Football Fundamentals

60 Drills for Developing the Fundamentals of Football

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In any level of football, success comes down to the basic fundamentals of blocking, tackling, catching and controlling the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball. 60 DRILLS FOR DEVELOPING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FOOTBALL is an all inclusive book that will help you get the most out of your players. It is designed to drill them on the fundamentals of football. This book will focus on developing the fundamentals of each position group. The book breaks down the basic fundamentals position by position, in drill format to allow each player to become proficient in the game of football.

The 60 Drills for Developing the Fundamentals of Football will help you get the maximum use of your most important teaching tools... your drills. Whether you are coaching little league, high school or professional football; developing and perfecting the basic fundamentals of football is the key to developing success.
# Table of Contents

## By Position:

**Fundamentals of Ball Security Pre-Practice drills**
- Center – quarterback fit drill .......................... 5
- Center – quarterback security drill .................. 6
- Center – quarterback ride drill .......................... 7
- Five points of pressure Isometric holds Drill .......... 9
- Five points of pressure isometric hold and punch drill .. 10
- Strip drill ................................................. 11

**Fundamentals of Quarterback play**........................ 12
- Three level drill .......................................... 13
- Hash drops drill ........................................... 15
- Pocket agile drill ........................................... 18
- Line drill .................................................. 20
- Circle drill .................................................. 22
- Rapid fire drill ............................................. 24

**Fundamentals of Offensive line play**.................. 26
- Load step and strut drill .................................. 27
- Demeanor drill ............................................. 28
- Fit drill ..................................................... 31
- Drive block drill ......................................... 33
- Slide step board drill ..................................... 35
- Five man sled blocking drill ............................. 37

**Fundamentals of Running back play** ................. 38
- Handoff pouch drill ....................................... 39
- Mesh drill .................................................. 41
- Deceleration drill ......................................... 43
- Open field cut drill ....................................... 45
- L drill ....................................................... 47
- Blaster rip drill ........................................... 49

**Fundamentals of Wide Receiver play** .................. 51
- Take off drill ............................................. 52
- Around the clock drill .................................... 54
- Confidence ball drills .................................... 56
- Hitch drill .................................................. 59
- Slant drill .................................................. 61
- Stalk blocking drill ...................................... 63
Ball Security: Center – Quarterback Exchange

The most important fundamental in offensive football is the center-quarterback exchange. The snap, or more important, the exchange is the first phase of any play. What may seem like an easy task isn’t so easy when the center and quarterback fails to execute the exchange and costs the team a possession or the game. The center quarterback exchange must become automatic. Repetition is the key to developing the proper mechanics.

Center-Quarterback Exchange: Receiving the Exchange
The psycho-motor pattern contains three phases that work simultaneously when receiving the exchange from the center. These phases are hand position, securing the ball and riding the center. The hand position refers to the placement of the receiving hand and securing hand. The receiving hand is the quarterback’s throwing hand, and will serve for the target for the center. The receiving hand should be placed under the center’s buttocks, make sure that the fingers are spread, relaxed and extended while giving slight pressure against the center. The heel of the securing hand needs to be in contact with the receiving hand, with the thumbs pointing parallel to each other. When the quarterback receives the ball from the center the laces should be up. The securing hand will then collapse around the lower part of the ball. The ride is the final phases of the exchange. The quarterback needs to stay in contact with the center as the center steps into his blocking assignment and as the quarterback steps away from the center. To accomplish this, the quarterback must be as close to the center with good knee and elbow bend. As the two separate, the quarterback will extend his arms to keep contact with the center.

Ball Security
Whether you are a running back running the football, a wide receiver catching the ball, or a quarterback scrambling; ball security is a must. Ball security is the most crucial fundamental for offensive football. The player carrying the ball must develop and master the five points of pressure and keep the ball high and tight.

Ball Security: Five points of pressure
1. Fingers grip the nose of the ball.
2. Palm of the hand rests against the ball.
3. Forearm presses against the ball.
4. The ball presses tight against the bicep.
5. The ball presses tight against the chest.

Ball Security: High and Tight
Make sure that the five points of pressure are applied and the nose of the ball is pointed up.

Ball Security: Drills performed to improve ball security
The purpose of these drills are to teach and practice the proper fundamentals and techniques used for proper ball security by emphasizing keeping the ball high and tight and securing the five points of pressure.
Center – Quarterback Exchange: Fit Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of proper body and hand placement.

**Equipment:** One football for each pair.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Set footballs up in a designated area on the football field.
2. Pair up one center and one quarterback.
3. Align the pairs in a designated spot on the field.

**Procedure:**
1. Align three centers in a correct three point stance about two yards apart.

2. The three quarterbacks will step behind the centers and place their receiving hand (throwing hand) in the proper fit position.

3. Have the quarterback place his securing hand. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds and repeat.

**Coaching Points:** Make sure that the quarterback is as close to the center as possible. The quarterback needs to have great knee and elbow bend. The quarterback’s receiving hand should be placed on the buttocks of the center with slight pressure to allow the center to feel the hand. This is a pre-practice drill that should be performed every day.
Ball Security: Center – Quarterback Security Drill

Purpose: To develop the feel of the correct positioning of the ball into the quarterback’s hand. The drill is performed at half speed for the first few reps then repeated at full speed.

Equipment: Footballs

Procedure:
1. Pair up the three centers and the three quarterbacks; make sure you pair up the players that will be working with each other.
2. The quarterback will then step behind the center placing the hands and feet in the proper fit position.
3. On the quarterback’s cadence the centers will slowly bring the ball up to the quarterback’s hands and place it in the quarterback’s hands until there is proper security with the receiving hand and securing hand.
4. The quarterback will then adjust the ball position to the way he would like the snap received.
5. The drill is then repeated at full speed.

Coaching Points: The quarterback is the coach of this drill. The quarterback will tell the center how he wants the ball received. When the quarterback receives the ball the laces should be facing up. As the receiving had feels contact with the ball the securing hand needs to cup around the ball. Secure the ball for five seconds with the quarterback holding the ball with both hands and the center holding it with the snapping hand.
Ball Security: Center – Quarterback Ride Drill

Purpose: To develop the proper ride with the quarterback and center. Allow the proper center – quarterback exchange, and to tie in all three basic fundamentals of the snap.

Equipment: Footballs.

Procedure:
1. Pair up centers and quarterbacks; make sure you pair up the players that will be working with each other.
2. The quarterback will get in the proper fit position (figure 1).
3. On the quarterback’s signal, the center will snap the ball and step in a predetermined direction (figure 2).
4. When the quarterback receives and secures the snap the quarterback will begin his drop back.
5. The ride drill needs to be performed at full speed.

Coaching Points: The quarterback needs to stay in contact with the center as the center steps into his blocking assignment, and as the quarterback steps away from the center. Make sure that the quarterback starts in the proper fit position with good knee and elbow bend. As the center and quarterback step away from each other the quarterback needs to stay in contact with the center by extending the arms. The first ten minutes of pre-practice should be spent on the ride drill. This is a pre-practice drill.
Ball Security: Five Points of Pressure Isometric Hold Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper one-hand carry of the football using the five points of pressure.

Equipment: One football for each player.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the players in a designated area on the football field.
2. Give a football to each player.

Procedure:
1. The player will grip the nose of the football with his palm and forearm pressing against the ball.
2. The player will then press the ball tight against the bicep and chest.
3. Hold the ball for ten seconds.
4. Repeat on the other arm.
5. Perform five reps on each arm.

Coaching Points: While standing still the player will attempt to squeeze the ball as hard as he can, as if he is trying to pop the ball. Make sure that the ball is carried high and tight with all five points of pressure. This is a pre-practice drill that should be performed by all skilled players.

Ball Security: Five points of pressure
6. Fingers grip the nose of the ball.
7. Palm of the hand rests against the ball.
8. Forearm presses against the ball.
9. The ball presses tight against the bicep.
10. The ball presses tight against the chest.
**Ball Security: Five Points of Pressure Isometric Hold and Punch Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper one-hand carry of the football using the five points of pressure while the defender is trying to strip the ball.

**Equipment:** Football

**Procedure:**
1. Pair two players up.
2. One of the players will hold the football high and tight implementing the five points of pressure in the right arm.
3. The second player will stand on the side of player one. He will grab, rip, and punch at the ball.
4. The action is carried out for 20-30 seconds. And then repeated on the left arm.
5. Both players will then switch responsibility and repeat the drill.

**Coaching Points:** While standing still the player will attempt to squeeze the ball as hard as he can. Make sure that all five points of pressure are performed. Make sure that the defender does not get carried away with the punching and ripping of the ball. However, he should give enough pressure to make the ball security action a challenge. This is a pre-practice drill that should be performed by all skilled players.

**Ball Security: High and Tight**
Making sure that the five points of pressure are applied and the nose of the ball is pointed up.
**Ball Security: Strip Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper ball security using the five point of pressure.

**Equipment:** Footballs for each pair of players.

**Procedure:**
1. Pair up players across the field, one player is on offensive (P1) the other player will be on defense (P2).
2. The offensive player will hold the ball high and tight securing the five points of pressure.
3. The defensive player will be behind the offensive player.
4. On the coaches command the offensive players will jog down the field keeping the ball secure. The defender will jog behind the offensive player trying to punch and strip the ball from the player.
5. Perform for 10 yards and repeat with the other arm.
6. Switch players and repeat the drill.

**Coaching Points:** All of the offensive players should hold the ball high and tight, keeping the five points of pressure. The defensive player should punch, strip and rip the ball out of the arms of the offensive player. Make sure that the defender does not get carried away with the ball strip. The strip drill could be performed pre-practice or during practice.
Quarterbacks

When coaching the complete quarterback you must drill and practice the skills used by the quarterback in game-like situations. Each drill should teach the proper throwing mechanics, footwork and drop backs. Make sure that the drills you run fit the offensive philosophy and schemes, never drill to drill but use your practice time efficiently.

Six Quarterback Traits to Achieve Success
1. Leadership
2. Fundamentals
3. Confidence
4. Effort
5. Intelligence
6. Unselfishness

Eight Intangible Traits to Achieve Greatness
1. Football savvy
2. Mental toughness
3. Poise
4. Perception and anticipation
5. Confidence
6. Self-discipline
7. Competitiveness
8. Leadership

Mechanics for Throwing the Football
1. Balanced Stance
2. Front arm push to start the throwing motion
3. Back foot perpendicular to the target
4. Short 4-5 inch step with front foot
5. Explode off back leg and throw hips through
6. Balanced feet

Daily Drills Should Focus on the Following:
1. Warm Up – Ball security, center quarterback exchange and mesh
2. Throwing warm ups
3. Footwork and drops
4. Transfer and throw
Throwing Warm Ups: Three Level Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of throwing the football at a variety of distances.

Equipment: One football for each pair of quarterbacks.

Drill Set Up:
1. Pair up the quarterbacks; give each pair of quarterbacks a football.
2. Line them up on the designated area on the football field.

Procedure: The three level drill will be broken up in three different drills. Each quarterback should throw ten balls at each level.

Procedure for Level One: Toe Up Toe Down Drill:
1. Align the pair of quarterbacks ten yards away from each other.
2. The two quarterbacks with the ball will start the drill by rising up to their tippy toes.
3. As the quarterbacks rise up on the toes they will rotate their trunk and throw the football to their partner aiming at the nose.
4. As the quarterback releases the ball he will return flat footed.
5. The drill will repeat with ten throws for each quarterback.
Procedure for Level Two: Buda Position Throw Drill
1. The pair of quarterbacks will now line up 15 yards apart.
2. The quarterbacks with the ball will stand in the proper Buda position with the feet outside the hips and the ball tight to the chest.
3. The quarterbacks will bounce three times and then take a small step with the front foot and throw the ball aiming at the chest.
4. The drill will repeat with ten throws with each quarterback.

Procedure for Level Three: Long Toss
1. The pair of quarterbacks will now stand on opposite sidelines.
2. The quarterbacks with the ball will stand in the proper Buda position with the feet outside the hips and the ball tight to the chest.
3. The quarterbacks will then transfer the body weight to the back foot while bringing the shoulder angle up.
4. As the quarterback throws the football he will explode over the front foot.
5. The drill will repeat with ten throws with each quarterback.

Coaching Points for the Buda Position: The quarterback will place both hands on the football with the elbows pointed down and away; the ball is close to the chest. The legs will be slightly outside the hips with the toes pointing forward.
**Footwork and Drops: Hash Drops Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the quarterback drop. Incorporated skills related to agility, ball carriage and body awareness.

**Equipment:** Football for each quarterback.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. The drill will start on the sideline.
2. The drill will end on the hash marks.
3. Align the quarterbacks in a straight line on a designated yard line.
4. Each quarterback will hold a football.

**Procedure:** The hash drill will be broken down into four phases; half speed (to loosen up and improve form), big reach step, big crossover step and full speed.

**Procedure for Half Speed Hash Drops:**
1. The quarterback will get into a proper stance as if taking a snap.
2. On the coach’s command the quarterback will perform the drop at half speed.
   a. The quarterback will stay on the designated yard line to assure a straight drop.
   b. The front hip and shoulders will be perpendicular to the side line and eyes down field.
3. The quarterback will perform the half speed drop to the hash and then back.
Procedure for Big Reach Step Hash Drop:
1. The quarterback will get into a proper stance as if taking a snap.
2. On the coach’s command the quarterback will perform the big reach drop.
   a. The quarterback will stay on the designated yard line to assure a straight drop.
   b. The front hip and shoulders will be perpendicular to the side line and eyes down field.
   c. Quarterback will open up the toes pointing them out hard, pushing off the front foot.
3. The quarterback will perform the reach drop to the hash and then back.

Procedure for Big Crossover Step Hash Drop:
1. The quarterback will get into a proper stance as if taking a snap.
2. On the coaches command the quarterback will perform the big crossover drop.
   a. The quarterback will stay on the designated yard line to assure a straight drop.
   b. The front hip and shoulders will be perpendicular to the side line and eyes down field.
   c. The quarterback will take an exaggerated crossover step gaining depth and followed by a small reach step.
3. The quarterback will perform the big crossover drop to the hash and then back.
**Procedure for Full Speed Hash Drop:**

1. The quarterback will get into a proper stance as if taking a snap.
2. On the coach’s command the quarterback will perform the drop at full speed.
   a. The quarterback will stay on the designated yard line to assure a straight drop.
   b. The front hip and shoulders will be perpendicular to the side line and eyes down field.
3. The quarterback will perform the full speed drop to the hash and then back.

