

## Technique of the week: homework – handling and coordination

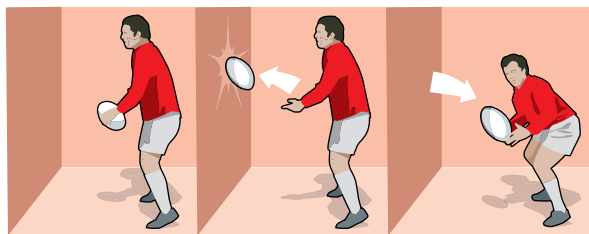
Following on from last week's issue, Colin Ireland gives you five more simple exercises for your players to work on at home to improve their ball skills and coordination.

### Wall passing

Wall passing is an excellent way to develop fast hands and reaction skills. An outside wall is preferable. There are two different exercises which can be performed.

- 1 The player stands facing a wall and throws the ball at it, catching the rebound before the ball hits the ground. To make it harder, he can stand a bit further back and let the ball hit the wall, then the ground before catching it. He should always catch the ball in two hands.
- 2 The player stands side on to a wall and walks or jogs along side it, passing the ball against the wall and catching the rebound. He should start about a metre away and gradually increase the distance as he improves.

### Wall bounce and react



### Wall passing



### Ball familiarisation

Simple exercises like passing the ball around the waist from one hand to the other and passing it in a figure of eight through the legs rapidly improve hand-to-hand coordination.

Challenge players to see who can perform the most consecutive figures of eight without dropping the ball. This can be a weekly challenge with a leaderboard displayed in the changing room each week. On really wet training days, it can be done in the changing room before going out to train.

### Drop and react

From a standing position the player drops the ball onto its point and catches it again on the bounce. By changing the angle at which the ball is dropped it can be made to bounce in different directions. Players will soon develop an understanding of how a rugby ball bounces when it lands in different ways.

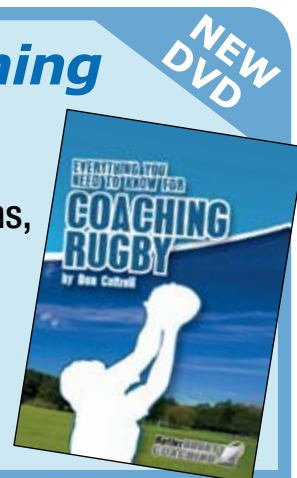
To make the exercise harder players can start with their eyes closed until they have released the ball or throw the ball a few feet in the air then try and catch it after the bounce.

### Bounce and react

The player bounces the ball off the ground (that means purposely pushing the ball towards the ground) and catches it after the first bounce. He should move the feet to the ball rather than reaching for it with the upper body. He should aim to catch the ball in two hands. 🏉

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## Technique of the week: rugby ball homework

Here is a selection of simple ball handling exercises from Colin Ireland that any player can work on at home. You will notice improvements quite quickly in your players' ball handling skills if they "do their homework".

### Hand to hand

Pass the ball from one hand to the other across the body. Players can perform short fast passes, longer passes, looped passes and spin passes to develop wrist strength and coordination. This is especially good for improving a right handed player's left hand coordination (and vice versa).

### Two hands – tuck – two hands

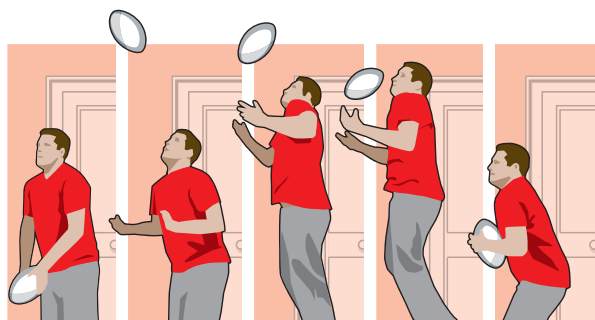
The player starts with the ball held out in front of them in both hands. They then move it to a position under the right arm (as if about to take contact or fend off). From there they move the ball back into two hands as quickly as possible, then repeat for the left arm. The player starts off standing still before progressing to performing the exercise jogging, then running.

### Throw and catch

The player throws the ball up in the air and catches it cleanly in both hands. They should increase the height of the throw and vary the type of throw as they improve, so they are spinning the ball and then catching it. Players then progress from a hand catch to an arm catch, getting side-on to catch the ball.

Next, from a standing position the player throws the ball high behind them so they have to turn and get in position to

### Throw, jump and catch

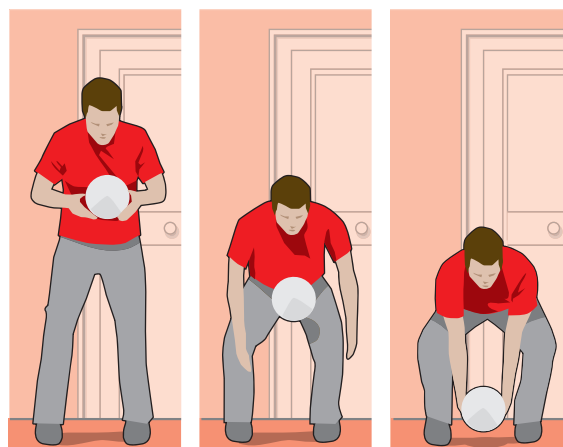


catch it. Finally the player should jump to take the ball, timing the jump so they catch the ball at the top of their jump.

### Ball drop

From a standing position the player drops the ball. He then has to squat and catch it before it hits the ground. To make it harder he can clap after release or release the ball with his eyes shut. To improve balance players can perform the exercise standing on one leg. 🏉

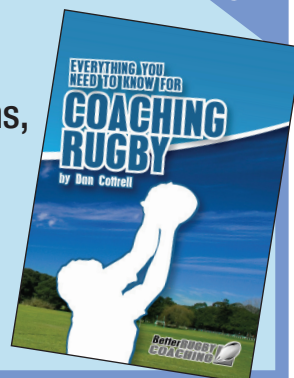
### Drop and catch



*Next week we'll look at another series of exercises players can do at home to improve their ball skills and coordination.*

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