



2008

NFL FLAG FOOTBALL COACHING GUIDE

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GENERAL YOUTH COACHING PRINCIPLES

Coaching is an extremely important responsibility. A good coach always places the best interests of a player before winning.

Coaching youth sports is a difficult job because parents expect professional results from people who are mostly volunteers. High school, college and pro coaches start as assistants and work their way up through years of intense professional training.

The players and their parents have placed you in a position of leadership, and you have a responsibility to give them your best effort. Additionally, this football experience will play a significant factor in determining whether the players continue participating in football.

If you follow the coaching guidelines and general principles below, the players and their parents will be better served.

COACHING TIPS

Whether you are an experienced coach or a novice taking the reins of your first team, your main goal should be to create a fun and safe learning environment for your players. Many of the skills your players will practice and play with are just like those of their NFL heroes. Feel free to emphasize this connection to the real-life game!

EVERYBODY PLAYS

NFL FLAG games were designed to make it easy for every player to participate in their team's success. While size and skill certainly come into play when the action starts, your coaching should emphasize this aspect of "working together."

TACKLE TACKLING EARLY

Don't let your practices dissolve into a giant pile of rambunctious kids. For both their safety and your sanity, make sure to discourage any tackling or roughness early on. Remind them that they won't help their team in a game by tackling or being rough.

SPORTSMANSHIP RULES!

Help your players be good sports. After a game, shake hands with or do a cheer for the other team. Applaud good play by both sides. Treat officials with respect. While imitating you, your team won't even recognize the good lesson they're learning.

LET THEM PLAY FOOTBALL!

The temptation to be another Don Shula or Bill Walsh will have to wait. This is NFL FLAG. While teaching football skills and strategies is important, keep your lessons as simple as possible. As your team grasps the basics, move on to more advanced ideas. Overloading young players with too much information too early can cause confusion for them and headaches for you.

HAVE FUN!

We thank you for your volunteer service. NFL FLAG couldn't happen without you – but remember to have fun too!



TEN COACHING GUIDELINES

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. They should be sensitive to the children's feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. A coach should be dedicated to serving children and understand that football provides physical and emotional growth for its participants. Remember, NFL FLAG is for the children.
2. A coach needs to realize that they are a teacher, not a drill sergeant. They should help children learn and work to improve their skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the child transforms into the best interests of the game.
3. The safety and welfare of the children never can be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.
4. Be patient. Don't push children beyond limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures – the football experience should not be one of them. Playing football should be fun.
5. Care more about the players as people than as athletes. The youth football program is a means to an end, not an end in itself.
6. A coach should encourage players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.
7. Remember that the rules of the game are designed to protect the participants, as well as to set a standard for competition. Never circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his or her opponents' team at risk should not be involved with children.
8. Be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. Take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.
9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.
10. A coach can measure success by the respect he gets from his or her players, regardless of victories or defeats. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indication of good coaching.



NFL FLAG Football is a popular five-on-five game filled with fun and action. In this game, the offensive team plays for a first down at midfield and a touchdown in the end zone. Running and passing plays are allowed, although there are “no-running zones” at midfield and near each goal line. The defensive team covers receivers, rushes the passer and grabs flags to make “tackles.” Please note that while the rules may be adopted to suit local needs, they must remain non-contact.

THE BASICS

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense’s 5-yard line.
- Interceptions may be returned.
- Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss unless deferred and the clock does not stop.

PLAYERS / GAME SCHEDULES

- Teams must field a minimum of five players at all times.
- Teams consist of 10 players – five on the field, with five substitutes.

TIMING / OVERTIME

- Games are played to 40 minutes running time. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime. The first team to score wins.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one 60-second and one 30-second time-out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.



SCORING

Touchdown:	6 points
Extra point:	1 point (played from 5-yard line) <i>or</i> 2 points (played from 12-yard line)
Safety:	2 points

RUNNING

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
- Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- “No-running zones” located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed.

RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

PASSING

- Shovel passes are allowed.
- The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
- Interceptions may be returned.



DEAD BALLS

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - Ball carrier’s flag is pulled
 - Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - Touchdown or safety is scored
 - Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
 - Ball carrier’s flag falls out
- Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. **NO RUNNING STARTS!!!!**
- Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
- Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
- Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.

SPORTSMANSHIP / ROUGHING

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



PENALTIES

- All penalties will be called by the referee.

DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

<i>Offsides:</i>	Five yards and automatic first down
<i>Interference:</i>	10 yards and automatic first down
<i>Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.):</i>	10 yards and automatic first down
<i>Illegal FLAG pull (before receiver has ball):</i>	10 yards and automatic first down
<i>Illegal rushing (starting from inside 7-yard marker):</i>	10 yards and automatic first down

OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

<i>Illegal motion (more than 1 person moving, false start, etc.):</i>	Five yards and loss of down
<i>Illegal forward pass (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage):</i>	Five yards and loss of down
<i>Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender):</i>	10 yards and loss of down
<i>FLAG guarding:</i>	10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down
<i>Delay of game:</i>	Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

