



FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

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PLAYER ▶▶▶▶ PROGRESSION GUIDE

12+ ADVANCE & COMPETE

Overview
Developmental Checklist
Skills



12+

**ADVANCE &
COMPETE**

WHAT IS ADVANCE AND COMPETE?

This stage is designed for athletes 12+. Technical skill acquisition and the dawning of tactical awareness mark athletes at this stage of development.

Athletes are challenged with more complex strategies and movements within practices and in competitive games. With adolescence comes the development of strength, stamina and speed.

As athletes prepare for more advanced versions of the sport, their practices and game rules more closely resemble those types of games. However, it is important to remember that they are not high school athletes yet. Not physically, mentally or emotionally.

The range of maturity levels are quite varied at this stage. Some athletes will have progressed into puberty, while others may still be a year or two away. Continue to construct drills and manipulate matchups as best you can to test skills, achieve success and teach concepts in a more competitive environment.

It is important to remember that competition and the desire to win cannot become the sole focus of your program. Recognize that as athletes develop physically, they may struggle with basic athletic movements at which they previously excelled. Remain patient and do not forget to go back to the basics when necessary.

Athletes do not only vary in terms of physical maturity, but emotionally and mentally as well. An athlete who appears to be physically developed may remain emotionally and socially immature, while athletes still waiting for a growth spurt may have matured in those areas.

Truth is, as a coach, you may never see as much variety in size, shape and personality in athletes as you will see during this season. Work hard to meet your athletes where they are and challenge them to become the best they can be, no matter what areas of growth need the most attention.

➤ **Reminder: Using this guide**

Throughout this Player Progression Guide, you'll find drills. You can find descriptions of these drills in the glossary on page 73.



STAGE DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Checkpoints are based on the **CORE** technical skill areas of the Football Development Model. These are checkpoints for mastery.

Athlete will be able to...

Passing (Using a developmentally appropriate-sized football)



- Effectively incorporate varying degrees of trajectory and power with accuracy (i.e., touch, pace)
- Accurately throw passes while moving and throwing to a stationary target
- Accurately throw passes while moving and throwing to a moving target

Running and Receiving (Using a developmentally appropriate-sized football)



- Demonstrate the ability to vary speed and direction to help create open receiving lanes
- Consistently catch accurately thrown balls while in traffic and/or while being defended
- Use spatial awareness and vision to read and react accordingly
- Demonstrate fluid and efficient lateral and diagonal movement

Kicking and Punting (Using a developmentally appropriate-sized ball or football)



- Demonstrate fluid movement, including balance and body control through the entire kicking/punting motion
- Using a 3-step approach, place-kick with distance accuracy (15+ yards)
- Punt a ball with distance accuracy (15+ yards)

Athletic Foundations



- Consistently perform game-related movement skills at an advanced level of proficiency
- Maintain form and technique while meeting or exceeding the force demands of game play
- Perform complex movement combinations with fluid and efficient transitions
- Can effectively apply sensory skills in various and changing conditions
- Consistently demonstrate spatial awareness resulting in more efficient movement patterns
- Demonstrate ability to react with increasing anticipation based on opponents' movements

Thinking, Feeling and Behaving



- Learn and recall more complex plays
- Demonstrate a deeper understanding of game strategy
- Anticipate situations and have a better understanding of cause and effect relationships as they relate to game play
- Demonstrate constructive ways to handle success and failure





PASSING

SKILL ELEMENTS AND KPIS

Below are skills that build the Passing progression. Each step of the progression has Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and drills that help coaches train and improve passing skills. Drill descriptions can be found in this guide's glossary.

1 PRE-PASS POSITION

- ✓ The body, grip and arm position prior to the throwing motion beginning. Creating a solid base from which to throw by having feet shoulder width apart, ball centered at chest, with a firm grip on the ball.

KPI(s):

Grip

- Fingers on laces
- One finger of space between palm and ball

Ball Carriage

- Ball properly secured in both hands
- Arms relaxed at the sides of the body
- Ball centered at the sternum

Base

- Feet shoulder-width apart
- Weight on the instep
- Hips inside the heels

Drops

- Maintains proper grip and base while taking a 1-Step and 3-Step drop
- Use proper footwork
- Cross-Plant-Throw



Drills to Support

- Meet in the Middle Grip Drill
- Cross Plant Throw
- 1-Step Drop to Ball Carriage Position
- 3-Step Drop and Throw
- 5-Step Drop and Throw
- Snap – Catch – Throw
- Snap – Catch – Drop – Throw

2 POSTURE

- ✓ A comfortable neutral posture as the throwing motion begins. Gained by dropping the hips, having a gentle bend in the knees and a very slight lean forward at the waist.