**Coaching Points:** The arms should stay relaxed and in the Buda position with the elbows pointed to ground. Emphasize form and depth over speed on all four drills. Make sure that the shoulders stay perpendicular to the side line and eyes down the field. Coach the quarterbacks to keep straight lines.

**Coaching Points for the Buda Position:** The quarterback will place both hands on the football with the elbows pointed down and away; the ball is close to the chest. The legs will be slightly outside the hips with the toes pointing forward.
Footwork and Drops: Pocket Agile Bag Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of agility in the pocket. Incorporated skills related to ball carriage and drops.

**Equipment:** Five step over bags, one wide receiver and a cone.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align five step over bags in a straight line about one yard apart.
2. Align the cone up two yards from the first bag.
3. Align the wide receiver up five yards away from the last bag.
4. Align the quarterback up at the cone.

**Procedure:**
1. The quarterback will get into the proper center quarterback exchange.
2. On the coach’s command the quarterback will perform a five step drop.
3. After the five step drop the quarterback will take two hitch steps up.
4. After the quarterback hitches up he will run through the bags with one foot in each hole.

5. The quarterback will finish the drill by throwing it to the wide receiver.
6. Repeat the drill escaping to the left.

**Coaching Points:** The arms should stay relaxed and in the Buda position with the elbows pointed to ground. Make sure that the quarterback always keeps two hands on the ball and eyes down the field. Perform the drill from the right and left.

**Coaching Points for the Buda Position:** The quarterback will place both hands on the football with the elbows pointed down and away; the ball is close to the chest. The legs will be slightly outside the hips with the toes pointing forward.

**Coaching Points for the Five Step Drop:** The first and third steps are the reach steps. Open up the toes and point them to the side line. The second and forth steps are the crossover. The crossover step will get depth from the line of scrimmage. The crossover step will be over and in front of the reach step while springing off the balls of the feet. The fifth step is the gather step, the feet and arms will come to the Buda position with the ball close to the body.
Transfer and Throw: Line Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of throwing the football with small steps and little arm circles. Incorporated are skills related to drop back and foot work, accuracy and reaction.

Equipment: One football.

Drill Set Up:
1. Pair up the quarterbacks. One player will be doing the drill while the other quarterback will act as the coach.
2. Align the pair of quarterback on a designated yard line on the field.
3. The quarterback doing the drill will hold the football.
4. The drill will start on the sideline.

Procedure:
1. The quarterbacks will get in the proper carriage (Buda) position with feet outside the hips.
2. On the coach’s command the quarterbacks will drop back straight down the designated yard line keeping the ball in the proper Buda position.
3. As the quarterbacks perform the drop back the coaches will slowly walk forward.
4. The coaches will then clap their hands.
5. On the clap the quarterbacks will set their feet and throw the ball as quick as they can, performing small step and little arm circles.
6. The coach will catch the ball then toss the ball back to the quarterback.
7. The quarterback will then get back into the drop back keeping the ball in the Buda position.
8. On the coach’s hand clap the quarterbacks will set their feet and throw the ball as quick as they can, performing small step and little arm circles.
9. The drill will repeat until the quarterback reaches the other sideline.

Coaching Points: The coach will randomly clap hands; try to get in 8 to 10 throws. During the drop back make sure that the quarterbacks keep the ball tight to the chest. The feet should cross over and push on the drop back. As soon as the quarterbacks see the clap they will set their feet with the legs outside their hips. Take a small step and throw the ball as quick as they can.
**Transfer and Throw: Circle Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of throwing the football with small steps and little circles. Incorporated are skills related to throwing accuracy, footwork and reaction.

**Equipment:** 5 to 10 footballs and four receivers.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the quarterback in a designated area, with the footballs by his side.
2. Align the four wide receivers in a circle 7-10 yards away from the quarterback.
3. Designate each wide receiver a number 1-4.
4. The coach will stand by the footballs.

**Procedure:**
1. The quarterback will hold a football in the proper carriage position referred to as the Buda position.
2. On the coach’s command the quarterback will buzz his feet staying in the Buda position and rotating in a circle, while standing in the same spot.
3. The coach will yell out a number 1-4 (example number 3).
4. The quarterback will rotate to the number 3 wide receiver as quick as he can and throw the football to him, performing the proper fundamentals of small steps and little circle.

5. The coach will then hand another football to the quarterback.
6. The quarterback will continue to buzz his feet as he rotates in a circle.
7. The coach will yell out the next number and the quarterback will throw the football to the wide receiver as quick as he can by using the proper throwing mechanics.
8. The drill will continue until all the balls are used.

**Coaching Points:** The quarterbacks will try to get the ball out of the hands as quick as possible. When the quarterback is throwing the football make sure he is taking small steps with the front foot and a little circle with the arm throwing motion. The quarterback should remain in the Buda position during the entire drill.

**Coaching Points for the Buda Position:** The quarterback will place both hands on the football with the elbows pointed down and away; the ball is close to the chest. The legs will be slightly outside the hips with the toes pointing forward.
Transfer and Throw: Rapid Fire Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of throwing the football quickly and accurately. Incorporated are skills related to footwork, arm strength and carriage (ball security).

Equipment: 5 to 10 footballs and a wide receiver.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the quarterback in a designated spot on the field (right hash, middle, left hash).
2. Place the football in a line in front of the quarterback.
3. Align the wide receiver in a designated spot on the field (end of a route).
4. The coach or the second string quarterback will set up behind the balls.

Procedure:
1. The quarterback will set up in the proper carriage position (Buda position).
2. The coach will begin the drill by tossing the ball to the quarterback’s chest.
3. The quarterback will catch the ball and take a small step with the lead foot and throw the ball to the target.
4. As soon as the quarterback releases the ball, the coach will toss the quarterback another ball. The quarterback will catch and throw the ball to the target as quick as possible.
5. The drill will continue until the remaining balls are thrown.
6. After all the balls have been thrown to the target, the drill will be moved to the other hash.
7. The wide receiver will now line up in a different spot on the field (end route of a slant).
8. The rapid fire drill will now be repeated with the same carriage and throwing fundamentals.

**Coaching Points:** The quarterback will get the ball out of his hands as quick as possible. Make sure that the quarterback stays in the Buda position with a nice wide base. The quarterback should take small steps with the front foot and keep a small circle with the throwing motion. Make the rapid fire drill a competition between the quarterback with speed of the throw and accuracy of the throw.

**Coaching Points for the Buda Position:** The quarterback will place both hands on the football with the elbows pointed down and away; the ball is close to the chest. The legs will be slightly outside the hips with the toes pointing forward.
Offensive Line

Perfect execution of the fundamentals of the offensive lineman is the difference between winning and losing. Blocking is one of the most crucial fundamental skills in football. The proper blocking techniques must be taught each and every day not only for skill development, but for safety. When coaching to develop the total offensive lineman you must drill and practice the basic fundamentals of blocking. Make sure that your drill fit your system, don’t just drill to drill.

Offensive Line Skills
1. Strength
2. Power
3. Leverage
4. Agility

Five Points to Run Blocking
1. Splits
2. Stance
3. Approach and steps
4. Contact and fit
5. Finish the block

Big Five to Pass Blocking
1. Splits
2. Stance
3. Sets
4. Punch
5. Finish the block

Daily Drills
1. Warm Ups (agility drills, stance)
2. Approach and steps
3. Contact and fit
4. Punch and finish
Approach and Steps: Load, Step and Strut Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the offensive linemen’s first two steps. Incorporated are skills used in run blocking, proper steps on contact and stance.

Equipment: Two cones

Drill Set Up:
1. Split the offensive line up in two even lines.
2. Align two cones 5 yards apart.
3. The coach will stand between the two offensive linemen.

Procedure: Load, step and strut drill will be broken down into three phases. Each phase needs to be properly executed before moving to the next phase.

Procedure for the Load:
1. The offensive line will line up in the proper three point stance.
2. On the coach’s command (load) the two linemen will take the proper six inch step (with the right foot) while reaching the hands back to the hips (like a cowboy reaching to his holsters).
3. The linemen will hold the load until the coach checks the proper technique.
4. The load step will be performed with the right and left foot lead.
Procedure for the Load and Step:
1. The offensive line will line up in the proper three point stance.
2. On the coach’s command (load) the two linemen will take the proper six inch step (with the right foot) while reaching the hands back to the holsters.
3. The linemen will hold the load until the coach checks the proper technique.
4. The coach will then give the next command (step).
5. The linemen will then take a six inch step with the left foot getting it in the ground as quick as possible. While the linemen take the step they will punch the arms out and up.
6. The linemen will hold the “step” until the coach checks proper form.
7. The load and step will be performed with the right and left foot lead.

Procedure for the Load, Step and Strut:
1. The offensive line will line up in the proper three point stance.
2. On the coach’s command (load) the two linemen will take the proper six inch step (with the right foot) while reaching the hands back to the holsters.
3. The linemen will hold the load until the coach checks the proper technique.
4. The coach will then give the next command (step).
5. The linemen will then take a six inch step with the left foot getting it in the ground as quick as possible. While the linemen take the step they will punch the arms out and up.
6. The linemen will hold the “step” until the coach checks proper form.
7. On the coach’s command (strut) the two linemen will take short choppy steps having as much ground contact as possible.
8. The offensive line will strut to the far cone.
9. The drill will be performed with the right and left foot lead.
Coaching points for Stance: The feet should be shoulder width apart, toe to instep relationship with the feet. Sink the hips and bend over at the waist, reach the arm forward putting the weight on the finger tips. The rear end drops parallel to the ground with good knee bend. The head is up and looking at the target. The free hand palm should be on the hip or held with a clenched fist on the side of the leg.

Coaching points for Load: The player should take a short six inch step; make sure that you keep the pad level in a low position. As the player takes the short six inch step he will reach both hands back to the hips.

Coaching points for Step: The second step is the most important step. Contact should be made on the second step. The second step is a short six inch step the player will need to get his second step in the ground as quick as possible.

Coaching points for Strut: You want the players on the balls of their feet, but we want the entire shoe on the ground (to do this you have to bend your knees and have good ankle flexibility). We want the knees, feet & back going straight down the field with the foot in total contact with the ground. With their feet going forward they take short choppy steps.

Coaching Points: Make sure that the linemen are always in the proper three point stance. Eliminate any false steps by using proper weight distribution in the stance (60% on the feet, 40% on the hand). Drill the right and left foot lead.
Approach and Steps: Demeanor Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the offensive line steps. Incorporated are skills used in run blocking, proper weight distribution and pad level.

Equipment: Two Cones.

Drill Set Up:

1. Align the two cones in a straight line 10 yards away from each other.
2. Align 4 to 5 players up in a straight line between the two cones.
3. The coach will stand in front of the line.

Procedure:

1. The linemen will get into the proper two point stance.
2. The coach will then point to the right or left
3. The linemen will power strut in the direction the coach points.
4. The coach will then point front or back.
5. The linemen will power strut in the direction the coach points.
6. The coach will continue pointing right/left, front or back.
7. The linemen will mirror the coach power stepping in the direction the coach points.

Coaching Points: The demeanor drill is a two point wave drill. The players will need to have a wide base, straight back, head up and good foot movement. The feet should be close to the ground, retaining the wide base and good ground coverage. The heels should never click together or cross over. If the right foot moves six inches, the left foot should move six inches. The closer the feet are to the ground the quicker the linemen can redirect his movement. Weight should be balanced on the insteps of the foot. Start the drill out slow as the players get the motion down and then the drill should progressively speed up.
Contact and Fit: Push Pull Fit Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the offensive line body position on contact. Incorporated are skills used in run blocking, proper pad level and stance.

Equipment: Four cones.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align two cones up in a straight line 10 yards apart (starting cones).
2. Align the other two cones up five yards apart looking like a box.
3. Align two offensive linemen up at the starting cones.
4. Align two more linemen up facing the offensive linemen.

Procedure:
1. The offensive linemen will pair up in two even lines.
2. The first two linemen will be the first group of blockers.
3. Two linemen from the back of the line will come to the front and stand facing the blockers.
4. The two blockers will lock themselves into a proper fitted position.
5. On the coach’s command the offensive line will power strut forward.
6. As the offensive linemen power struts forward the defensive player will try to escape to the right and then to the left.
7. The offensive linemen will power strut to the right and then the left keeping the proper fit position.
8. As the defender tries to go left the linemen will push with the left arm and pull with the right arm, as the defender tries to escape to the right the linemen will push with the right arm and pull with the left arm.

9. The drill will continue with the defender trying to get outside the linemen on the right side or left until they reach the finish cones.

10. The players will rotate from linemen to defender.

**Coaching Points:** This is a half speed drill, make sure the players have their mouth pieces in and chin strap snapped. The linemen should keep a flat back during the entire drill.

**Coaching Points for Proper Fit:** The offensive linemen’s hair line is place at the defenders breast bone. The hips, knees and ankles will be flexed with the back flat. The elbows will be in tight to the waist and the fists locked to the defenders chest.

**Coaching Points for the Push and Pull:** As the defender tries to get to the outside the fit position, the offensive linemen will take lateral power struts taking short choppy steps keeping the feet in the ground. With the fists locked to the breast plate the linemen will push with the outside arm while pulling with the inside arm.
Contact and Fit: Drive Block Board Drills

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the drive block. Incorporated are skills used in contact and fit, wide base, proper steps on contact and stance.

**Equipment:** Three blocking boards and three hand shields.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align three blocking boards in the designated area about 2 yards apart.
2. Align three linemen in the center of the blocking boards holding a hand shield.
3. Align the remaining linemen in even lines at the start of the blocking boards.
4. The linemen will rotate from the drive block to the bag holder.

**Procedure:**
1. The offensive linemen will get into the proper three point stance.
2. On the coach’s command the linemen will perform the proper drive block.
   A. The linemen will take the proper six inch step, while reaching back to the holsters.
   B. The linemen will then drive his second foot in the ground as quick as possible.
   C. The offensive linemen will shoot the hands out and up with the contact on the second step.
D. On contact the offensive linemen will run their feet power strutting to the end of the board.
E. The linemen will finish their block with a push.
3. The rotation will go from blocking to bag holding.

Coaching Points: The psycho-motor pattern contains two phases that work simultaneously (Steps & Fit). Each player will perform the drive block with the left foot lead and right foot lead. Make sure that the linemen keep a wide base and don’t step on the blocking board.