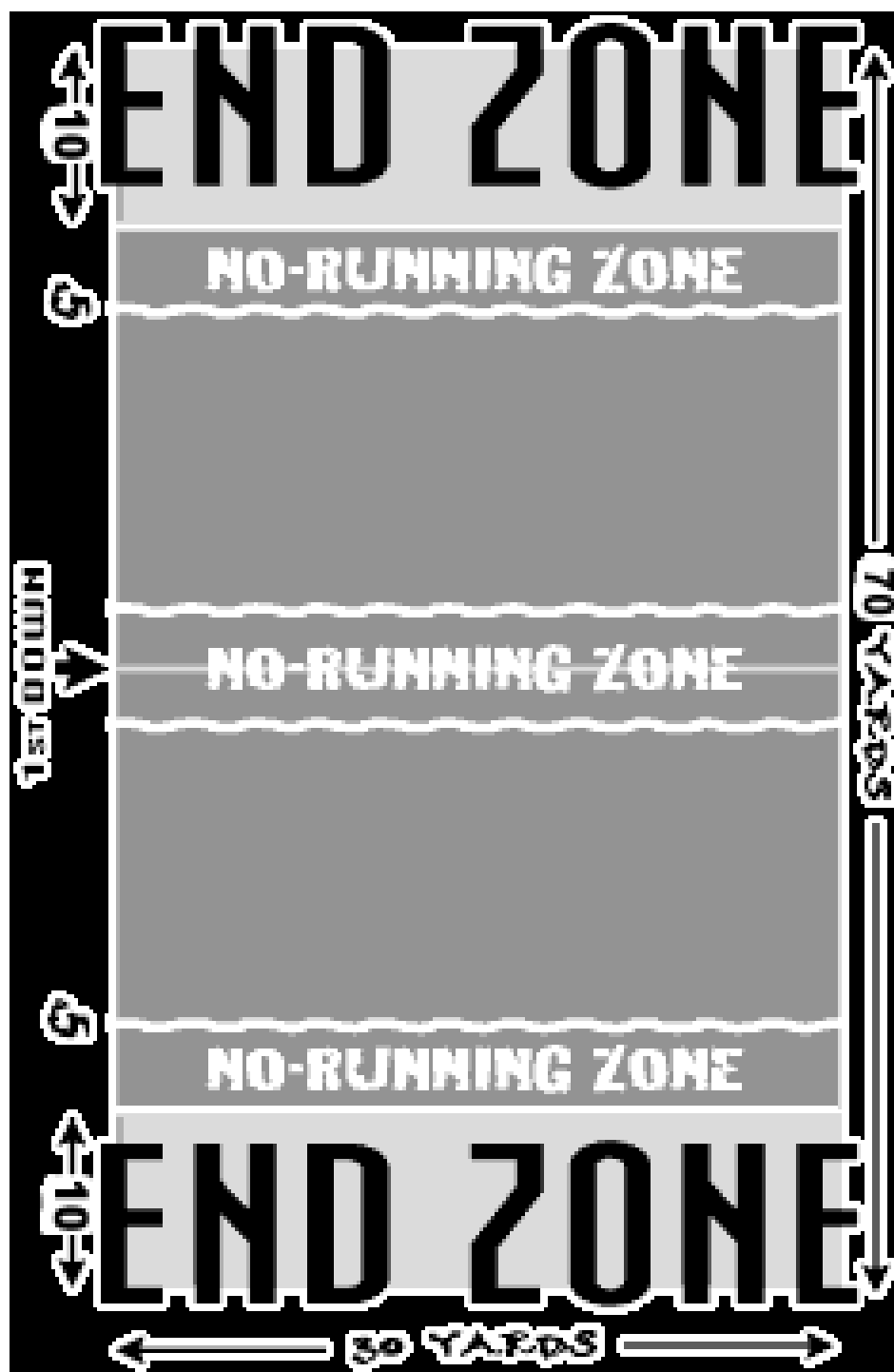
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

ATTIRE

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made. All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

Official NFL FLAG jerseys must be worn during play.

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.





NFL FLAG FOOTBALL

PRACTICE DRILLS

Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #1

Warm-Up Drill: "Jingle-Jangle"

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

Purpose:

Improve balance, footwork, and change of direction.

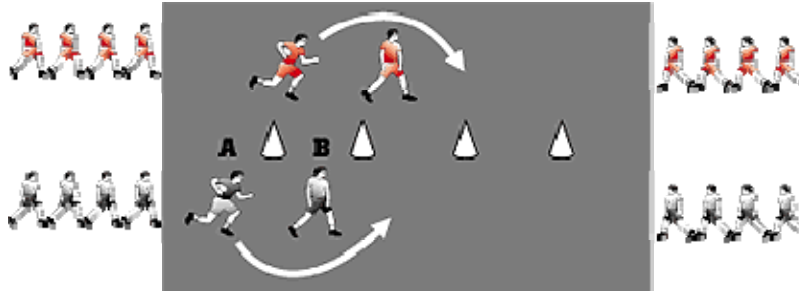
Drill Outline :

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #2

Centre QB Exchange



Purpose: To develop proper snapping technique.

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

Drill Outline:

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

Progression: Shotgun snap.

Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #3

Passing Drill: Progressive QB

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

Development Goals

Perfect throwing motion while using only the throwing arm.

Coaching Points

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

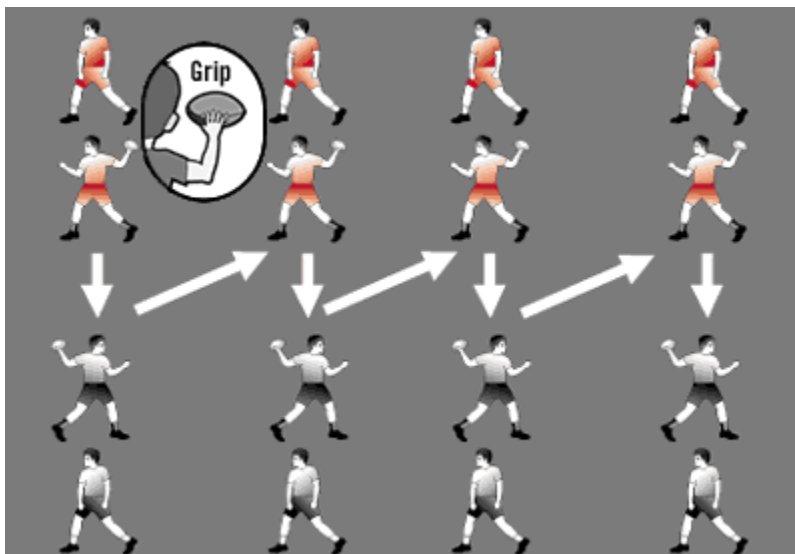
Progressions

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #4

Passing



Purpose: To develop proper passing technique.

