



Offensive Clinic

Sample Offensive Practice Plan

6:15-6:20 Warmup (dynamic stretching) (coach explains what is on the agenda for today)

6:20-6:35 Receiver education (stance and 2-3 basic routes)

6:35-6:40 water break (during water break coach instructs the form for next drill)

6:40-6:50 Running back / handoff education (how to take handoffs)

6:50-7:05 Quarterback education (how to hold football, throw football, etc)

7:05-7:10 water break (during water break coach asks questions about what the team has learned so far)

7:10-7:25 Install offense.

- Players line up in designated spots (quarterback, running back, receiver)
- Coach calls play, players line up, coach makes sure they are lined up correctly, and run the play.
- Coach fixes any issues based on how the play has been run and/or praises successes.

7:25-7:30 water break (coach asks randomly asks 1-3 athletes what they learned to day)

*As you can see, every minute is accounted for. While the athletes are resting, they are still in football mode and being taught. Coaches for younger athletes (under 4th grade), you know the attention span of your athletes, adjust accordingly.

*Do not punish athletes for being late. It's not their fault. This is not Friday Night Lights. Parents are juggling multiple jobs, multiple sports, dealing with rush hour traffic, etc. If an athlete is late, have them do a simple warmup and jump right into the drill. Remember, your athlete wants to be at your practice!

NOTE: *I have seen many teams scrimmage too early. If they players don't know what they are to do, they can't play effectively. Once they understand your scheme, definitely scrimmage. That being said, a scrimmage is NOT a game. When something bad happens to your team, it is a coaching moment. Ask the opponent to line up again, and walk through exactly what they did. Show your team what happened and how you correct it. This skill is invaluable and will pay off later in the season.*

Quarterback

Stance

The quarterback is standing in an athletic stance with toes and shoulders square to the line of scrimmage. You are square so you can read the defense and start deciding which side has a better matchup based on your receivers and coverage.

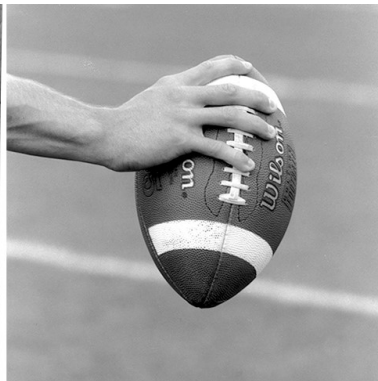
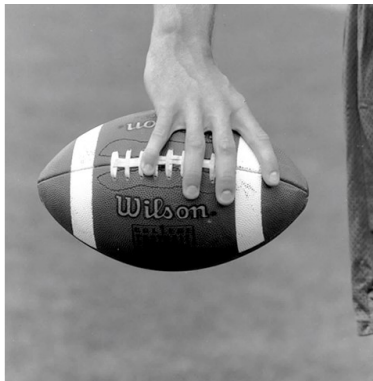
How to Hold a Football Before You Throw it



Every good throw starts with gripping the football correctly.

It is important for the quarterback to grip the football comfortably with the fingers, thumb and the heel of his hand. Where a quarterback grips the football – further back toward the tip or closer to the center of the football – depends on the size of his hand. The smaller the hand, the closer the grip must be to the tip of the football. Larger-handed quarterbacks can grip the football toward the middle, fat part of the ball.

Regardless of the location of the grip, at least one of the quarterback's fingers should rest across the laces to help provide control, as depicted below.



Never “palm” the football, which is where the palm of the throwing hand is pressed against the football. There needs to be space in there between the palm and the football.

The index finger of the throwing hand must not be too far from the rear tip of the football.

These two grip errors will lead to hard, nose-down passes that are difficult to catch.

Determining If The Defense Is In Man or Zone

When you line up into your stance and take a look at the defender, how are they lined up?

Man Coverage: If the defense is lined up with their butt pointed to the center of the field, they are in man. This means, the defensive player on you will go wherever you go.