Coaching Points for the Approach: During the approach and steps phase the players will take a six inch step and get the second foot in the ground. The aiming point will be in the center of the bag (breastplate). The headgear is in the sternum of the defender. To keep good pad level the linemen’s back need to be flat and the hips slightly higher the shoulders. Keep the instep at a high frequency. Drive the defender by driving the knees inside. The hips will roll with the movement of the defender.

Coaching Points for the Punch: During the punch phase the player will take a six inch step, while taking the step the arms will reach back to the hips (reaching for the holster). On the second step is when the punch is administered. During the punch the elbows need to be in tight to the waist with thumbs up punching the breastplate.
Contact and Fit: Slide Step Block Board Drills

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the slide step block. Incorporated skills used in contact and fit, keeping a wide base on contact, proper steps on contact and stance.

**Equipment:** Three blocking boards and three hand shields.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align three blocking boards in the designated area about two yards apart.
2. Align three linemen in the center of the blocking boards holding a hand shield.
3. Align the remaining linemen in even lines at the left of the blocking boards.
4. The linemen will rotate from the slide step block to the bag holder.

**Procedure:**
1. The offensive linemen will get into the proper three point stance on the left side of the board.
2. On the coach’s command the linemen will perform the proper slide step block.
   A. The Linemen will take the proper lateral (slide step), while reaching back to the hips (holsters).
   B. The linemen will then get is second foot in the ground as quick as possible.
   C. The offensive linemen will shoot the hands out and up with the contact on the second step.
D. On contact the offensive linemen will run their feet and power strut to the end of the board.
E. The linemen will finish their block with a punch.
3. The linemen will rotate from slide step block to bag holder.
4. After all the linemen perform slide step to the right they will perform it to the left.

**Coaching Points:** The psycho-motor pattern contains two phases that work simultaneously (Steps & Fit). Each player will perform the slide step block with the left foot lead and right foot lead. Make sure that the linemen keep a wide base and don’t step on the blocking board.

**Coaching Points for the Approach:** During the approach and steps phase the players will take a 4-5 inch lateral step and get the second foot in the ground. The aiming point will be in the center of the bag (breastplate). The headgear is in the sternum of the defender. To keep good pad level the linemen’s back needs to be flat and the hips slightly higher than the shoulders. We want the instep with high frequency. Drive the defender by driving the knees inside. The hips will roll with the movement of the defender.

**Coaching Points for the Punch:** During the punch phase the player will take a six inch step, while taking the step the arms will reach back to the hips (reaching for the holster). On the second step the punch is administered. During the punch the elbows need to be in tight to the waist and thumbs up punching the breastplate.
Finish the Block: Five Man Sled Finish Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper techniques used in blocking. Incorporated are skills related to approach and steps, fit and contact and finish the block.

**Equipment:** Five man blocking sled.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the five man sled in the designated area.
2. Align the offensive linemen in a straight line behind the five man sled.
3. The linemen will rotate from blocking to the end of the line.

![Five man blocking sled diagram]

**Procedure:**
1. The offensive linemen will get into the proper three point stance in front of the sled.
2. The coach will tell the linemen the cadence and what block to perform.
3. On the coach’s command the offensive linemen will take the proper six inch step, while reaching back to the holster.
4. The linemen will then get their second foot in the ground as quick as possible. Contact on the sled will be on the second step.
5. On contact the linemen will keep a flat back and power strut
6. On the coach’s command “Finish” the linemen will lock their arms out.
7. Rotate through all blocking techniques.

**Coaching Points:** Make sure that the linemen are in the proper three point stance. On contact the players will need to keep a wide base and take short choppy steps. When the players finish they want to extend the arms up and out while the feet are still moving. The five man sled should be used on all blocks.
Running Backs

When coaching to develop the total running back you must drill and practice a series of related skills that the running back will use in game situations. Don’t just drill to drill but incorporate the actual coordinated psycho-motor pattern of the running back skills. The running back should always be reminded of ball security and the five points of pressure.

Five Running Back Traits to Achieve Greatness
1. Must be a great blocker.
2. Must have great speed.
3. Must generate a great burst.
4. Must have great vision.
5. Must demonstrate great agility.

Running Back Skills
1. Running
2. Blocking
3. Catching
4. Playing without the ball; carrying out fakes and running precise routes.

Five Points to Running the Football
1. Assignment
2. Alignment
3. Steps
4. Aiming point
5. Finish the run

Daily Drills Should Focus on the Following
1. Warm up – ball security
2. Stance and steps
3. Cuts and breaks
4. Disengagements
5. Blocking

The following drills will emphasize developing the proper fundamentals for running back play and focus on the included daily drill categories.
**Warm Ups: Handoff Pouch Roll Drill**

**Purpose:** To develop the proper fundamentals of receiving a handoff. To emphasize on good handoff pouches, placement of the ball in the pouch, and proper rolling action over the ball once it has been placed on the belly.

**Equipment:** One ball.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Split the running backs up in two lines.
2. The two lines will face each other 5 yards apart.

**Procedure:**
1. On the coach’s command the first running back will jog forward with the ball in his hand toward the opposing running back.
2. When the ball carrier is half way to the opposite line, the first back in the opposite line will jog out and execute a handoff pouch.
3. The running back will receive the handoff with proper pouch and rolling action.
4. After the first running back hands off the ball he will go to the back of the line.
5. After the first running back receives the handoff he will then become the quarterback and hand off the ball to the next running back in line. The running back will receive the handoff with proper pouch and rolling action.
6. The drill will repeat until every running back has executed the proper pouch and roll of the handoff.
7. Each running back should perform the drill with a right hand receive and a left hand receive.
Coaching Points: Make sure that every player is executing the proper pouch. To develop the proper running back pouch make sure that the near hand (arm facing the quarterback) thumb is facing down. The elbow should be pointing to the quarterback at sternum height. The pinky of the far hand should be on the belly button. Both hands should be spread and open. After the handoff the running back should roll over the ball and squeeze.
Stance and Steps: Mesh Drill

Purpose: To develop the proper fundamentals for the running back stance, starts and steps. Incorporated are skills related to receiving a handoff from the quarterback, ball security and proper aiming points. The steps and aiming points may vary depending on the type of offense. Equipment: One fire hose marked with hole numbers and running lanes or offensive line position, one QB and ball. See diagram below on how to make the hose.

Drill Set Up:
1. Lay the fire hose stretched out on the ground with the hole numbers facing up.
2. The quarterback will stand behind the hose marked center.
3. Align the running back in the proper depth behind the quarterback.

Procedure:
1. The coach will call out the running play that will be performed (example inside zone).
2. The running back will align in the proper depth and stance for the play that is called.
3. The quarterbacks will begin his cadence and snap count.
4. On the quarterback’s signal the running back will perform his steps (example inside zone, the running back’s steps will be open, crossover and roll).
5. At the same time the quarterback will perform the quarterback steps.
6. The running back will then receive the handoff from the quarterback with proper pouch and rolling action.
7. After the running back receives the hand off from the quarterback he will press his aiming point (example inside leg of the tackle).
8. Repeat the drill with all running backs.
9. Repeat the drill with the other running plays.

Coaching Points: Make sure that the drill matches your playbook, don’t just drill to drill. Be sure to check all the points of the running back stance (two point or three point), steps and aiming points. When the running back receives the handoff coach the proper pouch and roll. To develop the proper pouch, make sure that the near hand (arm facing the quarterback) thumb is facing down. The elbow should be pointing to the quarterback at sternum height. The pinky of the far hand should be on the belly button. Both hands should be spread and open. After the handoff the running back should roll over the ball and squeeze. After the handoff, the running back needs to hold the ball high and tight.
**Cuts and Breaks: Deceleration/Acceleration Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the fundamentals of how to get into and out of all cuts and breaks. To develop the ability of starting, stopping and changing directions rapidly and efficiently.

**Equipment Used:** Between 7 and 10 cones, a football for each running back.

**Drill Set Up:**

1. Align the cones in a straight line.
2. The distance between the first cone and second cone should be 5 yards.
3. The distance between the remaining cones will vary between 3 and 5 yards.
4. The total distance from start to stop is 20 yards.
5. Align the running backs in a straight line at the first cone.

**Procedure:**

1. On the coach’s command the running back will sprint to the first cone holding the ball high and tight.
2. As the running back approaches the first cone the running back will lower his center of gravity to his base of support (drop the hips) and chop his feet as quick as he can.
3. The running back will then get back into acceleration as quick as he can by punching his knees out past his belly, keeping good forward lean.
4. Running back will sprint to the next cone performing the same action.
5. The running back will repeat the deceleration/acceleration until he reaches the last cone.
6. Repeat the drill for 4 to 6 reps.

Coaching Points: The running back needs to keep the ball high and tight and maintain the five points of pressure on the ball at all times. The quicker the running back can decelerate the quicker the running back can get into his cut or break. As the running back begins to decelerate he will need to lower his center of gravity to his base of support. Once the running back decelerates make sure the running back chops the feet so he can begin to accelerate. To perform the act of acceleration the running back needs to get in a good forward lean, by pumping the free arm aggressively. The knees need to be punched outside of the center of gravity and mash the calf to the hamstring. The head must stay in a neutral position.
**Cuts and Breaks: Open Field Angle Cut Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the fundamentals of how to get into and out of a cut and break in open field. To develop the ability of starting, stopping and changing directions rapidly and efficiently.

**Equipment Used:** Between 7 and 10 cones, one football for each running back.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the cones at an angle.
2. The distance between the cones should be 5 yards.
3. Align the running backs in a straight line at the first cone.
4. The total distance of the drill will be 20 yards.

**Procedure:**
1. On the coach’s command the running back will sprint to the first cone.
2. As the running back approaches the first cone the running back will lower his center of gravity to his base of support, chop his feet and push off the outside hip.
3. The running back will then get back into acceleration as quick as possible by punching his knees out past his belly, keeping good forward lean.
4. The running back will then sprint to the next cone performing the same action.
5. The running back will repeat the open field cut until he reaches the last cone.
6. Repeat the drill for 4 to 6 reps.

**Coaching Point:** The running back needs to keep the ball high and tight and maintain the five points of pressure on the ball at all times. The quicker the running back can decelerate and accelerate, the quicker the running back can cut in the open field and break tackles. As the running back approaches the cone the running back will need to lower his center of gravity to his base of support. Make sure the running back chops his feet as quick as he can to get his body back in to acceleration. The running back should maintain forward lean during the sprints.
Cuts and Breaks: L Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals for pressing the heels of the offensive lineman, jump cut and get vertical.

**Equipment Used:** Four step over bags or hand shields, two cones and footballs for the running backs.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Set up two step over bags perpendicular to each other. Place the other two bags perpendicular to each other three yards down the field. Align a cone 5 yards away from the second set of bags.
2. Align the running backs 5 yards away from the first set of step over bags.

**Procedure:**
1. The running back will align in the proper two point stance.
2. On the coach’s command the running back will burst to the first bag simulating pressing the heels of the offensive line.
3. When the running back reaches the bag, the running back will lower his center of gravity to his base of support and push off the outside leg and jump cut across the bag.
4. The running back will land on his opposite foot and burst to the second set of bags.
5. When the running back reaches the second set of bags, the running back will lower his center of gravity to his base of support and push off the outside leg and jump cut across the bag.

Coaching Points: Focus on making sharp jump cuts. On the jump cut the running back needs to lower his center of gravity (hips) to his base of support (ground) and push off the outside leg. Limit the amount of air time on the jump cut. While squaring up the shoulders and lowering the hips, land on the opposite foot. Accelerate to the next bag by punching the knees out past the belly button. Make sure that the running back keeps the ball high and tight while maintaining the five points of pressure.
Disengagement: Blaster Rip Drill

**Purpose:** To develop the ability to break a tackle and run through contact, to run with a base and deliver the blow to the defender.

**Equipment Used:** Two hand shields, one cone and a football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Two running backs will each hold a hand shield.
2. The two running backs that are holding the hand shields should stand shoulder to shoulder with a slight angle to one another.
3. The remaining running backs will line up in a straight line 5 yards from the bag holders.
4. The running backs will rotate from runner to bag holder.

**Procedure:**
1. On the coach’s command the running back will sprint to the two bag holders.
2. As the running back reaches the bags he will dip the shoulder and rip up and through the bags.
3. Once the running back rips through the bag the running back will accelerate the feet and sprint through the cone.
Coaching Points: During the drill the running backs need to be coached on keeping the ball high and tight and holding the ball with the five points of pressure. Keep the running backs shoulders square and low as he approaches the bags. On contact, the running back will widen his base and bring the feet outside the hips. The free arm will rip up and out past his facemask. Once the running back clears the bags his knees will punch outside his center of gravity (belly) to get his body back in to acceleration. The drill needs to be performed with right and left arm rip.
Wide Receivers

When coaching to develop the proper fundamentals of wide receiver play, make sure that your drills mimic game like situations. Don’t just drill to drill but incorporate the actual skills being used. Try to always incorporate catching in any drills to develop the proper hand placement. The wide receiver should always be reminded of ball security and the five points of pressure.

Wide Receiver Traits to achieve Greatness:
1. Must be a great blocker.
2. Must have great speed.
3. Must be a natural catcher.
4. Must be a play maker.

Wide Receiver Skills:
1. Running
2. Blocking
3. Catching
4. Jumping

Wide Receivers Big Six
1. Assignment
2. Alignment
3. Stance & Start
4. Release
5. Route Technique
6. Blocking

Daily Drills Should Focus on the Following
1. Warm – Up Catching
2. Stance and Starts
3. Releases
4. Catching
5. Route Technician
6. Blocking

The following drills will emphasize on developing the proper fundamentals for wide receiver play and focus on the daily drill categories.
**Stance and Start: Take off Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the wide receiver stance and start. Incorporated are skills related to proper release off the line.

**Equipment:** 8 cones or small step over hurdles.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align 4 cones or small step over hurdles in a straight line about two yards apart.
2. Align the remaining 4 cones or hurdles 10 yards from the first set.
3. Line the wide receiver in even lines behind each of the cones.
4. The total distance is 10 yards.