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

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

Progression:

- Begin with the participants on both knees facing each other.
- Kids throwing from their knees will focus on the throwing motion without the use of their legs.
- Progress to right knee up and then switch to left knee up.
- Next, have players stand straight up and pass with feet apart.

Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #5

Individual Pass Patterns



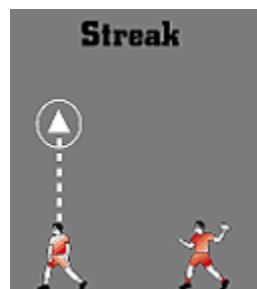
5 Yard Curl:
The WR runs up the field 5 yards, stops, and returns back towards the QB.



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



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



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



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



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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #6

Passing and Receiving: Run & Shoot

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

Development Goals

Passers: accuracy and how to lead receivers Receivers: how to run pass routes Defensive Backs: how to watch receivers and cut to the ball.

Coaching Points

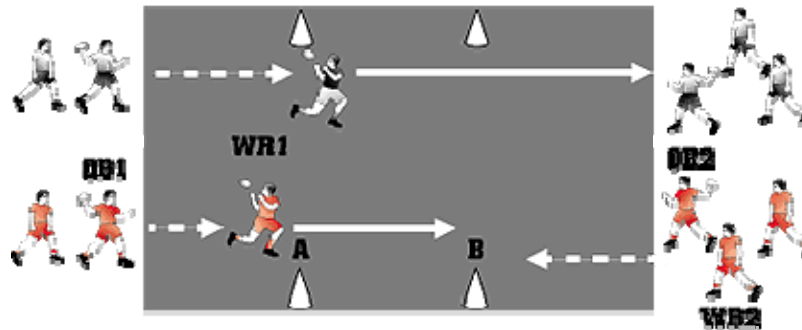
Divide your team into three groups. The first player in line is the first passer; the second goes out to play defensive back; the third is the receiver. The outside groups run simple 10-yard square-out patterns, while the middle group runs 10-yard turn-ins or buttonhooks.

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #7

Passing & Receiving



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

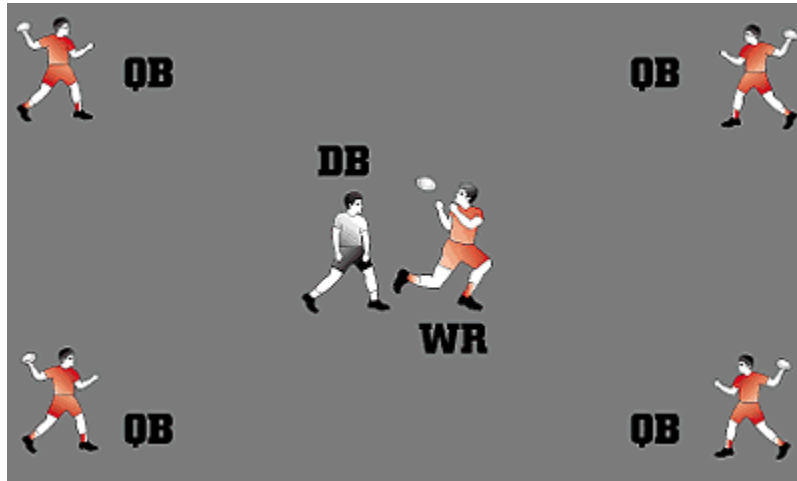
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #8

Passing & Receiving



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

Progression:

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

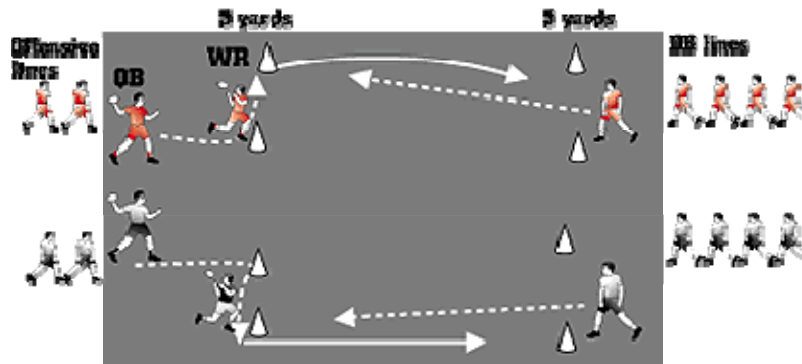
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #9

Passing & Receiving



Purpose: To develop proper pass patterns and defensive skills.

