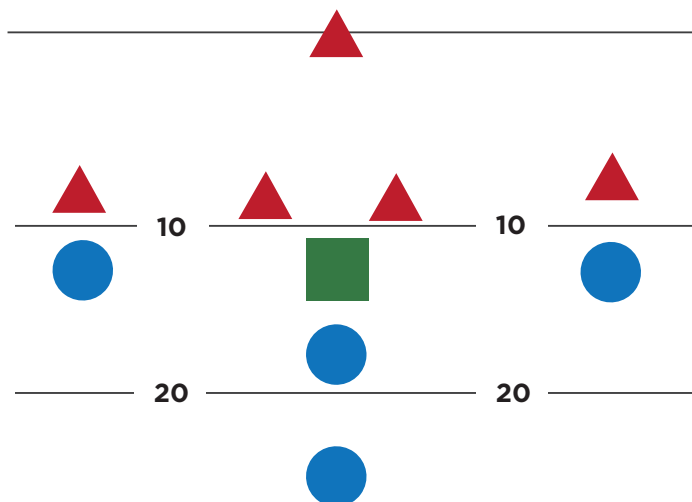
PURPOSE:

Players practice their offensive and defense schemes in a competitive scrimmage

SETUP:

The offense has one down to gain 10 yards, while the defense is trying to get a stop
After each down, the 10-yard distance resets

The offense gets 3 turns. Each 10-yard gain counts as one point
After those 3 turns, switch offense to defense and repeat



Offense scores a point for every 10-yard gain

HOW IT WORKS:

1. The offense has one down to gain 10 yards, while the defense is trying to get a stop
2. After each down, the 10-yard distance resets
3. The offense gets 3 turns. Each 10-yard gain counts as one point
4. After those 3 turns, switch offense to defense and repeat
5. Team with the most points wins the game

COACHING TIPS:

- This drill allows players to put all the skills they've been learning to use. Look for good fundamentals, good flag pulling technique and good defensive positioning as the drill is run.
- Feel free to adjust the distance or number of downs for the skill level of your team

18.

DOUBLE JUMP CUT DRILL



PURPOSE:

This drill teaches agility and demeanor in traffic.

SETUP:

Place four bags on the field. The first two in a horizontal L shape and then the other two in a flipped L shape. The runners and coach start 5 yards behind the first bag. If you don't have bags, you can create two L shapes using cones.



Runners practice two consecutive jump cuts around a course of bags or cones

HOW IT WORKS:

1. The coach simulates a snap, then hands off to the running back
2. Player runs to the first set of bags and does a jump cut right.
3. He then accelerates upfield to the next set of bags and does a jump cut left
4. Player then sprints upfield for 5 more yards

COACHING TIPS:

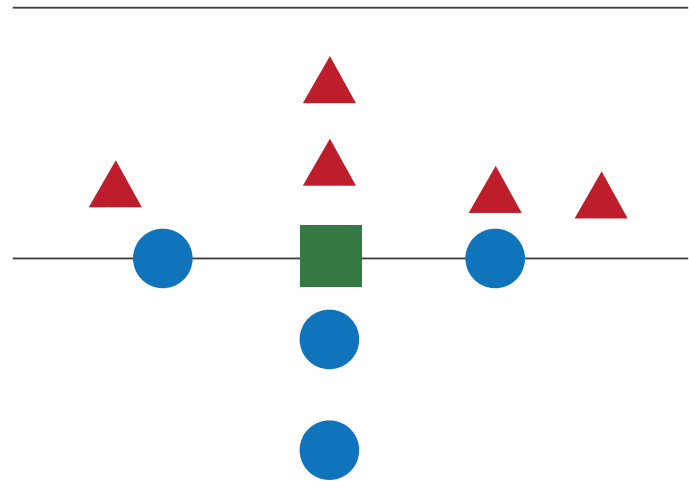
- To make a jump cut, the runner will hop into a two-footed plant, then make a quick lateral jump to change direction. It works best when an aggressive defender is lunging or diving toward the runner
- To increase difficulty, add a defender at the end of the course, which the runner has to beat
- For variety the coach can pitch the ball to the runner instead of handing off

PURPOSE:

Players practice their offensive and defense schemes in a competitive scrimmage

SETUP:

Field a full offense against a full defense. The offense starts at mid-field.