**Procedure:**
1. The ball will be to the left of the receivers at the start.
2. The wide receivers will stand with both feet pointing forward one foot away from the step over hurdles.
3. The inside foot (foot closest to the ball) will always be in front.
4. The wide receivers will assume a sprints four point stance.
5. The wide receiver will then raise the hand off the ground bringing the chest about 12 inches from the knees.
6. On the coach’s command the wide receivers will release off the line by punching the back knee out and over the hurdle.
7. The wide receiver will sprint 10 yards.
8. The drill will be repeated back with the ball to the right (right foot forward).

**Coaching Points for lower body stance:** The toes should be pointed forward with the inside foot forward. The distance from the front foot to the back foot is about 1 ½ feet. The wide receiver's weight should be forward on the front knee with the heel one inch off the ground. The back knee should be flexed with the heel two inches off the ground.

**Coaching Points for the upper body stance:** The arms should be lifted in the ready running position. The wide receiver should bend at the waist with the chin over the front knee. The chest is raised about 12 inches off the thigh. The shoulders will be square with the head up reading the coverage, and then turned in toward the ball.

**Coaching Points for the Start:** Make sure that the receiver always explodes off the ball by punching the back knee up and out. Drive off the front foot, while keeping the pad level and shoulders low. The wide receiver uses explosive arm action working from the chin to the back pocket. Make sure that the receiver eliminates all wasted motion.

**Coaching Points:** The receivers will start off in the four point stance so they can feel the proper lower body stance and weight distribution. The coaching buzz words will be punch and drive. Make sure that the receivers are coming off the ball at full speed. Most of the weight should be on the front foot to eliminate any false steps. The receiver should drive off the front foot and always punch the back knee up and out over the hurdle. Repeat the drill from only the two point stance.
Warm-Up Catching: Around the Clock Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals for catching the football. Incorporated are skills related to proper hand positioning, sighting of the ball, finger pinching action on the football and ball security after the tuck.

Equipment: One football and a quarterback, coach or jugs machine to throw the football.

Drill Set Up:
1. All of the wide receivers will align in a straight line.
2. The quarterback will stand between 5 and 10 yards away from the receivers. The distance will depend on the accuracy of the quarterback.

Procedure:
1. The quarterback will start out by throwing the ball at twelve o’clock.
2. The receiver will take one step to the quarterback and catch the football then tuck the ball.
3. The quarterback will then throw the football to one o’clock.
4. The receiver will step, catch, and tuck the football.
5. The quarterback will repeat the throwing sequence of throwing the ball around the clock.
6. The receiver will step, catch, and tuck the football.
7. The drill will repeat for each wide receiver. To speed up the drill more than one quarterback can throw the football.
Hand Positioning:
1. Whenever the ball is above the waist the thumbs and the pointer fingers should be touching each other with maximum finger spread.
2. Whenever the ball is below the waist the pinky fingers should be touching each other with maximum finger spread.

Coaching Points: The coaching buzz words that should be used are step, catch, tuck. The wide receiver should take a step to the ball to create strong powerful hands. The buzz word catch will refer to the type of hand positioning. After the wide receiver catches the ball he should tuck the ball applying the five points of pressure. Make sure that proper hand position is established on every catch. Maximum finger spread and catching with the finger tips. The wide receiver should never squat to catch a low ball. This is a great pre-practice drill.
Catching: Confidence Ball Drills

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of catching the ball with confidence in front of the body, behind the body, high in front and high behind the body. Incorporated are skills related to proper hand positioning, body positioning and ball security after the tuck.

Equipment: Footballs, two cones and quarterback or coach to throw the ball.

Drill Set Up:
1. Set the two cones up even with each other about 10 yards apart.
2. Align the wide receivers in a straight line behind one of the cones.
3. Align the quarterback or the coach 5 to 10 yards from the wide receivers, in the middle of the two cones.

Procedure For In Front of the Body Catch:
1. On the coach’s command the wide receiver will jog across the field.
2. The quarterback will throw the ball as the wide receiver gets to the middle.
3. The wide receiver will catch the ball in front of the body with thumbs together.
4. Once the receiver catches the ball he will tuck the ball and finish at the far cone.
5. The drill will repeat from the right and left performing five repetitions.
Procedure for Behind the Body Catch:
1. On the coach’s command the player will jog across the field.
2. The quarterback will throw the football as the wide receiver approaches the middle of the field.
3. The quarterback will place the ball behind the wide receiver.
4. The wide receiver will pivot and turn the body catching the ball behind the body.
5. Once the receiver catches the ball he will tuck and sprint up the field.

Procedure for High In Front of the Body:
1. On the coach’s command the player will jog across the field.
2. The quarterback will throw the football as the wide receiver approaches the middle of the field.
3. The quarterback will place the ball high and in front of the ball.
4. The wide receiver will jump reaching above the head and catch the ball with the thumbs together.
5. The wide receiver will tuck and sprint up the field.

Procedure for High and Behind the Body:
1. On the coach’s command the player will jog across the field.
2. The quarterback will throw the football as the wide receiver approaches the middle of the field.
3. The quarterback will place the ball high and behind the wide receiver.
4. The wide receiver will jump and rotate the body in the air catching the ball with the thumbs together.
5. The wide receiver will tuck and sprint up the field.
**Coaching Points:** The wide receivers need to catch the ball strong and with confidence. The wide receivers will gain confidence as they catch the ball with the proper hand placements. Make sure that any ball above the waist the wide receiver is catching the ball with the thumbs and pointer fingers together. Look for maximum finger spread. Any ball below the waist make sure the wide receiver is catching the ball with the pinky fingers together. As soon as the receiver catches the ball make sure the wide receiver locks the ball by securing the five points of pressure.
Route Technician: Hitch Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals and techniques of coming out of a 45 degree break. Incorporated are skills used in running a hitch route, proper stance and start, hand placement for catching the ball and ball security.

**Equipment:** Three cones and a football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align cone one and two 5 yards away from each other in a straight line.
2. Align cone one and three 5 yards apart in a straight line.
3. The three cones will look like a right triangle.
4. The wide receivers will line up behind cone one.
5. The coach will stand behind the third cone with the football.

![Diagram of drill set up]

**Procedure:**
1. The wide receiver will get in a proper stance.
2. On the coaches command the wide receiver will punch the back knee up and out and accelerate down to the first cone.

![Diagram of procedure step 2]

3. As the wide receiver approaches the cone he will begin to decelerate the body by lowering the center of gravity to the base of support.
4. As the wide receiver begins to decelerate perform the elbow jams (fast arm action).

![Diagram of procedure step 3]
5. Plant off the outside leg with the nose over toes.
6. Accelerate to the next cone.

7. As the wide receiver accelerates to the next cone the coach will throw the ball.
8. The wide receiver will step, catch and tuck the football use the proper catching techniques.
9. The drill will repeat from the right and left.

Coaching Points: Focus on making sharp cuts and breaks, by keeping straight lines and allowing no arches or circles. During the break the center of gravity needs to drop to allow the hamstrings to decelerate. Keeping the feet under the hips the wide receiver needs to plant and push off the outside leg. The inside foot needs to be placed in the direction of the next cone. Punch the knees outside the center of gravity to accelerate to the next cone. The coaching buzz words will be nose over toes, elbow jam and center of gravity to base of support.

Nose over Toes: The wide receiver will plant off the outside foot while lowering the chest and hips bringing the nose over the planted foot toe.

Elbow Jam: Refers to the arm action used before a wide receiver makes an in or out cutting break. The arms need to speed up rotating from eye socket to back pocket, the action needs to come from the shoulders.

Center of Gravity to Base of Support: The quicker the wide receiver can decelerate the quicker the wide receiver can get into his cuts and breaks. The center of gravity is the waist and the base of support is an imaginary box around the feet (the ground). The wide receiver must lower the hips to the ground.
Route Technician: Slick Cut Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals and techniques for running a slant. Incorporated are skills used in proper stance and start, hand placement for catching the ball and ball security.

Equipment: Five cones, six footballs and two quarterbacks.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align three cones in a straight line 5-6 yard between each cone.
2. Align the fourth cone in the middle and five yards to the left of cone two and three.
3. Align the fifth cone ten yards away in a straight line from cone four.
4. The wide receivers will line up in a straight line behind the first cone.
5. One quarterback will stand on the right of the cones, the other on the left each holding six footballs.

Procedure:
1. The wide receiver will get in a proper stance.
2. On the coach’s command the wide receiver will release off the line by punching the back knee up and out and accelerate to the first cone.
3. As the wide receiver approaches the first cone he will perform the stick cut by planting his outside foot in the ground, opening the left hip and redirecting to the next cone.
4. As the wide receiver redirects to the next cone he will receive the ball from the quarterback.
5. Catching the ball with proper hand placements and then locking the tuck into the body.
6. Then drop the ball.
7. The wide receiver will then sprint to the cone.
8. Perform the stick cut by planting with the left foot, opening up the right hip and redirecting to the next cone.
9. As the wide receiver redirects to the next cone the wide receiver will catch the pass from the quarterback with proper hand placement and locking the tuck in.

10. After the wide receiver locks the tuck he will drop the ball and continue running to the next cone.
11. As the wide receiver approaches the next cone he will perform the last stick cut by planting off the outside leg, opening the left hip and redirecting to the last cone.
12. As the wide receiver redirects to the last cone the wide receiver will catch the pass from the quarterback with proper hand placement and then lock in the tuck.
13. Repeat the drill for the rest of the wide receivers.

**Coaching Points:** Focus on making sharp cuts and breaks, by keeping straight lines and eliminating any arches or circles. During the break the center of gravity must lower to the base of support. Keeping the feet under the hips the wide receiver will plant open and redirect (exaggerate the redirect). Make sure the receiver has proper hand placement on all catches.

**Plant** – Stab the outside foot into the ground with force with the chest over the knee.
**Open** – Open the inside hip pointing it in the direction the receiver will go.
**Redirect** – Push hard off the outside foot and drive the knee up and out.
Blocking: Vertical Push Stalk Block Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals for blocking a defensive back.

**Equipment:** Four to five hand shields.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Pair up the wide receiver across the field.
2. Align the wide receiver five yards apart.
3. Half the wide receivers will be the defenders they will hold a hand shield.
4. Half the wide receiver will be the stalk blockers.

**Procedure:**
1. The wide receivers will get into a proper stance.
2. On the coach’s command the wide receivers will press vertical to the bag holder.
3. The bag holder will back pedal for a few steps then step forward.
4. Once the wide receivers break the cushion of the defender (bag holder) and the defender comes out of the back pedal the receiver will then decelerate and come to even (feet under the shoulders).
5. Once the receiver comes to even (feet under the shoulders) he will be patient with the feet.
6. The coach will then point to a direction the defender will shuffle to.
7. The wide receiver will need to slide step not crossing the feet over and mirror the direction the defender is going in.
8. On the coach’s whistle the defender (bag holder) will sprint forward.
9. Once the defender breaks forward the wide receiver will sprint to the up field shoulder of the defender
10. When the wide receiver makes contact on the back he will punch up and out getting his head across the bag.

**Coaching Points:** The coaching buzz words should be push vertical, break down come to even, be patient, slide step and punch. When the wide receiver *pushes vertical* the wide receiver needs to come off the ball aggressive. Stem to get nose to nose on the defender. *Break down come to even*; the wide receiver will attack the defender when the defender comes out of the back pedal and breaks on the ball the wide receiver will lower his center of gravity and comes to even. Feet should be under the hips with the head up. *Be patient*; settle your feet don’t have wild feet and stay square. *Slide step*; power strut, don’t hop or cross the feet over. *Punch*; on contact the wide receiver will need to get his head across the up field shoulder and run his feet. For beginners this drill will need to be broken down phase by phase. First teach press vertical and come to even. Then add the slide step or mirror. At this point the drills can be put together.
Tackling

The most important fundamental in defensive football is tackling. Without sure tackling the offense will march down the field and score. But more important if players are not taught the proper fundamentals of tackling serious injury can happen. When teaching the proper fundamentals of tackling, teach the technique at a walking pace then slowly pick up the pace once the players master the fit position.

Five Points for Teaching Tackling:
1. Never challenge a player’s level of courage.
2. Challenge the player’s technique.
3. Build confidence with drill design.
4. Practice the fundamentals of the proper fit position.
5. Practice tackling by position, size and ability.

Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:
1. The defender will break down – the feet should be about shoulder width apart with the knees bent, eyes up and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball – The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab high cloth – Shoot the hands up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips – Extend the knees and hip.

Daily Tackling Drills
1. Fit
2. Angle tackling
3. Open field tackling
Tackling: One Step Fit Drill

**Purpose:** To teach the proper fundamentals of form tackling.

**Equipment:** Two cones and one football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align two cones 2 yards from each other.
2. Separate the defensive players in two lines, one tackler, and one ball carrier.
3. One line will be the ball carriers the second line will be the runners.
4. The lines will rotate from tackler to ball carrier.

**Procedure:**
1. The offensive player (ball carrier) will stand in front of the cone with the ball in the right hand.
2. On the coach’s command the defender will step to the offensive player. And engage the offensive player in the fit position.
3. The defensive player will hold the fit position while the coach checks the proper fit.
4. Once the coach has checked the proper fit position, the defensive play will go back to the start.
5. The offensive player will now hold the ball in the left hand.
6. On the coach’s command the defender will step to the offensive player and engage the fit position.
7. The defensive player will hold the fit position while the coach checks the proper fit.
Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:
1. The defender will break down - The feet should be about shoulder width apart with the knees bent, eyes up and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball - The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab High Cloth – Shoot the hand up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips – extend the knees and hips.

Coaching Points: This is a walking drill; make sure that the players are not going full speed. The buzz words that should be coached are bit the ball and grab high cloth. Each player will perform the fit drill on the right then the left. Make sure that each player is in the proper fit before moving on.
**Tackling: Fit and Drive Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of tackling the ball carrier to the ground.

**Equipment:** Two cones, one football and a crash pad.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align two cones 2 yards from each other
2. Place the crash pad behind the second cone.
3. Separate the defensive players in two lines, one line will be the tacklers the second line will simulate the ball carrier.
4. The lines will rotate from tackler to ball carrier.

**Procedure:**
1. The offensive player (ball carrier) will stand in front of the cone with the football in the right arm.
2. On the coach’s command the defender will step to the offensive player and engage the offensive player in the fit position.
3. On contact the defensive player will grab high cloth and roll the hips.
4. As the defensive player is rolling the hips he will power step drive the player to the crash pad.
5. Repeat the drill with the ball in the right arm and left arm.
Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:
1. The defender will break down - The feet should be about shoulder width apart with the knees bent, eyes up, and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball - The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab high cloth – Shoot the hand up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips – extend the knees and hips.
6. Power steps – run the feet taking short steps to drive the ball carrier back.