KPI(s):

Neutral Position

- Slight bend in the knees
- Slight forward lean
- Weight on the instep
- Lead shoulder pointed at the target

Cleats in the Grass

- Hips inside the heels
- Weight on the instep
- Maintain posture on drops

Hips

- Hips dropped
- Load through the hips
- Slight forward lean

Footwork

- Maintain posture while throwing on the move
- Rollout to right and left

**Drills to Support**

- Hip Flips from Lateral Shuffle
- Spot Throws
- Offset Throws
- 4-Cone Position Throws
- Drop-Back to 4-Cone Drill
- Hip Flips from Standing Position
- Hip Flips from Lateral Shuffle
- Trunk Rotation Throws
- 5-Yard Quick Game (Slant, Out, In, Hitch)
- 10-Yard Intermediate Game (Curl, Dig, Out, Fade...)
- Mirror Drill
- Lateral Partner Throws
- Push-Pull Partner Throws

3 THROWING MECHANICS

- ✓ The movements that make up a successful throw and the ability to coordinate those movements throughout the throwing motion.

**KPI(s):****Fluidity**

- Throw the ball in single, fluid motion
- Use proper arm path

Symmetry

- Hands and elbows mirror each other during separation
- Horizontal “L” to vertical “L”
- Elbow even with or slightly below the shoulder

Separation

- Hands break equal and opposite each other
- Hands break at a horizontal “L” angle

Release

- Nose of the ball slightly up
- Front shoulder rotates
- Hips rotate
- Front Elbow Leads
- Thumb to ground

**Drills to Support**

- Snap – Catch – Roll – Throw
- 2-Player Concepts
- 2 vs. 1 Read the Defender (slant/flat or fade/flat)
- Contested Receiver Drill
- Reverse Drop Throws (3-step drop and reverse)
- Fallaway Throws
- 5-Yard Quick Game
- 10-Yard Intermediate Game
- Spot Throws

4 FINISH

- The body position and follow through after the ball is released.

KPI(s):

Balance

- Front foot flat on the stride
- Back foot finishes even or slightly behind the front foot
- Look for stability in the finish

Deceleration

- Front toe to the target
- Look for stability in the finish
- Don't over-rotate the upper body

Stabilize

- Thumb to pocket follow-through
- Hips square to the target
- Back foot finishes even with or slightly behind the front foot
- Don't lock out the front knee

Drills to Support

- Towel Drill
- Don't Cross the Line Drill (moving forward on throw, decelerate with balance)
- Straddle the Line
- Snap-Catch-Throw Rapid Fire
- Snap-Catch-Throw Rapid Fire to Different Targets (off-set targets)
- Negative Stride Drill

> TIPS FOR COACHES

Coaches should keep the following things in mind...

- Don't overcoach the ball carriage position
- Ball carriage position should be relaxed, central (sternum) and stable
- Firm wrist position
- Drop the hips to load the body
- Upper body and lower body work in alignment
- Don't emphasize quickness over fluidity
- Back foot should finish even with front foot (or slightly behind)
- Don't lock out the front knee
- Front foot flat on the stride
- Point the lead shoulder to the target when throwing on the run
- Lead shoulder pointed at target, move through the throw
- Snap shoulder at target



RUNNING AND RECEIVING

SKILL ELEMENTS AND KPIS

Below are skills that build the running and receiving progression. Each step of the progression has Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and drills that help coaches train and improve running and receiving skills. Drill descriptions can be found in this guide's glossary.

1 FEET/FOOTWORK

- ✓ Preparing the body from the ground up by making sure feet are positioned appropriately in preparation for, during and after the catch or handoff.

KPI(s):

Stance

- Two-point stance
- Equal weight distribution
- No false (extra) steps
- Inside foot forward

Balance

- Accelerate and decelerate with body control
- Maintain body control within different body orientations

Top of the Route

- Breakdown and sink the hips
- Plant the foot
- Locate the ball (Receiving)

Break the Cushion

- Close the space between you and the defender

Start

- No false steps
- Push off the front leg
- Hip drive from the back leg
- Proper foot strike
- Contralateral arm motion aligns with lower body movement.