Zone Coverage: If the defense is lined up with their butt pointed to the sideline of the field, they are in zone. This means, the defensive player on you will stay with you only in their zone and let you go when you leave it.

Why is this important?

If a defense is in man, you have to “lose” your guy covering you. Speed, athletics, shake and bake, etc, are all tools you can use to get rid of your opponent.

If a defense is in zone, you don’t have to lose them. You are trying to find the areas in-between the zones which will be open. The other concept to incorporate is to put 2 offensive players on routes inside the zones while spread apart from each other. This will force the defender to cover 2 players in a wide open area.

If a receiver is covered in zone but is running a crossing route, be patient. The receiver will get open 2-4x on the route because of the holes in the zone. The QB can anticipate this and throw when they see the receiver approaching the hole in the zone.

Throwing The Ball

CHECKPOINT 1 | TRIANGLE

With the elbows level at the base and a loaded wrist in the “cocked” position off the back shoulder, the triangle shape provides for a powerful position to launch the football. This pre-throw carriage position reduces the tendency to wind up on the throw, aligns the throwing arm in a position that generates arm power, and reduces wasted motion resulting in a faster release.



CHECKPOINT 2 | SHORT CIRCLE

Trigger the arm circle by bringing the ball from the carriage to a loaded position. Ideally, the quarterback should push the ball up and back away from the chest – never bringing the ball down below the chest and looping around. This will shorten arm action and quicken release time.



CHECKPOINT 3 | L POSITION

The move to the “L” position is done by bringing the ball further up and back, pointing the nose of the ball away from the target. When the arm is in the “L” position it helps to maximize arm power and acceleration. Keeping the ball tight to your head will result in a high elbow drive, maximizing throw power and minimizing strain in Checkpoints 4 and 5.



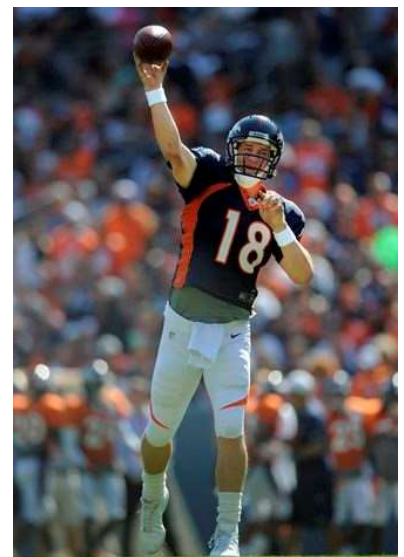
CHECKPOINT 4 | ELEVATE TO “ZERO”

The lead position the elbow has to be in to support the wrist. You may have heard coaches say “get the elbow up” – because the elbow only needs to go high enough to get over and ahead of the shoulder on the throw. The smoothness and efficiency of this move is the key to consistent power and accuracy on a throw. The “Zero” position places the elbow 6 inches ahead of the shoulder, 45 degrees up and out. “Zero” position is the orthopedic term given to this position because the rotator cuff muscles are neutral with no strain on them – that is, it’s the optimal position prior to the release because it minimizes strain on the joints and muscles involved in football throwing mechanics.



CHECKPOINT 5 | ARM EXTENSION

The throwing arm now releases its energy, extended outward and upward toward the intended target. Complete extension, and firing the wrist at the exact moment, maximizes power, accuracy and spiral of the ball. Throwing over the top, as seen below, is harped upon by coaches at all age levels because the chain of power that occurs as the tricep fires energy up through arm and out through the wrist/fingers into the ball is maximized when the arm is fully extended upward and outward.



Wide Receivers

Stance

The leg that is closest to the football is considered the inside leg. The inside leg is always forward in your stance. The inside leg is your drive step in to the route. The leg that is farthest from the football, is the outside leg. The outside leg is always back and becomes the first step into the route. Having your legs set up this way will ensure an explosive takeoff into your route.



The Routes

When you take off in to your route, steps will determine when you will break into various routes (slant, post, corner, etc)

For example:

On a slant, you will take either 1 or 3 (total steps) before you break into your route.