Offense maintains possession until they score or are stopped by the defense

HOW IT WORKS:

1. The offense tries to move the ball downfield and score. They get as many downs as they want, as long as they continue to make forward progress on every down
2. If the defense makes ONE stop, where the offense does not gain yardage, the ball changes sides and the defense is now on offense
3. The offense continues to move the ball downfield until they score, or turn it over
4. After a score, the other team takes possession at midfield

COACHING TIPS:

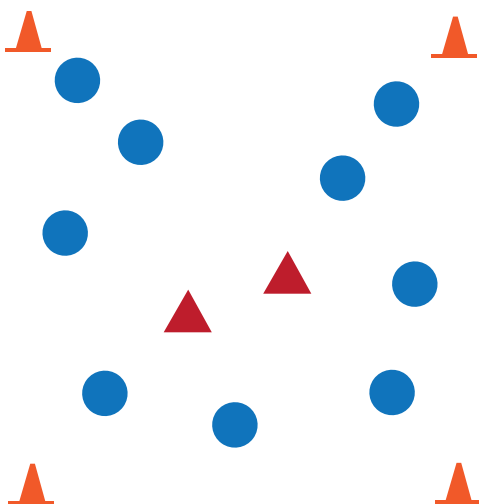
- Have the defense play both man to man and zone during the drill so that they can get familiar with both concepts.
- Look for good flag-pulling technique from the defense – staying balanced, going through the offensive player, using two hands and swiping down.



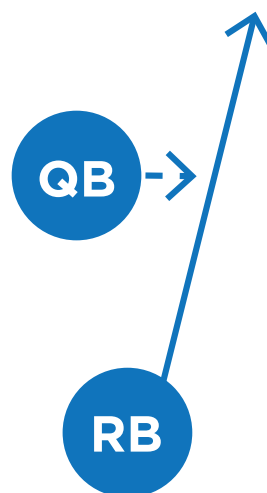
PRACTICE PLANS

1.

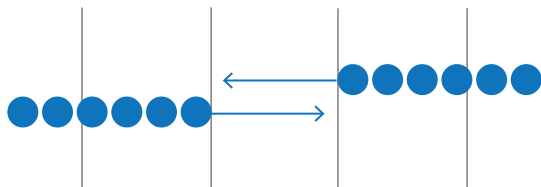
60 MINUTE RUNNING GAME FLAG FOOTBALL PRACTICE (BEGINNER)



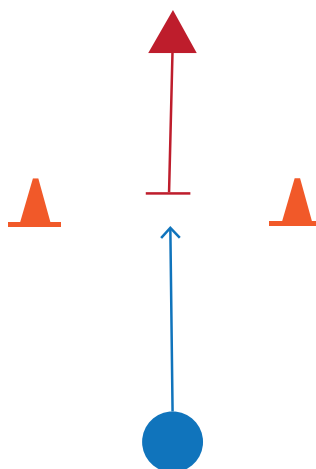
Flag Tag:
10 minutes



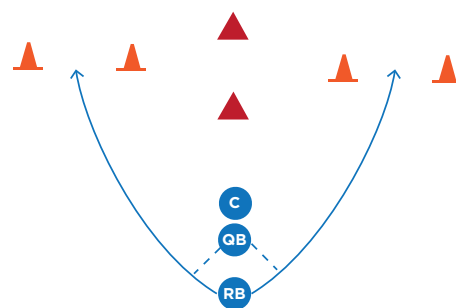
Handoff Drill:
5 minutes



Team Handoff Exchange:
10 minutes



Pit Drill:
10 minutes



3 on 2 Running Drill:
10 minutes

Play Review and Scrimmage: 10 minutes

Split team into two groups and practice your offensive plays at half speed against a dummy defense. Then full speed against live defense.