Tempo

- Stop and go with body control
- Adjust speed to the needs of the competitive scenario



Drills to Support

- Stance, Start and Go
- Zig-Zag Pathway
- Stop-and-Go Flow
- Curved Pathway
- Acceleration Drills
- Deceleration Drills
- Lateral Pathway
- TOR Drill
- Stem Drills
- Dual Leg Dominance
- Winning Leverage Drill
- Ladder Drills
- Stair Step Drill
- Agility Ladder Jumping Jack Feet

2 ARMS/HANDS

- ✓ Preparing and positioning the fingers, hands and arms to complete a successful catch or handoff.

KPI(s):

Arm/Hand Position

- Hands up, fingers spread (Receiving)
- Make a diamond shape with the hands (Receiving)
- Arms against the body to create a pocket for the handoff (Running)
- Near arm up during handoff (Running)

Catch Radius

- Adjust hands/arms based on flight of the ball (Receiving)

Long Arms

- Extend hands/arms towards the ball (Receiving)
- Catch the ball at the highest point (Receiving)



Drills to Support

- Clockwork Hands
- 10-yard Intermediate Game (dig, curl, speed-out)
- 5-yard Quick Game (hitch, slant, in, out)
- Long Arm Drill
- High Ball Drill
- Low Ball Drill
- Distraction Drill-Movement
- Side Clockwork Hands

3 VISION

- ✓ Tracking the football through the air and into the hands, keeping eyes up in the direction of the play and learning to focus through distraction with the body in various orientations.



KPI(s):

Locate

- Get the head around (Receiving)
- Find the ball (Receiving)
- Eyes up, looking ahead (Running)

Focus

- See the ball through distraction
- Read blocks (Running)
- Read the defense (Running)

Track

- Focus on the tip of ball (Receiving)
- Judge depth and distance of the ball (Receiving)
- Have track discipline - stay on your track (Running)



Drills to Support

- Progressive Turn and Catch
- Over-the-Shoulder Catches
- Pat and Go Drill
- Colored Ball Drill (tennis ball, racquetball)
- Colored Chalk Footballs
- Distraction Drill-Movement
- Mesh with Stepoever
- Mesh Read and React
- Toss Drill

4 FINISH

- Movement through and following the catch or handoff, transferring the football from catch or handoff to tuck and assuming correct ball-carrying position.

KPI(s):

Ball Security

- 5 points of pressure
- Ball in the outside arm

Run Through Catch

- Continuous movement through the catching motion (Receiving)

Transition

- See the ball through the tuck
- Feel the ball on the stomach
- Clamp down on the ball during the handoff (Running)



Drills to Support

- Catch, Wrap and Step
- Catch, Wrap and Go
- Outside Arm
- Progressive Run Through Catch Drills
- Ball Security Drill

> TIPS FOR COACHES

Coaches should keep the following things in mind...

- Work towards mastery of two-point WR stance, no false steps
- Work towards mastery of two-point RB stance, no false steps
- Teach breaking a defender's "cushion"
- Teach how to master hip level at "top of routes"
- Show players how to win leverage with stem releases
- Still emphasize arms fully extended and catching with hands, along with through the catch
- Have players focus on tip of ball in flight
- Work on hand placement when catching high and low balls



KICKING AND PUNTING

SKILL ELEMENTS AND KPIS

Below are skills that build the kicking and punting progression. Each step of the progression has Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and drills that help coaches train and improve kicking and punting skills.

1 PREPARE

- ✓ The stance and approach prior to making contact to the ball with the foot.

KPI(s):

Body Position

- Proper lean and balance
- Stable base

Plant Foot

- Plant foot positioned even with the ball
- Point plant foot in the direction of the kick

Footwork

- Approach the ball with coordinated movement



Drills to Support

- Two-Step Kicks
- Multi-Step Approach (6 to 12)
- Straight Line Approach Drill (punting)

2 CONTACT MECHANICS

- ✓ The movements that make up a successful kick/punt up to and at the point of contact. The ability to coordinate these movements throughout the kicking/punting motion.

KPI(s):

Eye-Foot Coordination

- Maintain vision on contact point through connection

Strike Point

- Connect with center of ball on punts
- Connect with the ball slightly below its center on place-kick
- Ankle and knee are locked at the point of contact
- Concentrate on the point of contact

Foot Position

- Shoelaces connect with the ball

Drop

- Drop the ball, don't toss it
- Drop accuracy



Drills to Support

- Directional Kicking
- Air Lift Drill
- Directional Punting
- Catch and Mold Drill
- Kneeling Drop Drill
- Walk and Drop Drill
- Onside Kicks

3 POWER

- Using multiple muscles and leg speed to generate strength behind the kick in order to achieve longer distance and/or height.