On a post or a corner, you will take 5-9 (total steps) before you break into your route.

Determining If The Defense Is In Man or Zone

When you line up into your stance and take a look at the defender, how are they lined up?

Man Coverage: If the defense is lined up with their butt pointed to the center of the field, they are in man. This means, the defensive player on you will go wherever you go.

Zone Coverage: If the defense is lined up with their butt pointed to the sideline of the field, they are in zone. This means, the defensive player on you will stay with you only in their zone and let you go when you leave it.

Why is this important?

If a defense is in man, you have to “lose” your guy covering you. Speed, athletics, shake and bake, etc, are all tools you can use to get rid of your opponent.

If a defense is in zone, you don’t have to lose them. You are trying to find the areas in-between the zones which will be open. The other concept to incorporate is to put 2 offensive players on routes inside the zones while spread apart from each other. This will force the defender to cover 2 players in a wide open area.

Wide Receiver Concepts

When coaching wide receivers, you want to be sure to emphasize catching the football with the eyes as well as the hands. A great way to incorporate this skill into your practice is marking the football with visual aids and having the receiver react using the skill you want to improve. This could be a mechanical reaction or a verbal reaction, such as calling it out which strengthens the visual response. Also be sure to emphasize following through with good finger spread, a little spring in the elbow and securing the football up under his arm.

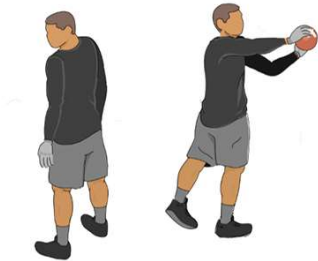
Blind Side Catches

Purpose

To work on reaction time and improve catch radius as well as body control.

Set Up

- Line up 5 cones in a straight line.
- Stand 10 yards from your partner with your back towards them.
- Partner starts with a football.



Instructions

1. Start off looking over your left shoulder, with the passer just in the corner of the receiver's peripheral vision.
2. Partner will make a pass, aiming for a spot just off the right shoulder of the receiver.
3. As partner releases football, receiver will snap over to left shoulder, locate the ball and make the catch.
4. Repeat, making 10 catches on each shoulder.

Coaching Tips

- Once players have become comfortable making catches, you can increase the challenge by increasing the distance or speed of the passes, or asking the receiver to catch with one hand.

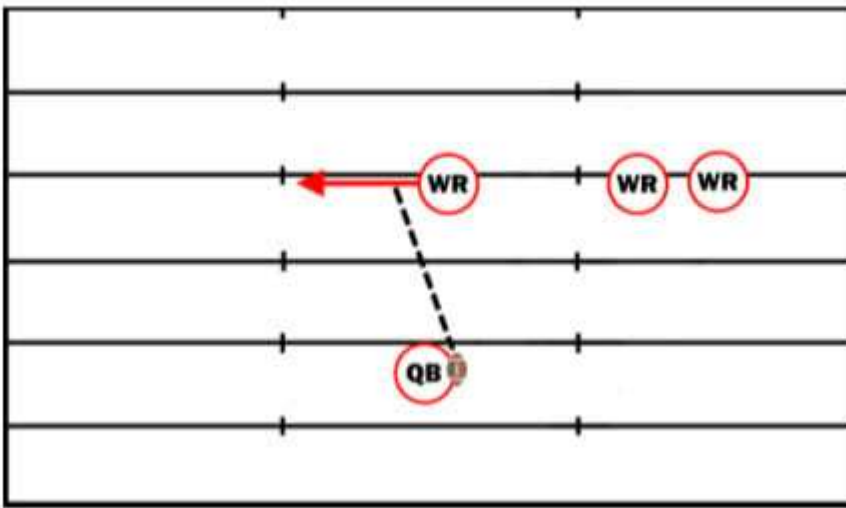
Over the Middle

Purpose

To develop a players ability to make a variety of catches as they run through the middle of the field. This is also a good accuracy drill for the QB.