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

Drill Outline:

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

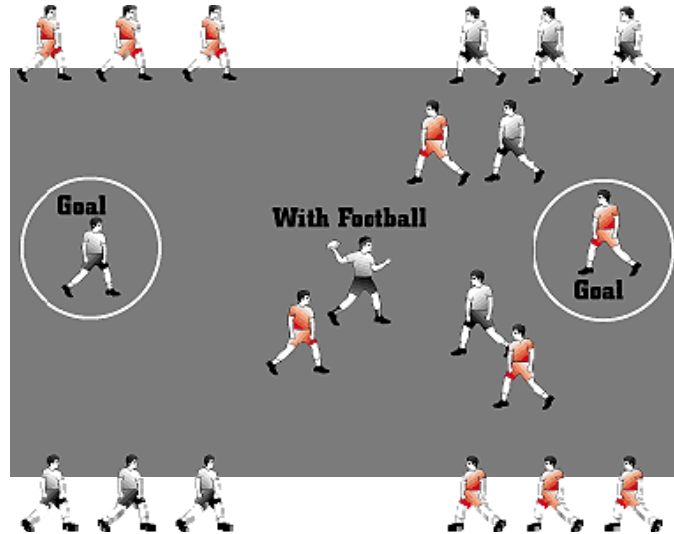
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #10

Passing & Receiving



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

Progression:

- Add players to the field, one per team.

Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #11

Pass Pattern Combinations



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



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



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



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



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



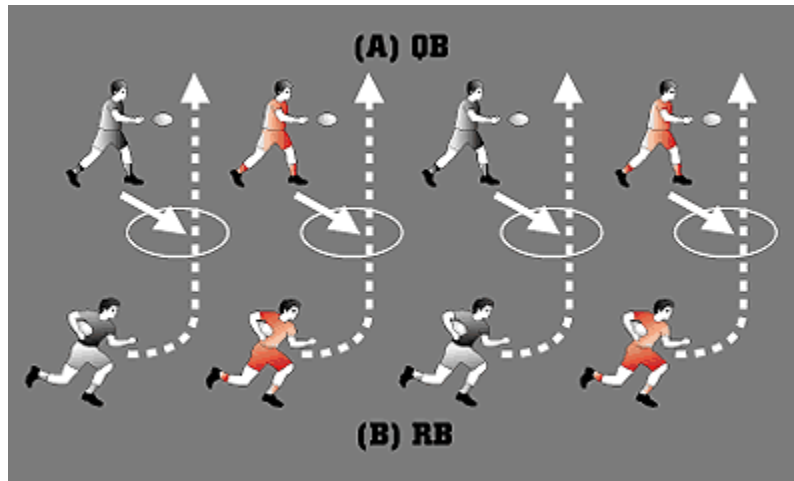
Twin Curl:
WR #1 and WR #2 both run 5-yard curls. This play is used in short-yardage situations.

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #12

Tossing the Ball



Purpose: To develop proper tosses or pitches.

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

Drill Outline:

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

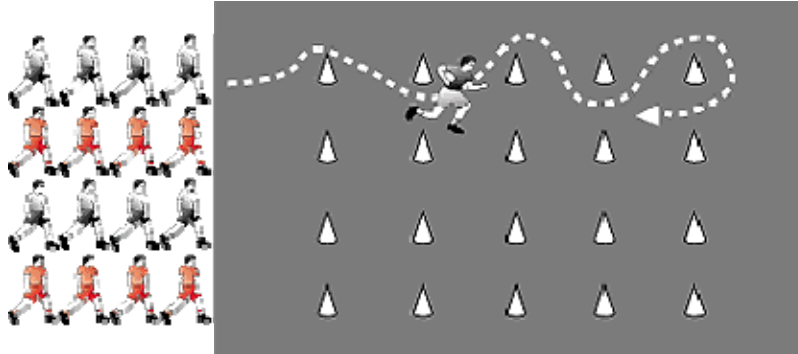
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #13

Running with the Ball



Purpose: To develop running skills.

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

Drill Outline:

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

Progression: Have players backpedal or hop over the cones.

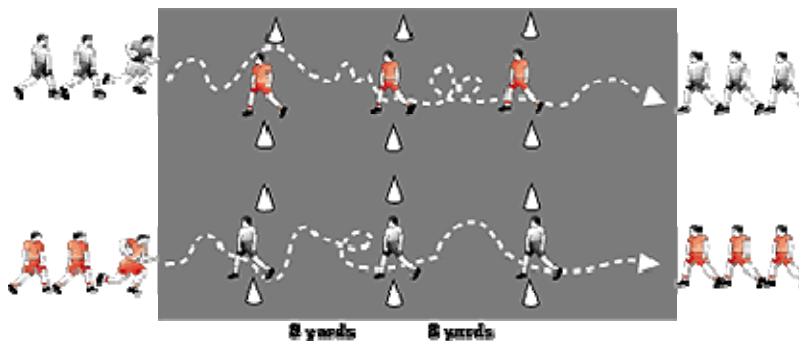
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #14

Running with the Ball



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

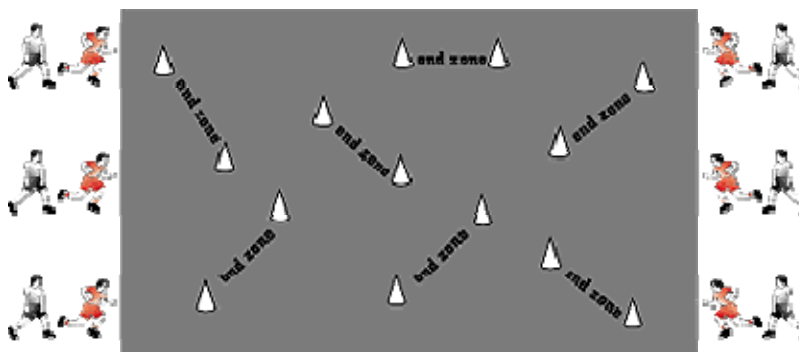
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #15

Running With The Ball



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

Progression: Shorten time to 30 seconds.