KPI(s):

Leg-Swing

- Generates force at the point of contact
- Adjusts power based on desired distance, length, height or direction

Extension

- Leg is extended up through the football

Backswing

- Bring the kicking leg back as far as possible
- Backswing creates momentum
- Adjusts power based on desired distance, length, height or direction



Drills to Support

- Backswing Drill
- Kick Return Tag
- Punt Return Tag
- Leg-Swing Line Drill
- Kickoffs

4 FINISH

- The drive and follow-through that completes the kicking motion.

KPI(s):

Follow-Through

- Maintain balance through contact
- Follows up and through towards the target
- Hips and shoulders square to the target line through finish
- Follow-through improves accuracy

Leg Drive

- Fluid motion from first step through follow-through



Drills to Support

- Leg-Swing Line Drill
- Partner Punt Passes
- Kicker H-O-R-S-E
- Kick the Horseshoe
- Field Goals Multi-Distance
- Field Goals Multi-Angle

> TIPS FOR COACHES

Coaches should keep the following things in mind...

- Contact point on the foot is the shoelaces and bridge of the foot
- Contact point for place-kick is below the center of the ball
- Contact point for a punt is the sweet spot in the center of the football
- Follow-through with extension upward and toward the target
- Ankle and knee should be locked at the point of contact
- Hips and shoulders square to target-line through contact



ATHLETIC FOUNDATIONS

SKILL ELEMENTS AND KPIS

These Skill Elements, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and drills will help lay the foundation for athleticism and building better athletes.

FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENTS

General physical movements that are foundational to developing athleticism while serving as a base to support sport specific skills.

RUNNING

Locomotive movement at a faster pace than walking; both feet are in the air at the same time with feet alternating moving forward.

KPI(s):

Arms, Control, Tempo, Feet, Acceleration, Deceleration, Efficiency

- Skip and march with contralateral arm movement and linear arm movement
- Skip and march with proper hip drive
- Skip and march with thigh parallel to the ground
- Stop and go with body control
- Skip and march while changing tempos
- Run in various orientations and pathways
- Proper foot strike
- Appropriate body lean
- Appropriate hip/arm/body mechanics associated with acceleration
- Deceleration mechanics: lowering hips, bending knees, choppy steps
- Perform skills consistently, efficiently, and accurately



Drills to Support

- Power Skips
- High Skips
- Single-Leg Bounds
- Straight-Leg Bounds
- Butt Kicks
- Carioca
- Forward Cone Step Over (Hip, Knee, Ankle Mechanics)
- Stop and Go Flow
- Gear Runs to Full Stop Balance
- Gear Runs to Change of Direction

SHUFFLING

Sliding laterally with the lead shoulder pointing in the direction of the movement; feet sliding along the ground in direction of movement without touching or crossing each other.

KPI(s):

Control, Tempo, Feet, Stance, Fluidity

- Gallop and shuffle without feet touching
- Shuffle laterally to right and left
- Stop and go with body control
- Perform all actions with varying tempos
- Perform actions on balls of feet
- Keeps a low center of mass
- Improve fluidity, keeping the head level and hips low
- Perform skills consistently, efficiently, and accurately

**Drills to Support**

- Lateral Shuffle
- Lateral Shuffle and Roll Reaction
- Lateral Cone Step Over
- Run-Shuffle-Run
- 5-10-5 Touch the Line
- L-Drill
- X-Drill
- T-Drill
- COD Cone Weaves

JUMPING AND HOPPING

Jumping: Pushing off the ground with both feet, using the leg muscles to achieve takeoff, and landing balanced on two feet with knees slightly bent to absorb the impact

Hopping: Pushing off the ground with one foot, using the leg muscles to achieve takeoff, and landing balanced on one foot with a slight bend in the hopping leg to absorb the impact and opposite leg bent at the knee, not touching the ground

**KPI(s):****Coordinated Movement, Balance, Tempo, Force, Deceleration, Efficiency**

- Jump with both feet leaving the ground at the same time
- Land with both feet touching the ground at the same time
- Coordinated arm swing, raising and lowering the center of mass
- Leave ground and land on one foot while maintaining balance and body control
- Perform all actions at varying tempos
- Jump and hop in various directions
- Jump and hop with varying force
- Perform actions while using proper landing mechanics (knees bent, hips lowered, spinal integrity, chest up)
- Improve mechanics and force demand increases
- Perform skills consistently, efficiently, and accurately