Coaching Points: This is a half speed drill; make sure that the players are not going full speed. Check and make sure that all the player’s mouth pieces are in and chin strap snapped. The buzz words that should be coached are bit the ball and grab high cloth. Make sure that the player has proper fit before moving on.
Tackling: Angle Tackling Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of an open field, sideline tackle.

**Equipment:** Four cones and one football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align two cones 5 yards apart.
2. Align the other two cones 8 yards apart in the middle of the first set.
3. Separate the defensive players in two lines, one line will be the defensive players the second line will be the ball carriers.
4. The two lines will face each other with the coach standing behind the defensive player.
5. Players will rotate from tackler to ball carrier.

**Procedure:**
1. The coach will point to the right or left cone.
2. On the coach’s command the ball carrier will run to the cone designated, with the ball in the outside arm.
3. The defensive player will then mirror the path of the ball carrier staying in the back pocket (behind) of the ball carrier.
4. The defensive player will close down the cushion of the ball carrier while staying in the back pocket of the ball carrier.
5. The defensive player will then engage in contact of the ball carrier, getting his head across the runner (bite the ball) in the proper fit position.
6. On contact the defensive player will grab high cloth and run his feet.
7. The players will then rotate lines.
8. The drill will be repeated until everyone has performed a tackle to the left and right.

Coaching Points: This is not a full speed drill; make sure that the defender does not take the ball carrier to the ground. Check and make sure that all the players mouth pieces are in and chin strap snapped. The coaching buzz words are stay in the back pocket, bite the ball and grab high cloth. On any sideline or open field tackles the defensive player will need to stay in the back pocket of the ball carrier to eliminate any cut back.

Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:
1. The defender will break down - The feet should be about shoulder width apart with the knees bent, eyes up, and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball - The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab High Cloth – Shoot the hand up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips – Extend the knees and hips.
6. Power steps – Run the feet taking short steps to drive the ball carrier back.
**Tackling: Back Pocket Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of an open field tackle to prevent the running back from cutting back.

**Equipment:** Three cones, a whistle and one football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Separate the defensive players in two lines, one line will be the defensive player the second line will be the ball carriers.
2. Align two cones about 10 yards away.
3. Stagger the third cone about two yard away from the first cone and 5 yards away.
4. Align the ball carriers at the third cone and the tacklers at the first cone.

**Procedure:**
1. On the coach’s command the ball carrier will run to the far cone carrying the ball in the outside arm.
2. The defensive player will then shuffle down the line keeping an inside relationship to the ball carrier.
3. The defensive player will close down the cushion of the ball carrier while staying in the back pocket of the ball carrier.
4. At any point between the two cones the ball carrier will cut up the field.
5. While staying in the back pocket of the ball carrier the defensive player will engage in contact of the ball carrier, getting his head across the runner in the proper fit position.
6. On contact the defensive player will grab high cloth and run his feet.

7. The players will then rotate lines from tackler to ball carrier.
8. The drill will be repeated until everyone has performed tackle to the left and right.

**Coaching Points:** This is not a full speed drill; make sure that the defender does not take the ball carrier to the ground. Check and make sure that all the players mouth pieces are in and chin strap snapped. The coaching buzz words are stay in the back pocket, bite the ball and grab high cloth. To eliminate any cut backs or missed tackles the defender will need to stay in the back pocket of the ball carrier and not over running him.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:**
1. The defender will break down - The feet should be about shoulder width apart with the knees bent, eyes up, and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball - The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab High Cloth – Shoot the hand up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips – extend the knees and hips.
6. Power steps – run the feet taking short steps to drive the ball carrier back.
**Tackling: Open Field Tackling drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of an open field tackle.

**Equipment:** Four cones and one football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align two cones up 5 yards apart.
2. Align the other two cones five yards apart and 10 yards from the first set.
3. Separate the defensive players in two lines, one line will be the defensive players and the second line will be the ball carriers.
4. The two lines will face each other in the middle of the cones.
5. Players will rotate from tackler to ball carrier.

**Procedure:**
1. The ball carrier will try to score by passing the end zone (set of cones).
2. The defender will try to prevent the ball carrier from scoring.
3. On the coaches command the ball carrier will run forward, or at an angle.
4. The defender will mirror the ball carrier.
5. The ball carrier will be allowed one juke or cut.
6. The defender will engage in contact with the ball carrier in the proper fit position, tackling him to the ground.

**Coaching Points:** This is a full speed drill; make sure that all the players have proper pads on with mouth pieces in and chin straps snapped. The defender will mirror the ball carriers path, if the ball carrier runs at an angle make sure the defender stays in the back pocket to allow any cut backs. On contact make sure the defender is in the proper fit position.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:**
1. The defender will break down - The feet should be about shoulder width apart with the knees bent, eyes up, and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball - The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab High Cloth – Shoot the hand up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips – Extend the knees and hips.
6. Power steps – Run the feet taking short steps to drive the ball carrier back.
Defensive Backs

The defensive back must be the most athletic player on the football field. He must run, jump, change directions and tackle. To master the position of defensive back the coach must drill the fundamentals of the position. The drills that are used in practice must fit game situations. The fundamentals must be practiced every day.

Five Intangibles of the Defensive Back
1. Physicality
2. Discipline
3. Technician
4. Communicator
5. Playmaker

Defensive Back Skills
1. Running
2. Jumping
3. Catching
4. Agility
5. Tackling

Defensive Backs Big Six
1. Assignment
2. Alignment
3. Stance & Start
4. Backpedal
5. Breaks
6. Tackling

Daily Drills Should Focus on the Following
1. Stance and Starts
2. Backpedal and Breaks
3. Tackling

The following drills will emphasize developing the proper fundamentals for defensive back play and focus on the following daily drill categories.
Stance and Start: Backpedal Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals in executing the backpedal. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts.

**Equipment:** Two cones

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Set two cones up in a straight line 10-15 yards apart.
2. Align the defensive backs in a straight line at the starting cone.

**Procedure:**
1. The defensive back will get in to the proper Z stance.
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will backpedal to the far cone at half speed.
3. After all the defensive backs have backpedaled to the far cone at half speed they will return to the starting cone full speed.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Stance Z Position:** The defensive back will be in a stagger start position with a toe to instep or toe to heel alignment. The weight should be on the balls of the feet. The ankles, knees and hips need to be bent. The back is straight, the head is up and the arms are hanging loose and relaxed.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Start:** On the initial movement the defensive back will push off the front foot. Make sure that the weight distribution is equal on both legs. The defensive back needs to stay low while pumping the arms. The key to the start is staying low. If the player stands straight up on the start he will fall over.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Backpedal:** The two most important aspects of the backpedal are the size of the steps and the lifting height of the feet. The steps should not be too large and the feet should be kept low to the ground. As the defensive back backpedals he should drag the feet over the grass. The defensive back must stay low and in the Z position during the backpedal.
Stance and Starts: Backpedal Weave Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals in executing the directional backpedal. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts.

**Equipment:** Two cones

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Set up the two cones at a designated yard line.
2. Align the defensive backs in a straight line behind the two starting cones.

**Procedure:**
1. The defensive backs will get into the proper Z stance.
2. On the coach’s command the defensive backs will start to backpedal.
3. The coach will give a direction by pointing to the right or left
4. The defensive backs will backpedal mirroring the coaches’ point.
5. The coach will then give another direction by pointing to the right or left.
6. The defensive backs will again backpedal mirroring the coach’s point.

7. The coach will then continue pointing to the right and left until the defensive backs have reached the designated finish line.
8. Repeat the drill coming back.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Stance Z Position:** The defensive back will be in a stagger start position with a toe to instep or toe to heel alignment. The weight should be on the balls of the feet. The ankles, knees and hips need to be bent. The back is straight, the head is up and the arms are hanging loose and relaxed.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Start:** On the initial movement the defensive back will push off the front foot. Make sure that the weight distribution is equal on both legs. The defensive back needs to stay low while pumping the arms. The key to the start is staying low. If the player stands straight up on the start he will fall over.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Backpedal Weave:** The two most important aspects of the backpedal are the size of the steps and the lifting height of the feet. The steps should not be too large and the feet should be kept low to the ground. As the defensive back backpedals he should drag the feet over the grass. The defensive back must stay low and in the Z position during the backpedal. Make sure that the defensive back keeps the shoulders square to the coach at all times.
Breaks: Half Turn Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of a defensive back coming out of the back pedal into a speed turn. Incorporated are skill related to stance and starts, agility and body control.

Equipment: One cone and a football.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the cone on the designated yard line.
2. Align the defensive back in front of the cone.
3. Align the rest of the defensive backs in a straight line off to the side.

Procedure:
1. The defensive back will align in the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will start his backpedal.
3. On the coach’s command (Break) the defensive back will drop the chin to the chest and whip the inside elbow back and sprint down the line.
4. The coach will throw the football as the defensive back drives out of the back pedal.
5. After each defensive back performs the speed turn to the right the drill will repeat to the left.

Coaching Points: Make sure that the defensive backs are in the proper Z stance; toe to heel relationship, flat back, knees bent and the chest over the knees. The defensive back will need to stay low on the backpedal and the break. Instruct the defensive backs to whip the inside elbow and open up the inside hip. Keep the chin down on the half turn.
Breaks: T Step Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of a defensive back coming out of a backpedal and breaking on the ball.

**Equipment:** Three cones

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the three cones in a right triangle.
2. The distance between each cone should be 5 yards.
3. Align all the defensive backs in a straight line behind the first cone.

**Procedure:** The T step drill will be broken down in to three phases; the plant, the drive and the roll. Each phase of the T step should be drilled before putting it all together (perform).

**Procedure for T set Plant:**
1. The defensive back will get into the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will backpedal to the cone.
3. As the defensive back reaches the cone he will plant the outside foot into the ground. The contact of the plant foot should be on the toes.
4. The inside foot should be perpendicular with the outside foot making a T.
5. Repeat the drill with the right foot and left foot.
Procedure for T step Drive:
1. The defensive back will get into the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will backpedal to the cone.
3. As the defensive back approaches the cone he will perform the proper plant on the outside foot.
4. The defensive back will plant on the outside foot and will raise the inside foot driving the knee out and up and then will drive forward off the outside foot. Planting and pushing off the same foot.

Procedure for T step Roll:
1. The defensive back will get into the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will backpedal to the cone.
3. As the defensive back approaches the cone he will perform the proper plant on the outside foot.
4. The defensive back will plant on the outside foot and will raise the inside foot driving the knee out and up and then will drive forward off the outside foot. Planting and pushing off the same foot.
5. Roll the right leg toward the next cone. (Example: plant with right foot, drive with left knee, roll with right foot).
**Procedure for the T Step Drill**

1. The defensive back will get into the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach's command the defensive back will backpedal to the cone.
3. As the defensive back approaches the cone he will perform the proper T step; plant, drive and roll.
4. After the roll the defensive back will sprint through the cone.
5. Repeat the drill from the right and the left.

**Coaching Points:** Make sure that the defensive back is in the proper Z stance; toe to heel relationship, flat back, knees bent and the chest over the knees. Break down each phase to the T step (plant, drive, roll) before putting it all together. The drill should be performed at half speed for 2 to 3 reps before going full speed. As the defensive back gets good at the T step drill a football can be added.
Breaks: W Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of a defensive back coming out of a backpedal and breaking on a 45 degree angle. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts, T step, agility and body control.

Equipment: Two cones and a football.

Drill Set Up:
1. Set up two cones in a straight line between 15-20 yards.
2. Align the defensive backs in a straight line at the first cone.

Procedure:
1. The defensive back will get into the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will backpedal.
3. On the coach’s command (Break) the defensive back will perform the proper T step and break at a 45 degree angle.
4. The defensive back will then sprint forward.
5. On the coach’s command (Backpedal) the defensive back will drop the hips and get back into the proper Z position and backpedal.
6. On the coach’s command (Break) the defensive back will again perform the proper T step and break at a 45 degree angle.
7. The defensive back will repeat the steps of backpedal, break and sprint until he has reached the far cone.
8. The drill needs to be performed from the right and left.

Coaching Points: Make sure that the defensive back is in the proper Z stance; toe to heel relationship, flat back, knees bent and the chest over the knees. The defensive backs need to stay low throughout the backpedal and break. The defensive back will need to perform the correct T step; plant, drive and roll. The drill should be performed at full speed.
Breaks: 90 Degree Cut Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of a defensive back coming out of a 90 degree break. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts, agility and body control.

**Equipment:** One cone and a football

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Set up the cone on a marked yard line.
2. Align the defensive backs in a straight line at the first cone.

**Procedure:**
1. The defensive back will get into the proper stance (Z stance).
2. On the coach’s command the defensive back will backpedal.
3. On the coach’s command (Break) the defensive back will plant, open and drive.
4. The coach will throw the football and the defensive back will drive on the ball catching it with the proper hand placement.
5. After every defensive back performs the 90 degree break to the right defensive backs will perform the same 90 degree break to the left.

**Coaching Points:** Make sure that the defensive backs are in the proper Z stance; toe to heel relationship, flat back, knees bent and the chest over the knees. The defensive back will need to stay low on the backpedal and the break. Instruct the defensive backs to whip the outside back keeping the head down.
Linebackers

The linebackers are the leaders on the defense. The linebacker has to be able to cover the wide receiver like a defensive back, take on and get off blocks like a defensive lineman and be the best tackler on the field. To master the position of linebacker the fundamentals of the linebacker play must be drilled every day in practice.

Five Intangibles That Make a Great Linebacker
1. Leadership
2. Work Ethic
3. Physicality
4. Football Instinct
5. Dependability

Linebacker Skills
1. Running
2. Jumping
3. Tackling
4. Agility
5. Catching

Linebackers Big Six to Achieve Greatness
1. Assignment
2. Alignment
3. Stance & Starts
4. Block separation
5. Tackling
6. Pass Coverage

Daily Drills Should Focus on the Following
1. Stance and Starts
2. Run Fits
3. Pass Drops
4. Tackling
Stance and Starts: Step Over Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of reading the run and making a tackle. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts and agility.