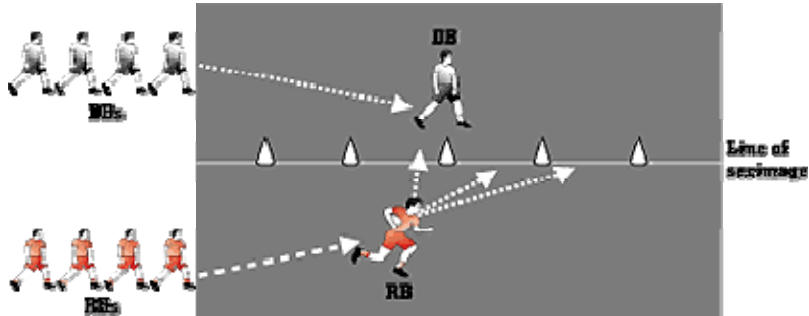
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #16

Defense



Purpose: To develop defensive back skills.

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

Drill Outline:

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

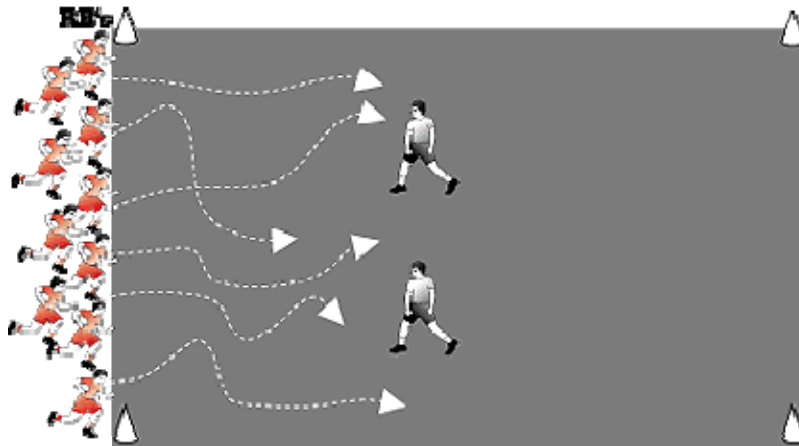
Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #17

Defense



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

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

Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #18

Defense



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

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

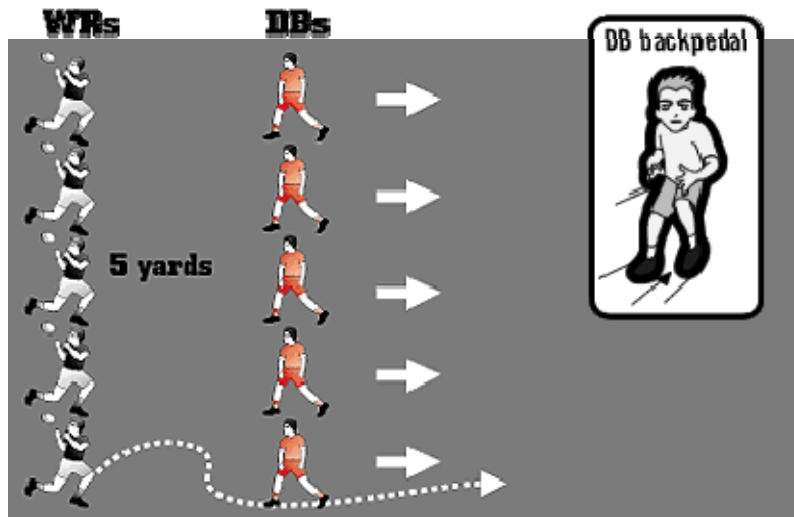
Key Coaching Points:

- DB practices staying in front of offensive player.



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #19

Defense



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

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

Key Coaching Points:

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



Reebok Skills & Drills - Drill #20

NFL Ultimate



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

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

Drill Outline:

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

Key Coaching Points:

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

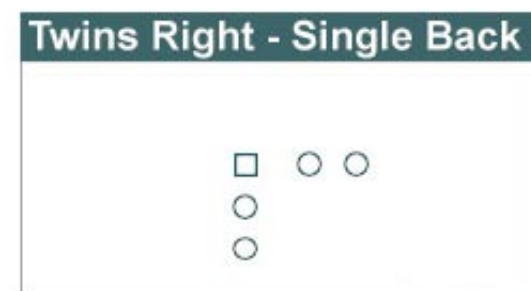
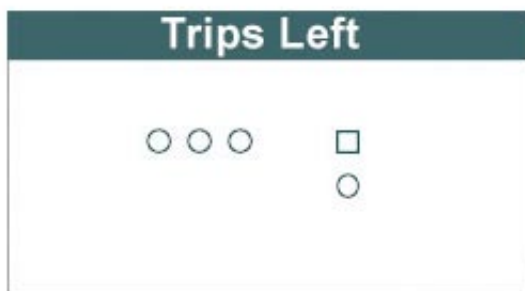
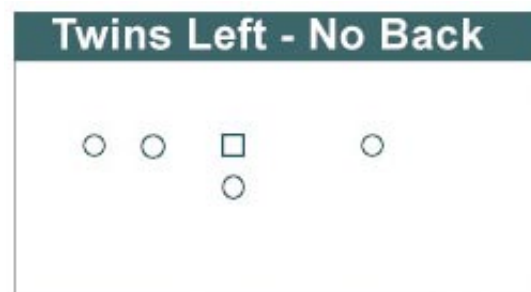
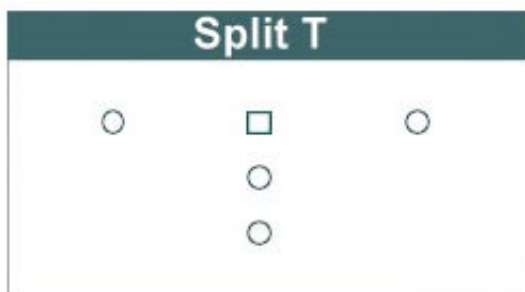