**Drills to Support**

- Box Jump to a Box
- Box Jump from a Box
- Jump Rope
- 180 Jumps
- Agility Ladder Jumps Forward
- Agility Ladder Jump Lateral
- Jump and Land Vertical
- Jump and Land Horizontal
- Front Box Jump
- Lateral Box Jump
- Jump Squats
- 180 Jump Squats
- Burpees
- Leg Tucks
- 1-leg Lateral Hops

FALLING AND ROLLING

Falling: moving fluidly from an upright position to a position on the ground without bracing with the limbs

Rolling: using twisting or circular movement of the whole body to travel in a given direction while on the ground in a non-upright position

 **KPI(s):**

Head, Arms, Knees, Landing, Transitions, Fluidity, Application

- Roll in straight line
- Transition from a standing position to a roll
- Protect the head while falling to the ground
- Roll in different orientations
- Transition into a roll from an upright movement skill and return to movement skill
- Improve fluidity and efficiency of falling and rolling
- Perform skill and techniques in response to contact


Drills to Support

-
- Shoulder Rolls
 - Backward Shoulder Rolls
 - Burpees
 - Push-Up and Roll
 - Three-Player Roll and Weave
 - Lateral Shuffle and Roll Reaction

SENSORY AWARENESS

The ability to receive and differentiate various types of sensory stimuli in the environment and respond appropriately.

 **KPI(s):**

Vocabulary, Space, Vision, Balance, Direction, Distraction

- Movement skill vocabulary
- Move in space
- Directional awareness
- Identify different rhythms and tempos
- Visually track an object
- Maintain balance in different body orientations
- Execute tasks that combine multiple sensory skills
- Growth and efficiency of sensory skills in various conditions


Drills to Support

-
- Quick Feet Reaction
 - Diagonal Chop and Reach
 - 1-leg in Place of Single
 - Partner Tracking Tag
 - Partner Knee Tag
 - Partner Cross-Tracking Tag
 - Flying 20 or 30
 - Hip Flips Backpedal
 - Backpedal
 - W-Drill

ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

Foundational movement skills and skill descriptors that are inherent to all levels and game types within football.

AGILITY

- Ability of an athlete to move quickly and easily
- Ability of an athlete to move and change direction and position of the body quickly and effectively while under control



Drills to Support

- Building Agility 1
- Building Agility 2
- Building Agility 3
- Building Agility 4
- Agility Ladder Run
- Agility Ladder Lateral
- Agility Ladder Jumping Jack Feet
- Quick Feet Reaction
- Carioca
- Agility Ladder Turn and Sprint
- Agility Ladder In and Out
- Partner Tag
- Random Cone Jumps
- Crossover Steps
- Partner Knee Tag

STRENGTH AND POWER

Strength: The amount of weight that can be moved and not the speed in which it is moved

Power: Moving an object between two points as quickly as possible with force



Drills to Support

- Pushups
- Squat Walkout
- 1-Leg Balance Reach
- Reverse Lunge
- Lunge
- 1-Leg Cone Touch Lateral
- Bird Dog
- Diagonal Chop and Reach
- Partner Plank Hand Tag
- Gorilla Crawl
- Bear Crawl
- Push Up and Roll
- Wall Push
- Partner Mirror Hands
- Various Plank Drills
- Head Lifts
- Crab Crawl

STAMINA

- Ability of an athlete to sustain prolonged physical or mental effort



Drills to Support

- Get Up, Chop and Go
- Timed Distance Run
- Flying 20 or 30

SPEED

- The rate at which an athlete can move or operate
- The ability of an athlete to move quickly across the ground or move limbs rapidly to grab or throw

**Drills to Support**

- L-Drill with Cones
- Sprints
- Circle Around the Cone
- Backpedal
- W-Drill
- X-Drill
- Slalom Weave Drill

“ I believe in the Football Development Model because I believe that it sets a standard and it also gives a road map or a guide as to how to go from a beginning player all the way up to a professional.”

Derick Grant

Flag Coach, Frisco Football League (Texas)

“ If this game is taught properly and learned properly, it can provide a lifetime of memories and enjoyment.”

Dave Clawson

Head Football Coach, Wake Forest