Set Up

- Have the WRs form a line on the numbers at the 20 yard line.
- The QB will line up in the middle of the field on the 10 yard line with a bucket of footballs.



Execution

1. The first WR in line will run a sprint across the field.
2. The QB will make the throw, leading the receiver and hitting him in stride.
3. The WR will run through the far hash mark and then come drop off the ball and head to the back of the line. The next WR will run through the drill.

Coaching Tips

- Begin by having the QB throw accurate passes, but after a couple reps, start having him throw passes that are purposefully high, low, or behind the receiver, forcing him to get used to adjusting to the ball to make the catch.

Taking a Handoff

Points for Running Backs

- Inside arm is up (arm nearest to the QB). If you are taking a handoff to the left, your right arm needs to be up. If you are taking a handoff to the right, your left arm needs to be up. Another way to teach it- inside arm is always up!
- The RB must come down on the ball once it is placed in his “*bread basket*”. You do not want to take the ball from the QB.
- You do not want the running back to belly towards the QB for the handoff. **It is the QB’s job to get to the running back** and hand the ball to him. If the point of attack is the 5 hole, the running back needs to run right at the 5 hole. **Again, it is the QB’s job to get the RB the football.**
- Running back’s eyes are always looking where he is running. You want the running back to be looking which way he has to cut.
- Once the ball is inserted into his bread basket, the RB must secure the football and maintain two hands on the football going through traffic.



Coaching Points for Quarterbacks

- The QB must insert the ball into the bread basket of the running back. The QB has to look where he is inserting the football.
- QB shouldn't slam the ball in the bread basket, he should just insert it and the running back will come down on the ball.
- You want the QB to get the RB the football in the backfield. You don't want the QB to give the running back the ball close to the line of scrimmage. This can be an issue because if there is a blitz, the running back will have no time to adjust his path.
- It is the QB's job to receive the snap and meet the running in the backfield and at the point of attack. QB has to move his feet.

*Note: The most dangerous part of the field is the sideline. Not the center of the field. Why? It's the farthest the opposite corner has to travel to gain ground on an offensive player sprinting towards the sidelines.

Basic Route Tree

This image showcases six different routes that can be used on offense in flag football.

Let's walk through each player, from left to right. Note that all routes begin at the hike of the ball by the quarterback.

0 - Hitch: In this hitch route, the player runs straight for seven yards, then quickly pivots backwards for a couple yards. This throws off defenders running backwards to guard the player, and opens them up to a quick pass from the quarterback.

1 - Slant: During a slant, the player should run forward a couple yards, then cut at a near 45-degree angle forward. This play becomes more effective when combined with 2 - Out (See below).

2 - Out: In an out play, the player should run forward for a designated yardage, five in this case, and then cut on a direct 90-degree angle in either direction.

Offensive football plays pro-tip: The combination of 1-Slant and 2-Out is a classic, effective technique. As the two players cross directions mid-route, their defensive counterparts are often unable to track and follow their designated target. This opens not one, but two players for a quick throw from the quarterback. Your first down awaits!

Offensive football plays safety pro-tip: When combining two football plays that cross each other, like slants and outs, make sure the players communicate who is going to leave their formation first. This prevents any collisions as the players complete their routes.

3 - Post: The player runs forward a designated amount, in this case seven yards, then cuts at a 45-degree angle to the center of the field. This route is reliable for critical yardage gain.

Offensive football plays pro-tip: Having a hard time keeping all the types of routes straight? Easily remember 'post' routes by envisioning that you're running towards the field goal post in the center of the field.

4 - Corner: This player proceeds straight for seven yards, then runs at a 45-degree angle toward the edge of the field. This route is optimal if you need the player to catch the ball and then step out of bounds to stop the clock during a nail-biting game.

5 - Fly: The fly is the easiest route in the book. Run straight—and fast! Give this route to the player who has some serious wheels (and hands) to gain lots of yardage. First down!