NFL FLAG FOOTBALL

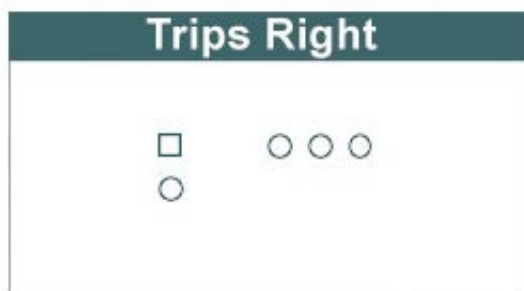
PLAYS & FORMATIONS

How to Set and Call a Formation

- In NFL FLAG we work with the understanding that there are three basic formation calls: Split T, Twins and Trips. Variations and adjustments to the formation may be made.
- In our first series of plays we run out of the most basic formation, the Split T, where one receiver is on either side of the ball, split out approximately 10-12 yards from the center, with a single running back set behind the quarterback. This is a balanced formation in NFL FLAG with no strong side, therefore we will not have a call side (no right or left). The formation when set looks like the letter “T.”
- The first call made when setting a play will be the formation.



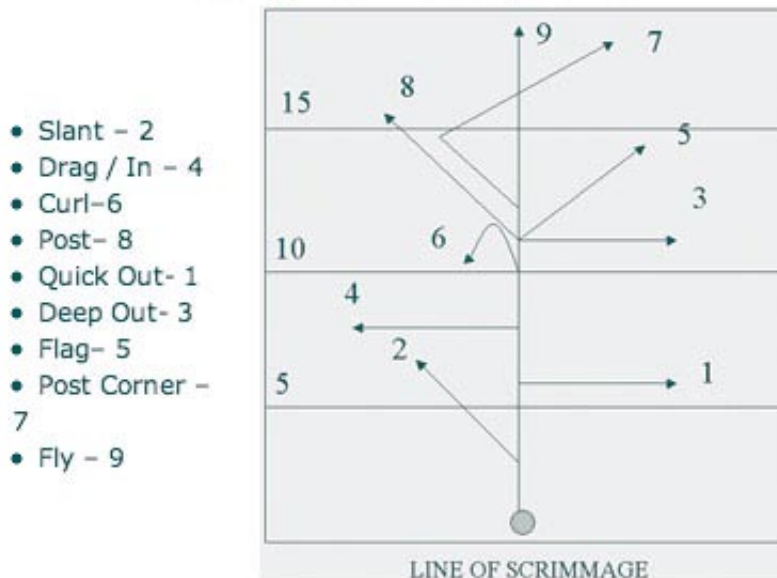
In this diagram, two receivers go to the call side of the formation. There is the option to have a single back or no backs.



In this diagram, three receivers go to the call side of the formation. This is a no back formation.

Passing Tree

Passing Tree - Routes / Number



The Passing Tree is a numbered system used for the passing routes.

The passing tree system is designed so that all even-numbered routes (2,4,6,8) are run towards the middle of the field and all odd-numbered routes (1,3,5,7,9) are be run towards the sideline.

These routes are used for all positions on the field.

The running back has extra routes that are always be referred to by name.

Since the ball is always placed in the middle of the field, the center faces the dilemma, and all of the center's routes should be based on the play design.

Passing Tree Receiver Route Definitions

Quick Out: This is a 5-8 yard route forward then the receiver cuts out towards the sideline then looks for the ball.

Slant: This is a 3-5 yard route forward then the receiver breaks towards the middle of the field on a 45 degree angle and looks for the ball.

Deep Out: This is a 10-15 yard route. It should be run exactly like the quick out only deeper.

Drag/In: This is a 5-8 yard route forward then the receiver breaks into the middle of the field on a 90 degree angle and looks for the ball.

Flag: This is a 10-15 yard route forward then the receiver breaks at a 45 degree angle towards the sideline and looks for the ball.

Curl: This is a 5-8 yard route forward then the receiver stops and turns to the ball.

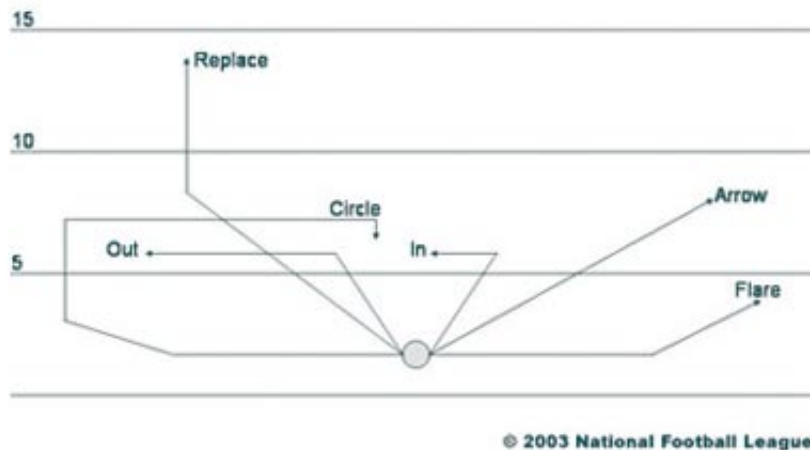
Post Corner: This is a 12-20 yard route forward then the receiver cuts on a 45 degree angle to the middle of the field for a few steps then the receiver cuts on a 45 degree angle towards the sideline and then looks for the ball.

