



THE FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS + DRILLS

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The skills that are shown here are constant across all levels of the game of American Football. Getting it right at the beginning makes it more FUN and progressing in the sport easier. More drills can be found on the NZAFF website under ENDZONE plus there are many Youtube Flag Football videos with options for drills and exercise games that will extend your abilities.

SKILL 1: HOW TO PASS THE BALL

GRIP



- Second finger over third lace towards back of ball. For smaller hands or smaller ball, pinky and second finger may cross laces instead.
- Wrap rest of hand around ball, with thumb wrapped around other side.
- Third finger may be placed on first lace.
- Hold towards back of ball.

STANCE



- Left shoulder facing target.
- Weight on slightly bent right leg.
- Left leg leading, foot side on.

Please Note: For left-handed throwers, reverse stance so right leg and shoulder lead.

MOTION



STEP 1

- Shoulder facing target.
- Weight on bent knee.
- Eyes focused on target.

STEP 2

- Hold ball near head.
- 90 degree angle at elbow.

STEP 3

- Rotate shoulders towards target, keep elbow up, follow through with wrist, and spin ball by finishing with thumb down.
- Transfer weight to front foot while pivoting towards target.

SKILL 2: HOW TO CATCH THE BALL



LOW CATCH: BELOW WAIST

- Palms facing slightly up.
- Fingers spread.
- Pinkies crossed.



HIGH CATCH: ABOVE WAIST

- Palms facing forward.
- Thumbs and index fingers form diamond.



TIPS + TRICKS

- 'Soft hands catch, hard hands bounce.'
- Catch with arms extended away from body, not against.

STARTING DRILLS FOR PASSING + CATCHING

SINGLE PERSON THROWING DRILL

- Throw the ball at a target like a bucket or box. Vary the distance – start close and move away.
- If there is a rotating clothes line, attach the target to that and spin slowly then hit the target.
- Distance throw. Place markers on the ground as measurements. How far can you throw?

TWO PERSON THROWING DRILL

- Throw the ball between two players while kneeling on the ground. Good for rotation of the shoulders while passing.
- Standing throw varying the distances.
- Have the receiver running across so the thrower has to anticipate the catch position.
- Set up two sets of targets at either end of the backyard, or field, with a player at each end to throw the ball back.

SKILL 3: HOW TO SNAP THE BALL

DIRECT SNAP: QUARTERBACK CLOSE

STEP 1

- Feet square, shoulder-width apart.
- Pinch shoulder blades to spread chest.
- Slide forearms down thighs, pushing hips back until elbows rest on lower thighs.



STEP 2

- Hand over end of ball with fingers under and thumb on top.
- Tip of ball remains on ground until snap is performed.



STEP 3

- Bring ball up, rotating sideways with bent elbow, handing off to Quarterback.



QUARTERBACK

- Wrists together, throwing hand on top (crocodile hands).
- Stand directly behind Centre ready to receive ball, then perform 3-step drop (see Skill 4).

SHOTGUN SNAP: QUARTERBACK FURTHER BACK

CENTRE

- Same as 'Direct Snap' except ball is brought up with straight elbow and thrown back to Quarterback.



QUARTERBACK

- Quarterback stands 2-3 metres back from Centre with fingers spread, ready to catch (above the waist).
- Once they receive snap, Quarterback performs '3-step drop' (see Skill 4) before passing.

SKILL 4: AFTER THE SNAP

3-STEP DROP

Once the Quarterback receives the snap, they shift away from the Centre to throw the ball. This is called the 'drop.' The longer the drop, the more time is allowed for play to develop. For ENDZONE, we focus on the 3-step drop.

- 1 Quarterback receives snap.
- 2 Quarterback takes explosive step directly back.
- 3 Next take a small step with leading foot crossing in front.
- 4 Regain balance with another small step to square feet.



The illustration shows a left handed Quarterback.

STARTING DRILLS

SINGLE PERSON QUARTERBACK DRILL

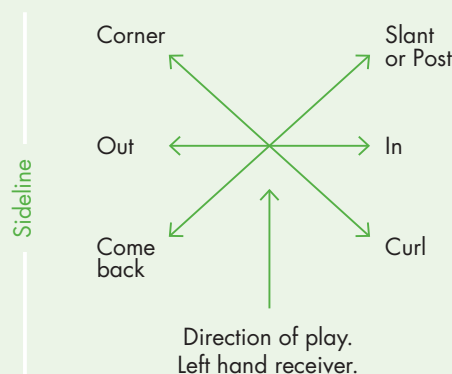
- Add the 3-step drop to the throwing drills with targets in different positions.

TWO PERSON CENTRE + QUARTERBACK DRILLS

- Add the 3-step drop to the throwing drills.
- Alternate playing Centre and Quarterback with both direct and shotgun snaps with the centre running as a receiver after the snap or use targets in different positions.

SKILL 5: RUNNING ROUTES

Routes are different patterns run by the Receivers to confuse defence and catch the ball. Receivers run along a route and then make a sharp turn ('cut') to evade Defensive Backs.



STARTING DRILLS

FOR RUNNING ROUTES

- With two players — one can start as Centre, snap the ball then run a route.
- Or the Quarterback can pretend they have received the snap & drop while the other acts as left or right receiver.
- Set up markers for the cut for each route so both know where the receiver is running to.