**Equipment:** Five step over bags and two cones.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align five step over bags up in a straight line two yards apart.
2. Align the staring cone 2 yards away from the first bag.
3. Align the finishing cone 3 to 5 yards down field from the last bag.
4. Align the linebackers in a straight line at the starting cone.

**Procedure:**
1. The linebacker will get into the proper two point stance.
2. On the coach’s command the linebacker will take an 8 inch direction step with the left foot and then get the second step in the ground staying square to the line of scrimmage.
3. The linebacker will then quickly step over the step over bags keeping the shoulders square and not crossing the feet over.
4. Once the linebacker successfully steps over each bag he will then sprint threw the finish cone.
5. Repeat the drill with all the linebackers going right and left.

**Coaching Points for Proper Stance:** The linebacker’s feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width; the width will allow the linebacker to take the proper 8-12 inch lateral or directional step. The knees should be bent and positioned over his feet; shoulders should be over the knees. The head and eyes should be up and the arms should be relaxed and off his knees.

**Coaching Point:** Make sure that the linebackers keep their shoulders square to the line of scrimmage with their head and eyes up. As the linebackers are going through the bags make sure they don’t cross their feet over. As the linebacker finishes the bags put the foot in the ground and explode through the finish cone. As the linebackers master the shuffle add a tackling dummy.
Stance and Starts: S&S Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of the stance and starts for a running play.

Equipment: One football

Drill Set Up:
1. The coach will stand at a designated yard line holding a football facing the group.
2. Align two linebackers up 5 yards from the coach.
3. Align the rest of the linebackers up behind the first two.

Procedure:
1. The linebackers will get into the proper two point stance.
2. The coach will then point the football to his right.
3. The two linebackers will take an 8 inch directional step with the left foot and then get the second step in the ground staying square to the line of scrimmage.
4. The linebackers will reset in the proper two point stance.
5. The coach will now point to his left.
6. The linebackers will take an 8 inch directional step with the right foot and then get the second step in the ground staying square to the line of scrimmage.
7. The coach will repeat the drill to the remaining linebackers.

Coaching Points for Proper Stance: The linebacker’s feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width; the width will allow the linebacker to take the proper 8-12 inch lateral or directional step. The knees should be bent and positioned over his feet; shoulders should be over the knees. The head and eyes should be up and the arms should be relaxed and off his knees.

Coaching Points: Make sure that the linebackers do not take a false step the weight should be on the balls of the feet. After the read step the linebackers should stay square to the line of scrimmage with good pad level.
Stance and Starts: Pass Drop Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of opening the hips and getting into a pass drop. Incorporated are skills related to reading the quarterback’s eyes and breaking on the football.

**Equipment:** One cone and one football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Set up the cone on a designated yard line and hash.
2. Align the linebacker in the proper alignment, 5 yards from the cone.
3. The coach will stand back as the quarterback.

**Procedure:**
1. The linebacker will line up in the proper two point stance 5 yards away from the line of scrimmage.
2. On the movement (pass drop) the linebacker will open up the outside hip and shuffle to hook to curl zone keeping his eyes on the quarterback.
3. The coach will then point with the ball to the right or left.
4. The linebacker will shuffle in the direction of the coach’s point keeping his shoulders square to the line of scrimmage.
5. After the coach points to the right or left he will throw the football.
6. The linebacker will break on the ball, locking the catch in and making the interception.

**Coaching Points for Proper Stance:** The linebacker’s feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width; the width will allow the linebacker to take the proper 8-12 inch lateral or directional step. The knees should be bent and positioned over his feet; shoulders should be over the knees. The head and eyes should be up and the arms should be relaxed and off his knees.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Drop:** There are many different types of linebacker drops: shuffle, crossover and backpedal. Make sure the drop fits the defensive scheme. When the linebacker shuffles to the drop make sure he does not cross the feet over or click the heels. The linebacker’s eyes should always be on the quarterback.
Run Fits: Stun and Separate Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of getting off a block. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts.

**Equipment:** Two cones and one hand shield.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align two cones up 5 yards apart on a designated yard line.
2. Have one of the linebackers hold the hand shield standing in front of the second cone.
3. Align the rest of the linebackers in a straight line behind the first cone.

**Procedure:**
1. The linebacker will get into the proper two point stance.
2. On the coach’s command the linebacker will take the proper read steps.
3. As the linebacker is taking his read steps the bag holder will move toward the linebacker.
4. The linebacker will then attack and stun the bag holder by shooting hard into the breast plate.
5. The line backer will then neutralize the bag holder and create separation by locking the arms out.

6. After the separation created by the lockout, the coach will check proper leverage.
7. The drill will rotate from linebacker to bag holder.

**Coaching Points for Proper Stance:** The linebacker’s feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width; the width will allow the linebacker to take the proper 8-12 inch lateral or directional step. The knees should be bent and positioned over his feet; shoulders should be over the knees. The head and eyes should be up and the arms should be relaxed and off his knees.

**Coaching Points for Proper Attack and Stun:** In order to neutralize or stun a blocker, the linebacker must keep his shoulders square and maintain a proper base and keep his pad level low. On contact, the linebacker must maintain inside out leverage on the blocker by attacking with the inside foot up and his outside foot back.

**Coaching Points for Proper Separation:** The linebacker must attack and stun the linebacker with low pad level and hand placement. The hand should attack the breast plates of the blocker. His elbows should be in and his thumbs should be up. To create separation the linebacker will lock the arms out.
Run Fits: Read, Shuffle and Fit Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of reading the run and making a form tackle. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts.

Equipment: 5 step over bags.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the five step over bags up in a straight line about two feet apart.
2. Designate each step over bag an offensive linemen.
3. Align the two inside linebackers up in their proper gaps 5 yards away from the bags.
4. Align one of the remaining linebackers up as the running back.

Procedure:
1. The two inside linebackers will line up in the proper two point stance 5 yards away from the bags.
2. The coach will assign a hole for the running back to run through.
3. On the coach’s command the running back will run through the designated hole.
4. As the running back moves the linebackers will take the proper read steps.
5. The play side linebacker will fill the appropriate hole and perform the proper form tackle.
6. The backside linebacker will shuffle and scrape over the top looking for the cut back.

Coaching Points for Proper Stance: The linebacker’s feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width; the width will allow the linebacker to take the proper 8-12 inch lateral or directional step. The knees should be bent and positioned over his feet; shoulders should be over the knees. The head and eyes should be up and the arms should be relaxed and off his knees.

Coaching Points: Repeat the drill to the right and to the left. Make sure the linebackers are taking the proper read steps. The play side linebacker should always finish with speed while the backside linebacker will slow the play and stay in the hip pocket of the running back. On contact make sure the linebackers perform the proper fit of biting the ball and grabbing the high cloth.
Run Fits: Cut Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of getting off a cut block and making a tackle. Incorporated are skills related to agility, stance and starts and tackling.

**Equipment:** One football and one cone.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the cone at a designated yard line.
2. Place one of the linebackers as a guard two feet away from the cone.
3. Align another linebacker up as the fullback 3 to 4 yards behind the guard.
4. Place a running 6 to 7 yards behind the cone holding the football.
5. Align the linebacker in the proper defensive technique.

**Procedure:**
1. The linebacker will line up in the proper two point stance 5 yards away from the line of scrimmage.
2. The linebacker’s playing guard will line up in a three point stance, while the fullback and running back lines up in a two point stance.
3. On the coach’s command the linebacker will take the appropriate read steps, keeping his eyes on the running back. The running back and fullback will run to the outside.
4. The linebacker will then shuffle down the line mirroring the running back.
5. At the same time the guard will fire off the ball and aim to cut the outside leg.
6. The linebacker will play the blocker first, stun and separate pushing the cut block to the ground.
7. After the linebacker separates from the block he will continue to shuffle down the line keeping his eyes on the running back.
8. The fullback will run outside looking to cut the linebacker’s outside leg.
9. The linebacker will play the blocker first, stun and separate pushing the cut block to the ground.

10. After the linebacker separates from the fullback’s cut block he will continue to shuffle to the running back.
11. The running back will continue running to the outside.
12. The linebacker will perform the proper fit position on the running back.

**Coaching Points for Proper Stance:** The linebacker’s feet should be slightly wider than shoulder width; the width will allow the linebacker to take the proper 8-12 inch lateral or directional step. The knees should be bent and positioned over his feet; shoulders should be over the knees. The head and eyes should be up and the arms should be relaxed and off his knees.

**Coaching Points for Proper Attack and Stun:** In order to neutralize or stun a blocker, the linebacker must keep his shoulders square and maintain a proper base and keep his pad level low. On contact, the linebacker must maintain inside out leverage on the blocker by attacking with the inside foot up and high with the outside foot back.

**Coaching Points for the Proper Fit:**
1. The defender will break down with the feet shoulder width apart and the knees bent, eyes up, and shoulder pads down.
2. Step with the opposite foot that will make contact.
3. Bite the ball. The eyes should be up and the facemask on the football.
4. Grab high cloth. Shoot the hand up and through and grab the back of the jersey.
5. Roll the hips by extending the knees and hips.
6. Power steps should be used to run with the feet taking short steps to drive the ball carrier back.
Defensive Line

The defensive lineman is a rare cross breed that can excel at any area on the football field. He mixes size and strength with great speed. He is aggressive and tough when getting off blocks. The lineman is fast and agile when rushing the passer. To develop the all around defensive lineman the fundamentals of football must be practiced every day.

Defensive Linemen Skills
1. Running
2. Jumping
3. Tackling
4. Agility
5. Strength

Defensive Linemen Big Six to Achieve Greatness
1. Assignment
2. Alignment
3. Stance & Steps
4. Engagement
5. Pursuit
6. Tackling

Daily Drills Should Focus on the Following
1. Stance & Starts
2. Agility
3. Hands & Escape
4. Engagement
5. Tackling
Stance & Starts: Get Off Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of getting off the ball. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts.

Equipment: One football attached to a broom stick.

Drill Set Up:
1. The coach will hold the football stick at a designated yard line.
2. Align the defensive linemen up in two straight lines.
3. Start the line one yard in front of the coach.

Procedure:
1. The first two defensive linemen will get into the proper defensive lineman stance.
2. The coach will begin barking out a cadence trying to get the linemen to jump.
3. The defensive linemen will stay down in their stance with their head turned in looking at the football.
4. As the coach is barking out the cadence he will simulate a snap by pulling the ball back.
5. On the snap of the ball the linemen will explode out of their stance by driving the back leg up and out
6. The linemen will then sprint forward for 5 yards. The drill will be repeated for 5 reps.

Coaching Points for Stance: The player will be in a three point stance with the feet as close to parallel as possible and the hips higher than the head. The weight will be on the balls of the feet with the knees in and heels off the ground. The head should be turned in looking at the ball. The front arm should be well in front of the head with the free arm cocked by the facemask ready to strike.
Agility: Hoop Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper footwork and body control while getting off and rushing the passer.

Equipment: On large hoop or eight cones and a football.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the cones in a circle covering a total distance of 5 yards.
2. Designate a starting cone.
3. Align the defensive linemen in a straight line at the start.

Procedure:
1. The first defensive lineman will get into a proper three point stance.
2. The defensive lineman will watch the ball, on the coach’s movement the defensive lineman will sprint around half the circle.
3. As the defensive lineman nears the finish he will raise his hands.
4. Repeat the half circle to the left and right for 2-3 reps.

Coaching Points: As the defensive line rounds the circle make sure that he is staying tight to the cones the weight needs to be on the instep of the foot while pushing off the inside leg. Make sure that the defensive lineman has good arm action with the outside arm.
**Engagement: Six Point Sled Drill**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of engaging an offensive lineman and separating. Incorporated are skills related to stun and separate.

**Equipment:** Five man or two man sled and one football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the two man or five man sled in a designated area.
2. Align a defensive lineman up in front of each pad.
3. The other defensive linemen will follow in line.

![Diagram of sled drill setup](image)

**Procedure:**
1. Align the two defensive linemen up in a six point stance. The toes should be dug into the ground; the knees will also be on the ground with the player up on the fingertips. The back will be flat with the eyes up.
2. On the movement of the football the defensive linemen will explode into the sled. Roll the hips forward and lock the arms out.
3. The drill will be repeated for 5 reps before the next two linemen perform the drill.

**Coaching Points:** In order to neutralize or stun a blocker, the lineman must keep his shoulders square and maintain a proper base and keep his pad level low. The linemen must attack and stun the blocker with low pad level and hand placement. The hand should attack the breast plates of the blocker. His elbows should be in and his thumbs should be up. To create separation the defensive lineman will lock the arms out.
**Hands and Escape: Hand Drills**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of getting off a block using the two handed club. Incorporated are skills related to agility.

**Equipment:** Two forearm pads or cone pads.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Pair up the defensive linemen in groups on a designated line.
2. The pair of linemen will stand arm length away from each other

**Procedure:** The hand drill will be broken down in two phases; two step club and full speed club.

**Procedure for the two step club drill:**
1. The players will stand face to face arm length away from each other with one player holding both arms out in front parallel to the ground.
2. Each player will take turns performing the drill.
3. On the coach’s command the defensive player will come across his body stepping with his outside leg and with his outside arm. He will hit the arms away with his forearm.
4. As the defensive player hits the outstretched arms he will decrease his surface area by pointing both toes to the offensive lineman.
5. The defensive lineman will then clear the outstretched arms by stepping up the field with the inside leg and ripping the inside arm. He will then settle in the gap.
6. Each player will perform the drill 5 times.
Procedure for full speed club drill:

1. The coach will stand 3 yards away from the defensive linemen with the arm shield.
2. The defensive linemen will stand in a straight line going one at a time.

3. The defensive lineman will get down in a three point stance.
4. On the coach’s command the defensive player will sprint out of the stance as the defensive lineman reaches the coach he will step and come across his body stepping with his outside leg. With his outside arm he will hit the arms away with his forearm.
5. As the defensive player hits the outstretched arms he will decrease his surface area by pointing both toes to the offensive lineman.

6. The defensive lineman will then clear the outstretched arms by stepping up the field with the inside leg and ripping the inside arm. He will then settle in the gap.

7. Each player will perform the drill for 5 reps.

Coaching Points: The feet will always take the player to where he wants to go. Meaning, that the defensive player will want to flip the hips while he is clubbing the arms and point the toes to the offensive lineman. This will decrease the surface area and make it harder to be blocked. The defensive lineman will then rip and step with the same hand and leg pointing the toes back in the gap.
Hands and Escape: Stun and escape Swim and Rip drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of getting off a block and making a tackle. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts.