Post: This is a 12-20 yard route forward then the receiver breaks on a 45 degree angle towards the middle of the field and looks for the ball.

Fly: This route is run straight up the field with the receiver looking for the ball after he gets past about 15 yards.

** For younger participants the passing routes can be reduced by half.*

Passing Tree Running Back Routes



While your backs may run any of the assigned routes on the primary passing tree, these routes have been designed as a high-percentage second option to complete a pass.

These routes will not be numbered. You will always refer to them by name.

Replace: This is a 8-15 yard route where the running back angles forward on a 45 degree angle and then goes straight up the field and looks for the ball.

Arrow: This route the running back drives on a 45 degree angle towards the sideline and looks back for the ball.

Circle: This route starts toward the sideline and then circles back to in front of the QB.

Out/In: This route starts straight up the field then the running back breaks “out” or “in” depending on the play.

Secondary Routes

Replace: Exactly what the route is called. Your secondary or safety receiver should drive to and replace the area where your receivers were aligned. Works well in the case when receivers clear out one side of the field.

Arrow: A route in which the receiver drives on a 45 degree angle, always toward the side line. The receiver should always look over the outside shoulder for the pass.

Stop: Look for open space. Turn to the quarterback with your back to the defender. This should be a pass to the chest.

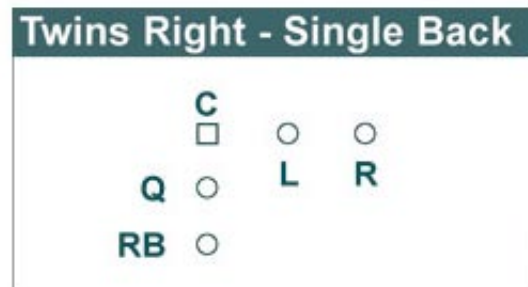
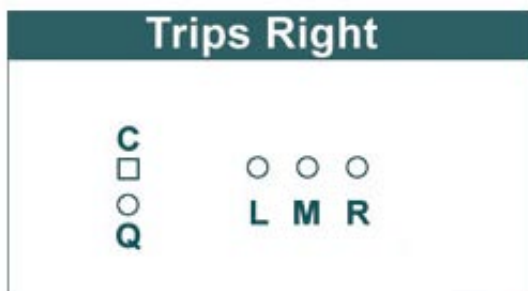
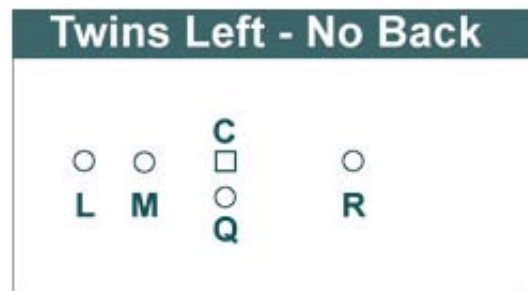
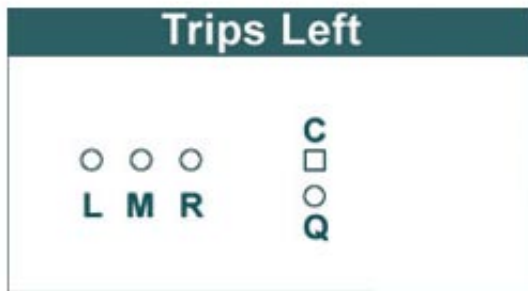
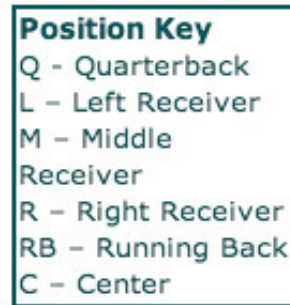
Flare: Rounded off pattern in the backfield with the completion coming near or at the line of scrimmage. Usually executed by a running back being used as a second or third option. A pass option for a quarterback when his main options have been shut down.

How to Call a Play

Now that you've read your passing tree and understand the pass routes available, there are two options you have in play calling. The simple option is to use positions attached to route names. The more advanced option is to use the passing tree numeric system.

There will be a few constants when calling plays.

1. You will always call the formation first, including the alignment (left or right, if necessary). You'll call an alignment in an unbalanced formation (anything but a Split T. See examples below).
2. You will always call your receiver pass routes from left to right (then your Halfback (H) route, followed by the Center route)

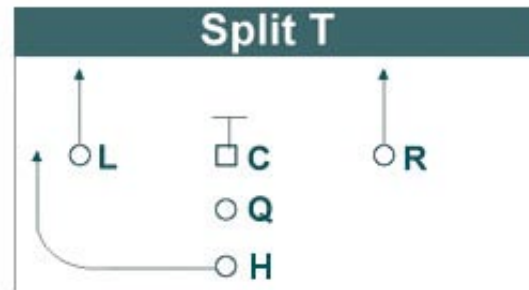


Three receivers go to the call side of the formation – This is a no back formation.

Two receivers go to the call side of the formation – There is the option to have a single back or no backs.