2.

60 MINUTE RUNNING GAME FLAG FOOTBALL PRACTICE (BEGINNER)

Dynamic Warmup: 5 minutes



High Knee



Buttkicker



Frankenstein



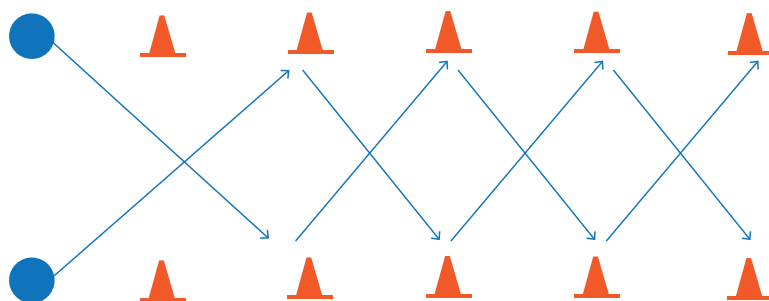
Walking Lunge &
Twist



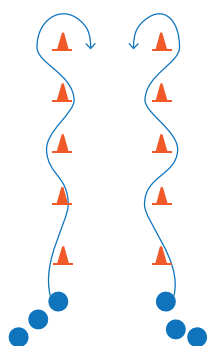
Walking Knee Hug



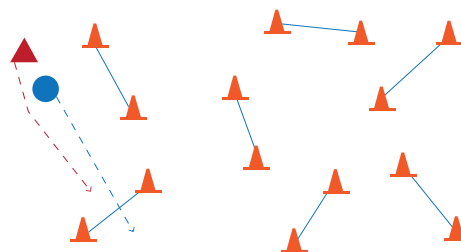
Straight Leg
Run



Crisscross Handoff Drill:
10 minutes



5 Cone Relay Race:
10 minutes



Wolf Drill:
10 minutes

Play Review and Scrimmage: 20 minutes

Split team into two groups and practice your offensive plays at half speed against a dummy defense. Then full speed against live defense.

3.

60 MINUTE RUNNING GAME FLAG FOOTBALL PRACTICE (INTERMEDIATE)

Dynamic Warmup: 5 minutes



High Knee



Buttkicker



Frankenstein



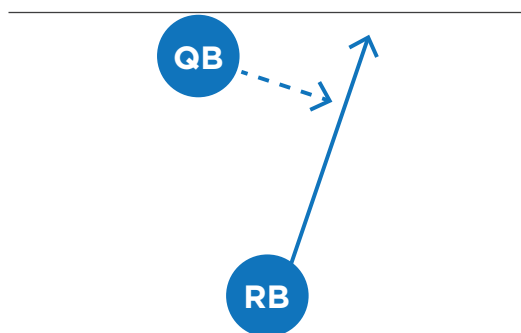
Walking Lunge & Twist



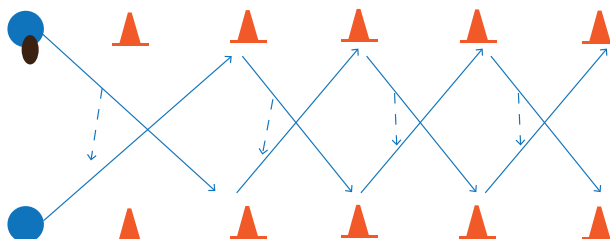
Walking Knee Hug



Straight Leg Run



Toss Drill:
10 minutes



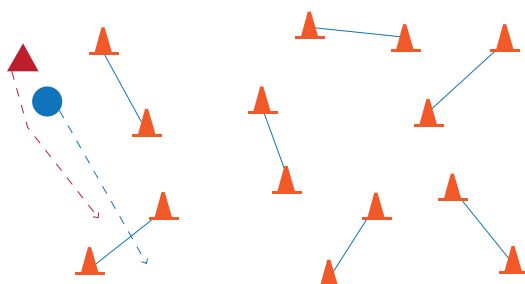
Crisscross Lateral Drill:
10 minutes



Bag Course Drill:
5 minutes



Juke and Spin Drill:
5 minutes



Wolf Drill:
20 minutes

4.