Equipment: One man sled or stand up bag.

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the one man sled in a designated area on the football field.
2. Align the defensive linemen up in a straight line in front of the sled.
3. The coach will stand to the side.

Procedure for the Swim Drill:
1. The first defensive linemen will get into the proper three point stance in front of the one man sled. The remaining linemen will fall in behind the first linemen.
2. On the coach’s command, the defensive line man will take a six inch step with the back foot and initiate contact on the sled on the second step.
3. The lineman will drive the feet moving the sled for one yard.
4. The defensive lineman will then perform the swim move and escape to the right.
5. Each defensive lineman will perform the escape to the right and left with the swim move.
Procedure for the Rip Drill:
1. The first defensive linemen will get into the proper three point stance in front of the one man sled. The remaining linemen will fall in behind the first linemen.
2. On the coach’s command, the defensive lineman will take a six inch step with the back foot. He will initiate contact on the sled on the second step.
3. The lineman will drive the feet moving the sled for one yard.
4. The defensive lineman will then perform the rip move and escape to the right.
5. Each defensive lineman will perform the escape to the right and left with the rip move.

Coaching Points: When the defensive linemen initiate contact on the sled the thumbs need to be down and the elbows up. The hands should attack the breast plates of the blocker. To create separation the linemen will extend and lock the arms out.

Coaching Points for Swim Move: After creating separation; the defensive lineman will then pull the offensive linemen back to him and reach the inside arm up and out over the linemen. The motion needs to be short and fast.

Coaching Points for the Rip Move: After creating separation; the defensive linemen will then pull the offensive linemen back to him and punch the inside arm up. The motion should rip up through the jaw.

Coaching Points for Stance: The player will be in a three point stance with the feet as close to parallel as possible and the hips higher than the head. The weight will be on the balls of the feet with the knees in and heels off the ground. The head should be turned in looking at the ball. The front arm should be well in front of the head with the free arm cocked by the facemask ready to strike.
Team Drills
Team Drills: Wide Receiver/ Defensive Back One on One Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of wide receiver route running and defensive back in man coverage. Incorporated are skills related to catching, route running, throwing, backpedaling, and breaking on the ball.

**Equipment:** Footballs

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Align the quarterbacks up in the center of the football field or on one of the hashes.
2. Align half of the wide receivers up on the right side of the field.
3. Align the remaining wide receivers up on the left side of the field.
4. Align a defensive back up in the proper alignment on the right side and left side.
5. The remaining defensive backs will stand on the side line.

**Procedure:**
1. The coach will signal what route he wants run to the quarterback and wide receiver (hitch).
2. The quarterback, wide receiver and defensive back will get into their proper stance.
3. On the simulated snap of the ball:
   a. The quarterback will take the proper drop back.
   b. The wide receiver will take the proper start.
   c. The defensive back will take the proper man backpedal.
4. The wide receiver will then run the signaled route (hitch) using proper fundamentals.
   a. The defensive back will play man coverage and make the proper break on the ball.
5. The quarterback will throw the ball to the wide receiver.
6. The wide receiver will catch the ball with the proper catch and lock fundamentals.
7. The defensive back will try to break up the ball or intercept it.
8. The coach will then signal the quarterback and right wide receiver the next pass route.
9. The quarterback, right wide receiver and right defensive back will perform the one on one drill.
10. The drill will repeat from right to left, rotating through all the wide receivers and defensive backs.

**Coaching Points:** Make sure that all three players are in the proper stance before the snap of the ball. Coach each position to use the fundamentals that were drilled during individual time. This is a full speed drill but moving at buzz tempo. The defensive back will not bring the wide receiver to the ground.
Team Drills: Inside Nine on Seven Drill

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of offensive run game and defensive run stop. Incorporated are skills related to blocking, tackling, running and ball security.

**Equipment:** One football.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Place a football on a designated yard line and hash mark on the football field.
2. Huddle the starting front nine offensive players up behind the ball.
3. Huddle the starting front seven defensive players in front of the ball.

**Procedure:**
1. The offensive coach will give a designated play to the quarterback. While the defensive coach will signal the designated play to the linebacker.
2. The quarterback will give the play to the offense and snap count.
3. The linebacker will give the signaled play to the defense.
4. Both units will align in the proper alignment for the play.
5. On the quarterback’s cadence the offensive unit will perform the running play that is called in the huddle.
6. On the snap of the ball the defense will play their proper run gaps for the defensive play called.
7. The offensive unit will try to execute the play call to perfection while the defense will try to stop the run play.
8. On the whistle the play will end with both units huddling back up awaiting the next play.
9. The drill will be repeated until the designated plays have been run.

**Coaching Points:** Make sure that before the drill starts all of the players know exactly what type of practice tempo is being used (full, thud). All players should be coached to perform the proper fundamentals for each position group.

**Coaching Points for Full Speed Tempo:** Full speed tempo is a full speed drill the defensive players will perform the proper form tackle and take the ball carrier down to the ground.

**Coaching Points for Thud Tempo:** Thud tempo is a full speed drill the defensive players will perform the proper form tackle on the ball carrier. The only difference is the defensive player will not take the ball carrier down to the ground. After the defensive player performs the proper fit on the runner he will let him go.
Team Drills: One on One Pass Rush Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of defensive line pass rush and offensive line pass protection. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts, blocking fits, hands and engagement.

Equipment: One stand up bag.

Drill Set Up:

1. Align the offensive line up with two foot splits in a designated area on the football field.
2. Place a pop up bag 5 to 6 yards behind the center.
3. Align the defensive line up in their proper alignment.
4. Align the remaining defensive linemen behind the starters.
5. Align the remaining offensive linemen up to the side away from the drill.

Procedure:

1. The drill will be run from left to right.
2. The left tackle and right defensive end will get into the proper stance (the offensive linemen that are not going will stand up but keep their two foot split).
3. On the coach’s command, the left tackle will pass set keeping his shoulders square to the line of scrimmage and pass block the defensive end.
   a. On the movement of the offensive linemen, the right defensive end will pass rush trying to get to the stand up bag.
2. The left guard and right defensive tackle will now get into their proper stance.
3. On the coach’s command, the left guard will pass set keeping his shoulders square to the line of scrimmage and pass block the defensive tackle.
4. On the movement of the offensive linemen, the right defensive tackle will pass rush trying to get to the stand up bag.

5. The drill will continue with the center and nose guard or defensive tackle performing the one on one pass rush drill.
6. The drill will continue with each player performing the one on one pass rush drill until the set amount of time has elapsed.

Coaching Points: This is a full speed drill and all the players need to have their mouth pieces in and chin strap snapped. All players need to be in the correct stance before the ball is snapped. The defensive linemen should use their hand and escape techniques to get around the offensive linemen. The offensive linemen should keep their shoulders square to the line of scrimmage and punch with the hand to keep the defensive linemen from getting to the bag.

Coaching Points for Defensive Lineman Stance: The player will be in a three point stance with the feet as close to parallel as possible and the hips higher than the head. The weight will be on the balls of the feet with the knees in and heels off the ground. The head should be turned in looking at the ball. The front arm should be well in front of the head with the free arm cocked by the facemask ready to strike.

Coaching points for Offensive Lineman Stance: The feet should be shoulder width apart, toe to instep relationship with the feet. Sink the hips and bend over at the waist, reach the arm forward putting the weight on the finger tips. The rear end drops parallel to the ground with good knee bend. The head is up and looking at the target. The free hand palm should be on the hip or held with a clenched fist on the side of the leg.
Team Drills: Pass Skeleton

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of offensive passing game and defensive pass coverage. Incorporated are skills related to passing, catching, running, backpedalling and stance.

Equipment: One football

Drill Set Up:
1. Place a football on a designated yard line and hash mark on the football field.
2. Huddle the starting quarterback, wide receivers, tight ends and running backs behind the ball.
3. Muddle huddle the starting defensive backs and linebackers.

Procedure:
1. The offensive coach will give a designated play to the quarterback. While the defensive coach will signal the designated play to the linebacker.
2. The quarterback will give the play to the offense and snap count to the players.
3. The linebacker will give the signaled coverage to the defense.
4. Both units will align in the proper alignment for the given play.
5. On the quarterback’s cadence the offensive unit will perform the proper pass play given in the huddle.
6. On the simulated snap of the ball the defensive unit will play their proper pass coverage responsibilities.
7. The offensive unit will try to execute the play called in the huddle to perfection while the defense will try to stop the play.
8. On the whistle the play will end with both units huddling back up awaiting the next play call.
9. The drill will be repeated until the designated plays have been run. Make sure to rotate all players in.

Coaching Points: All players should be coached to perform the proper fundamentals for each position group. Make sure that the players are aligned in the proper alignment and perform the correct starts and stance. This is not a tackling drill the tempo for the drill is buzz.

Coaching Points for Buzz Tempo: This is a full speed drill which all of the players will run at full speed with the exception of the defense. The defense will not fit up the ball carrier. The defensive player will break on the ball and play the ball, but once the wide receiver or running back catches it he will just tag the hips with the hands.
Team Drills: Pat and Go

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals for quarterback and wide receiver timing. Incorporated are skills related to stance and starts, running, catching, and throwing.

Equipment: Footballs

Drill Set Up:
1. Align the quarterbacks up on different designated yard lines and hash.
2. Align one quarterback on one hash and the other quarterback on the other hash.
3. Align half of the wide receivers up on the left side of the ball with the first QB.
4. Align the remaining wide receivers up on the left side of the ball with the other QB.

Procedure:
1. The quarterbacks and wide receivers will start the pat and go drill with the hitch route.
2. On the command of the quarterbacks, the wide receivers will take the proper release off the line of scrimmage and run the proper depth of the hitch.
   a. The quarterbacks will take the proper drop and throw the ball to the wide receivers.
   b. As the wide receivers catch the football they will lock the ball and sprint up the field.
3. After the wide receiver gets down the field they will line up in the opposite line.
4. The quarterbacks will repeat the hitch route until they have thrown the ball to each receiver.
5. After the hitch route has been completed the players will move on to the slant route.
6. On the command of the quarterbacks, the wide receivers will take the proper release off the line of scrimmage and run the proper depth of the slant.
   a. The quarterbacks will take the proper drop and throw the ball to the wide receivers.
   b. As the wide receivers catch the football they will lock the ball and sprint up the field.

7. After the wide receivers gets down the field they will line up in the opposite line.
8. The drill will repeat until the described routes have been run.

Coaching Points: The drill is run at full speed once the wide receiver catches the ball make sure he burst up field simulating the run after catch. Coach the proper hand position and lock on the catch. The quarterback needs to hold the ball in the Budda position with small steps and little circles. The quarterback should rotate hashes.
Team Drills: Defensive Pursuit Drill

Purpose: To teach and develop the proper fundamentals of defensive pursuit angles on the ball carrier. Incorporated are skills related to read and reaction.

Equipment: Footballs and ball runners.

Drill Set Up:
1. Place the ball on a selected yard line on the football field.
2. Align the starting defensive unit up on the football.
3. Place half of the runners on one sideline and the other half on the other sideline.
4. The coach will stand in the offensive back field as the quarterback.

Procedure:
1. The defense will start in the huddle with the coach signaling the defensive play call.
2. The defense will break the huddle and align in the correct spots on the football field.
3. On the command of the coach, the defensive line will rush the passer.
   a. The linebackers and defensive backs will pass drop in their correct pass lanes.
4. The coach will then throw the football to the right or left ball runner.
5. The ball runner will catch the football and sprint down the sideline.
6. Once the coach throws the football the defensive unit will pursue the ball carrier.
7. The defense will run full speed in their proper pursuit lane and tag off on the runner.
8. Repeat the drill working the right side and left side.

**Coaching Points:** Allow the defensive unit to recognize that it is a pass (defense will yell pass). Make sure that the defensive players are not running in the same pursuit angle. Make sure that the defensive players run were the runner is going to be and not where he is at. Instruct all the pursuers to keep their shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage as they run to the runner. Each defensive player will tag the runner, don’t impede the runner from sprinting down the field.
**Team Drills: Agility Circuit**

**Purpose:** To teach and develop the proper body mechanics when changing directions. Incorporated are skills related to conditioning.

**Equipment:** Cones, step over bags, agility ladders and stop watch.

**Drill Set Up:**
1. Pick three to five different agility drills from the following list.
2. Set up three to five different agility stations in a designated area.
3. Split up the team in three to five even groups.
4. Designated each station one through five. Assign the groups a starting station.

**Procedure:** The following are a number of agility drills that are to be performed during the agility circuit. For each prescribed agility drill, do the three exercises and perform them at full speed. Perform each drill for 4 reps, two from the right and two from the left. Twelve reps will be performed for each agility station. Pick a group of agility drills from the following list.

**3 Cone Drills:** The distance between all cones is five yards.
1. Sprint, around, sprint, around, sprint (4 reps).
2. Sprint, sprint, sprint (4 reps).
3. Shuffle, sprint, sprint (4 reps)
4 Cone Drills: The distance between all cones is 5 yards.
1. Diagonal sprint, shuffle, diagonal back pedal, shuffle (4 reps).
2. Sprint, around, sprint, around, sprint, around, sprint (4 reps).
3. Back pedal, diagonal sprint, back pedal, diagonal sprint (4 reps).

5 Cone Drill: Place the Cone 10 yards from each other. Center cone 7 yards perform each drill for 4 reps.
1. M drill; back pedal, sprint, back pedal, sprint, shuffle.
2. Shuffle butterfly; start in the middle shuffle to each cone back to middle.
3. Sprint, back pedal, butterfly.

6 Cone Drill: All Cones are placed 5 yards apart perform each 4 reps.
2. Sprint, vertical shuffle, vertical sprint, shuffle, vertical sprint, vertical shuffle.
3. Sprint to upper center, circle around to lower right, sprint, sprint to lower center, circle around to upper left, sprint.
20 yard Shuttle: Straddle the middle line in a 3 point stance. Sprint to the left 5 yards. Touch the line with the left hand. Turn and sprint 10 yards, and touch the line with the right hand. Then sprint back through the start line. Repeat the drill the opposite direction. Total reps are 4.