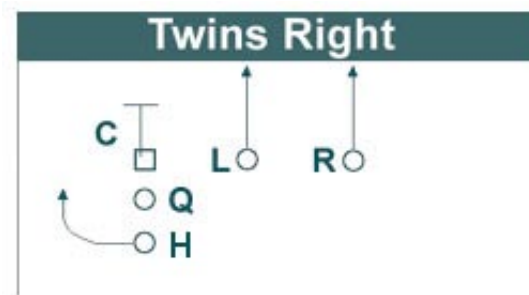
Plays Examples - 1

Based on the passing tree routes, and using our formula of calling your receiver routes from left to right followed by the running back route then the center route, the following play would be called:



Split T – Left Fly – Right Fly – H Flare Left – Center Stop

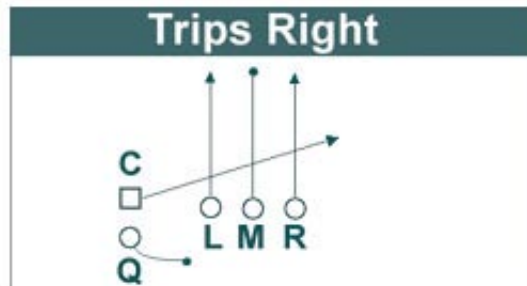
If we stick with our formula, the same play in a different formation will look like this:



Twins Right – Single Back – Left Fly – Right Fly – H Flare Left – Center Stop

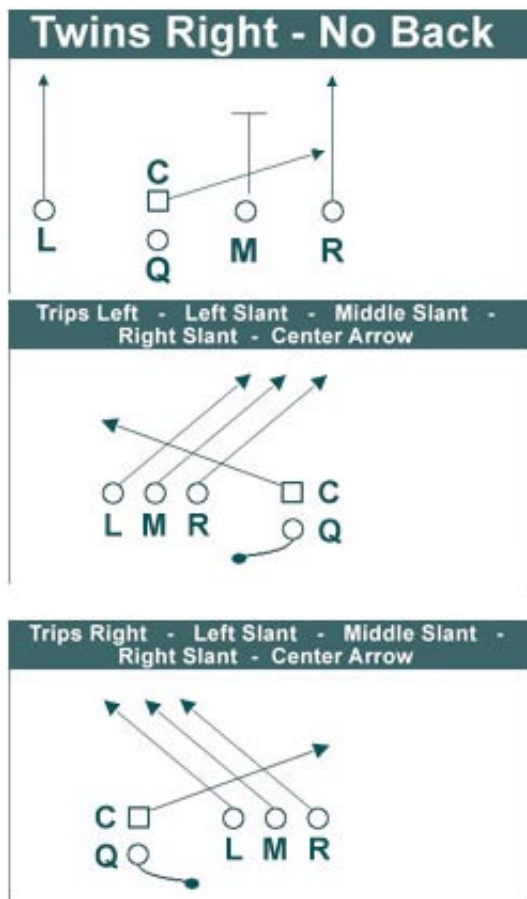
Plays Examples - 2

If we move to a three receiver set with no running back, (a Trips formation or Twins with a single receiver split opposite the call side), we now have a middle, or M receiver. Our play call formula remains the same – the play call is your receivers from left to right followed by the center call (since there is no running back in these formations there are no running back calls).



Trips Right – Left Fly – Middle Fly – Right Fly – Center Arrow

If we stick with our formula, the same play in a different formation will look like this:



Twins Right – No Back – Left Fly – Middle Stop – Right Fly – Center Arrow

If you are using the numeric play calling system from the passing tree we would call these plays:

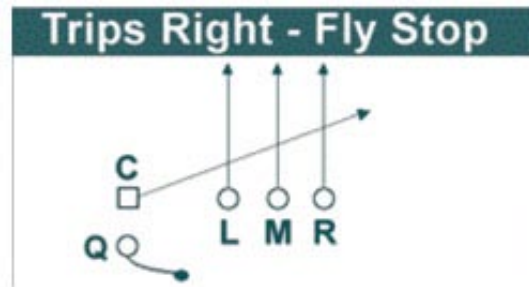
**Trips Left – 222- Center Arrow or
Trips Right – 222 – Center Arrow**

The goal of this play is to isolate your center for an easy completion. This play works well in a man-to-man cover situation with one safety and one rusher, where you are able to run all the defenders out of the area you want your center to go. The key to this play is to have your center delay for a count of two to three seconds to allow your other receivers the chance to cross the centers face at a deep angle (hopefully drawing the safety into the coverage) and take their defenders at full speed away from the play. Once the rusher is focused on the quarterback, the center can then release to the play side and should find himself/ herself wide open.

1 – Quick Out, 2 – Slant, 3 – Deep Out, 4 – Drag/In, 5 – Flag, 6 – Curl, 7 – Post Corner, 8 – Post, 9 – Fly

Advanced Play Calling

If you want a more advanced system to call plays, you can use the actual numbers attached to the routes on the passing tree to call your receiver routes (refer to passing tree for routes and the numbers associated with them). You are still calling your receiver routes from left to right. Instead of designating the receiver and the route he/ she will run, you call out a sequence of numbers that tells the receiver which route to run.



Now this play would be called:
Trips Right – 999 – Center Arrow

Instead of:

Trips Right – Left Fly – Middle Fly – Right Fly – Center Arrow

The key to using this numeric system is to ensure that each receiver knows their position within the formation.

- The first number is the left receiver
- The second number is the middle receiver
- The third number is the right receiver

Important Reminders:

- You will continue to call the routes (without using numbers) for the running back (when necessary), and the center.
- If you are using a two-receiver formation, then the play call should only be two digits rather than three.