90 MINUTE RUNNING GAME FLAG FOOTBALL PRACTICE (INTERMEDIATE)

Dynamic Warmup: 5 minutes



High Knee



Buttkicker



Frankenstein



Walking Lunge & Twist

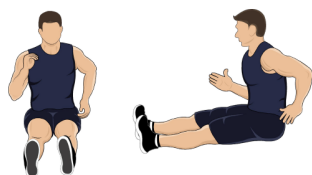


Walking Knee Hug

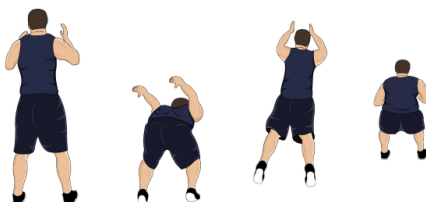


Straight Leg Run

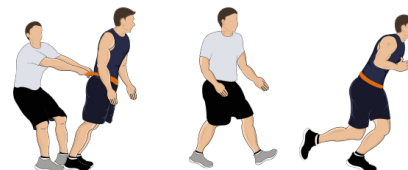
Power Circuit: 5 minutes



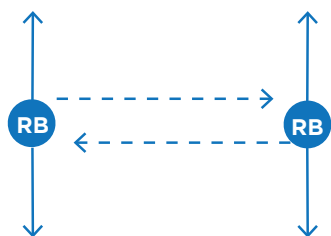
Seated Arm Swings



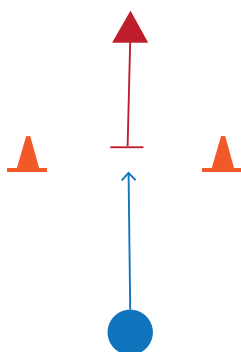
Frog Jumps



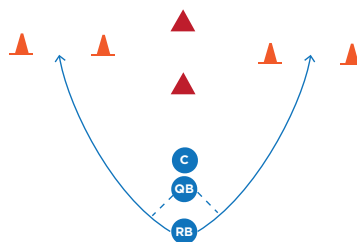
Let Go's



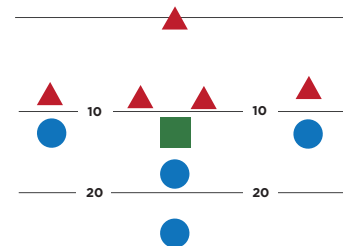
Popcorn Pitch Drill:
10 minutes



Pit Drill:
10 minutes



3 on 2 Running Drill:
15 minutes



10-Yard Shootout:
20 minutes

Play Review and Scrimmage: 20 minutes

Split team into two groups and practice your offensive plays at half speed against a dummy defense. Then full speed against live defense.

5.

90 MINUTE RUNNING GAME FLAG FOOTBALL PRACTICE (ADVANCED)

Dynamic Warmup: 5 minutes



High Knee



Buttkicker



Frankenstein



Walking Lunge & Twist



Walking Knee Hug



Straight Leg Run

Power Circuit: 5 minutes



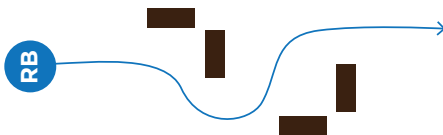
Seated Arm Swings



Frog Jumps



Let Go's



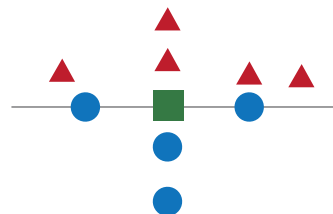
Double Jump Cut Drill:
10 minutes



Cones and Cans Drill:
10 minutes



Juke and Spin Drill:
10 minutes



Combat:
20 minutes

Play Review and Scrimmage: 20 minutes

Split team into two groups and practice your offensive plays at half speed against a dummy defense. Then full speed against live defense.