Dragon Cone Drill: Align three cones in a row 5 yards apart, place one cone 3 yards away from the middle cone. Sprint to the 3 cones, drop the hips and (nose over toes) and sprint back down to the middle cone. Push off the outside hip and sprint to the 4th cone, and back again to the middle. Then sprint back to the start. Perform two reps to the right and two to the left.

Coaching Points: Make sure that the players are going full speed. There should be a five to one ratio: five players will be resting while one player is performing the agility drill. Coach the players to drop their center of gravity to base of support during all change of direction movements. Make sure that the players are using the proper arm action.
Dynamic Warm Up

For many decades, athletes have warmed up before practice and/or competition. It was originally thought that we need to utilize static stretch by sitting on the ground and reaching to our toes, remaining in one place at a time. Many of today’s top coaches are detouring away from the typical static stretch before the athletic event. They are now incorporating the dynamic warm-up into pre-practice and pre-competition events.

To be a great athlete the player needs to encompass a wide range of skills. While speed, power and strength are very important, having great balance, body awareness and flexibility is equally important. To increase our chances of winning, we need to improve our player’s athletic ability the moment they step on to the practice or playing field.

Warming up before physical activity is a universally accepted practice with the objective of preparing the athlete physically and mentally for optimum performance and is believed to reduce the risk of injury. The question is, why then should we use a dynamic warm-up instead of a static warm up? The majority of static stretches are completed on the ground. This does not put the athlete in the athletic position. Very few sports, if any, are played with the athlete sitting or lying on the ground. The dynamic warm-up can be defined as a series of movement drills performed in a progressive sequence from low to moderate intensity. Performing a dynamic warm-up will not only stretch the muscle surrounding the joint but, it will improve the athlete’s performance.

Six components to developing a dynamic warm-up

We want to increase the core body temperature.
Increase the heart rate for vigorous activity.
We want to spend as much time in the athletic position.
Provide stretches that develop balance and body awareness.
Stretches should involve movement patterns that mimic the sport.
The final component encompasses stretches that rehearse the skills that the athlete is getting ready to perform.
Dynamic Warm Up Drill

**Purpose:** To increase the core body temperature and increase the flexibility of the athlete.

**Procedure:**

**Jog to Backpedal** – This drill is a simple way to increase the core and muscle temperature, while mimicking movement patterns we are getting ready to perform. Jog to backpedal is performed for 10 yards down and back 5 to 8 times.

**Walking lunge with forearm touch** - This drill will increase strength in the lower body and core as well as improve upon body awareness. This will increase the flexibility in the gluteus, hamstrings and lower back. The athlete steps forward with the right leg while bending at the knees forming a 90 degree angle on the forward foot. The athlete proceeds to bend at the waist placing the right forearm on the ground. The athlete then pushes his/her body up with the arms and forward leg to return to a standing position and alternates to the opposite leg to continue the drill for a total of 10 yards.

**Lean pull step** – Great drill to improve strength and balance in the lower body. This drill will increase the flexibility in the hamstrings, gluteus and hips. With a slight bend in the left leg, the athlete will begin to raise the right leg behind. While keeping the right leg straight, lean at the waist bringing the chest and right leg parallel to the ground. The athlete then proceeds to straighten up and brings the right knee to the chest. Take a step with the right leg and alternate to the opposite leg to continue the drill for 10 yards or more.

**Straight leg Kicks** – This drill will stretch the hamstring and lower back, along with improving balance and proprioception. The athlete starts in the standing position up on his /her toes. The arms should be extended in front of the body pointing up at an angle. The athlete then alternates opposite straight leg kicks keeping the leg as straight as possible, taking the foot to the hand not the hand to the foot. Each leg is repeated until the athlete reaches 10 yards.

**Heel Pulls** – The athlete starts in the standing position up on their toes. One leg will be brought up and held by both hands. The athlete then pulls on the ankle, externally rotating the hips. They should try to get the ankle height even or above the knee height. A step should be taken and repeated with the opposite leg. This movement will improve mobility in the hips, along with improving balance, coordination, and proprioception.
Practice Plans

In any level of football, wins come down to the fundamentals of blocking, tackling and controlling the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball. When developing practice plans make sure that you incorporate the basic fundamentals of football. Be prepared to have your weeks and days planned out. Have every minute accounted for, coach the players on the run and coach every rep. Do not focus on yelling, correct using buzz words that will help improve skills. Finally set the tempo and attitude with hustle and enthusiasm.

Practice should be broken down in five categories
1. Pre – Practice: Have a drill that will improve individual skills (example: center-quarterback exchange).
2. Walk through: This time will be spent to improve game plan installment.
3. Dynamic warm-up: Get the body ready for practice.
4. Practice: Focus on the key fundamentals of football.
5. Post Practice: Static stretch to cool down the muscles.

Practice weeks should be broken down in to three different categories
1. Buzz tempo: This is a full speed drill all of the players will run at full speed with the exception of the defense which will not fit up the ball carrier. The defensive player will break on the ball and play the ball, but once the wide receiver or running back catches it he will just tag the hips with the hands.
2. Thud tempo: Thud tempo is a full speed drill the defensive players will perform the proper form tackle on the ball carrier. The only difference is the defensive player will not take the ball carrier down to the ground. After the defensive player performs the proper fit on the runner he will let him go.
3. Full tempo: Full speed tempo is a full speed drill that the defensive players will perform the proper form tackle and take the ball carrier down to the ground.

Seven Characteristics of a great coach
3. Be Enthused: Be active, coach on the run, give instruction, praise and correct.
4. Be a Servant Leader: Serve the best interest of the players.
5. Be an Example: Model the work ethic we want to see in our players.
7. Be a Coach: teach the players at their speed and on their level.

Explanation..Demonstration..Practice.. Praise/Correction..Repetition
Practice Plans: Youth Football

Warm Up and Team Stretch  10 Minutes
The warm up and team stretch is meant to get the body ready for the task at hand. The body should be properly warmed up. Spend most of the time on the dynamic warm up and save the static stretching for post practice. The intensity should be half working to full speed.

Offensive Skill Development  15 Minutes
This period is meant to develop the fundamentals of throwing the football with proper mechanics. Catching the football with the proper hand position and tuck, ball security and center quarterback exchange. Offensive skill development will also allow the coach to evaluate each player. Make this period fun for the kids so they can start to develop a love for the game.

Offensive Individual Drills  15 Minutes
Each kid will be split up in their appropriate position. This is the time were players will be introduced to the proper fundamentals of blocking, throwing and catching. Emphasize one to two drills a day. The intensity should be higher than the previous period but the kids should still be having fun.

Agility Development  15 Minutes
The team will be split up in even groups. Each coach will take a group and the kids will rotate through each group. The agility development period is used to teach the kids how to control their body, move forward, backward, start and stop. The period should be full speed.

Tackling Skill Development  15 Minutes
This period is meant to develop the proper fundamentals of tackling. All tackling drills should start off with demonstration at a slow motion pace. Once the players have mastered the proper fit position the tempo can be increased. Make sure that when pairing up the players they are the same height, weight and skill level. Tackling skill development should be practiced every day to eliminate the risk of injury.

Defensive Individual Drills  15 Minutes
Each player will be split up in their appropriate position. This is the time where players will be introduced to the proper fundamentals of their individual skill. Emphasize one to two drills a day. The intensity should be high but the kids should be having fun.

Team  20 Minutes
The full team will come together and work on the fundamentals of team offense and defense. This is the time where the kids will begin working on play development. Limit the amount of plays to two to three. Make sure each kid gets a chance to play offense and defense. Make sure that the kids are having fun and competing.
Conditioning          10 Minutes
Conditioning should be set up in a way that the kids are competing with each other, make the conditioning period fun but challenging. An example includes sprint races or relay races. Don’t run the kids just to run them, have a plan and a purpose.

Total amount of practice time: One hour and thirty minutes.

Coaching Points: When putting together your practice plan make sure that every minute is accounted for. Make sure you limit the amount of standing around. Set your drills up in small groups to allow multiple reps and limit lack of focus. The most important thing to remember is to allow the kids to have fun and let them enjoy the game of football. Coach the basic fundamentals of football; the ability to throw, catch and tackling is more important than the schemes used with the offense and defense.

Weekly Practice Emphasis and Practice Tempo
Monday – Perfect the fundamentals of football, improve on skill development. Practice tempo should be a mixture between thud and full.
Wednesday – Perfect the fundamentals of football and improve on skill development while teaching the basic offense and defense. Practice tempo should start out thud then finish with full.
Friday – Perfect the fundamentals of football and improve on skill development while improving the basic offense and defense. Practice tempo should be buzz.
Saturday – Game day!
Pre Practice 10 Minutes
Pre practice is a time to transition the players from being in the class to now being out on the football field. The players should work on the basic fundamentals of football catching, throwing, center-quarterback exchange and ball security. The intensity should be low with the energy high.

Dynamic Warm up 10 Minutes
The dynamic warm up will get the body ready for the task at hand. The body should be properly warmed up. Spend most of the time on the dynamic warm up and eliminate any static stretching. The intensity should be full speed and energy the energy up.

Offensive Individual Drills 30 Minutes
Each kid will be split up into their appropriate position. This is the time where the players will develop and perfect the fundamentals of blocking, throwing and catching. Offensive team drills can also be incorporated at this time like pat and go drill.

Offensive Team 20 Minutes
The full team will come together on a designated area on the football field. This is the time where the players put all of their fundamentals together. The offense will practice their plays versus a scout defense. Offensive team drills can be incorporated at this time like pass skeleton or inside run drill.

Special Teams 10 Minutes
Special team emphasis of the day will be perfected during this practice period. Each day different special teams will be practiced and perfected. An example would include; on Monday punt being set aside for punt.

Defensive Individual Drills 30 Minutes
Each kid will be split back into their appropriate defensive position. This is the time where the players will develop and perfect the fundamentals of tackling, running and catching. Each day defensive individuals should start out with some type of tackling circuit.

Defensive Team 20 Minutes
The full team will come back together this time with the emphasis being placed on the starting defense. The defense will practice their plays versus a scout offence. This is also a great time to work on the pursuit drill.

Conditioning 10 Minutes
The intensity of the practice will determine the amount of sprints done. Make sure you don’t run the kids just to run them, have a plan and a purpose.
Total amount of Practice Time: Two hours.

Coaching points: When putting together your practice plan make sure that every minute is accounted for. The coach should have his individual drills planned out before practice. Make sure that you drill the fundamentals of each position group. Remember don’t just drill to drill but make your drills mimic real game situations. The most important thing to remember is to allow the kids to have fun and let them enjoy the game of football. Coach the basic fundamentals of football; the ability to throw, catch and tackling is more important than the schemes used with the offense and defense.

Weekly Practice Emphasis and Practice Tempo
Monday – Perfect the fundamentals of football teach and improve skill development, introduce offensive and defensive schemes. Tempo should start off thud and moved to full.
Tuesday – Perfect the fundamentals of football improve the skill development; improve the offensive and defensive schemes. Tempo should thud but incorporate some full.
Wednesday – Perfect the fundamentals of football, perfect the offensive and defensive schemes. Tempo should be buzz.
Thursday – Possible game day.
Friday – Perfect the fundamentals of football. Make corrections on the offensive and defensive schemes. Tempo should be buzz.
Pre Practice 10 Minutes
Pre practice is a time to transition the players from being in the class to now being out on the football field. This is a great time to work on the little things like center-quarterback exchange, five points of pressure isometric holds, catching and throwing. Intensity should be low and energy high.

Walk Through 10 Minutes
Walk through is a time to start getting the players more focused in to practice. Any new plays that have been installed should be reviewed at this time. Intensity should be low and the focus high.

Stretch and Dynamic Warm up 15 Minutes
This is time to get the body ready for the task at hand. The body should be properly warmed up. Spend most of the time on the dynamic warm up and eliminate any static stretching. The intensity should be full speed and energy up.

Individual Drills 30 Minutes
Each position group will break up in separate groups on the football field. This is the time in practice where the fundamental skills should be practiced and perfected. The defense should spend the first 10 minutes on tackling drills before moving on to position drills.

Inside Drill 15 Plays
Wide Receiver/Defensive Back One on One Drill 15 Minutes
The team will now come together with the wide receiver and defensive backs on one end of the field doing the one on one drill. While the offensive line, running backs, defensive line and line backers perform the inside drill on the other end of the football field.

Special Teams 15 Minutes
Special team emphasis of the day will be perfected during this practice period. Each day different special teams will be practiced and perfected. An example would include; Monday punt will be set aside for punt.

Pass Skelly 20 Plays
One on One Pass Rush 20 Minutes
The team will now come back together with the defensive and offensive line in a designated area on the football field performing the one on one pass rush drill. While the quarterbacks, wide receivers, running backs and defensive backs are performing the pass skeleton drill.
**Team offensive emphasize**  
20 Minutes  
The full team will come together on a designated location on the football field. This is the time where the players put all of their fundamentals together. The offensive unit will practice their plays versus a scout defensive unit (what the team will see in the next game). Each day should have a different emphasis for example; red zone, third downs, first and second down.

**Team defensive emphasize**  
20 Minutes  
The full team will stay together this time the emphasis will be on the starting defense. The defense will practice their plays versus a scout offense (what the team will see in the next game). Each day should have a different emphasis for example; red zone, third downs, first and second down.

**Conditioning**  
10 Minutes  
Depending on the intensity of the practice will determine the amount of sprints done. Make sure you don’t run the kids just to run them, have a plan and a purpose.

**Total amount of practice time:** Two hours and twenty five minutes.

**Coaching points:** When putting together your practice plan make sure that every minute is accounted for. The coach should have his individual drills planned out before practice. Make sure that you drill the fundamentals of each position group. Remember don’t just drill to drill but make your drills mimic real game situations.

**Coaching Points for the Week:** The amount of practice time should start to decrease as the week nears game time. The day before the game should be set aside for walk through and perfect plays. Each day of the practice week should have a practice emphasis and practice tempo.

**Weekly Practice Emphasis and Practice Tempo**  
**Monday** – Perfect the fundamentals of practice, install game plan and new plays. Practice tempo is full.  
**Tuesday** – Perfect the game plan, emphasize on first and second down plays. Practice tempo is thud.  
**Wednesday** – Perfect the game plan, emphasize on third down plays and red zone. Practice tempo is thud and buzz.  
**Thursday** – Game situation and substitutions, walk through top 10 plays. Practice tempo is buzz.  
**Friday** – Game day.  
**Saturday** – Review game film and make any corrections.