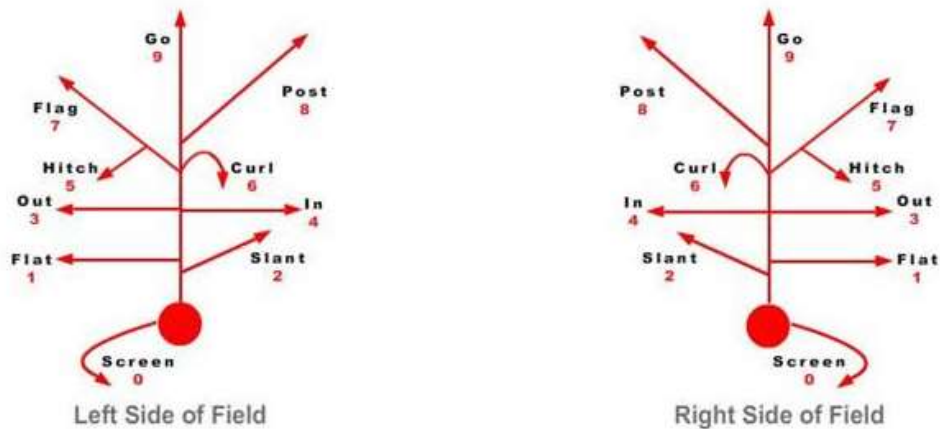


Practice Drills

A. Passing Tree Routes (Junior and Senior Divisions)

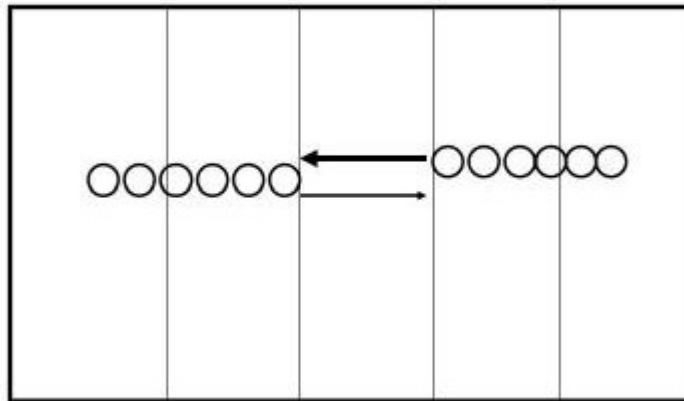
This drill can be run with a coach throwing or if your team is advanced, with one of the players throwing. First, it would be a good idea to have the passing tree routes printed and handed out. Review the number system with the players ahead of the drill and highlight that the numbers are based on routes to the left of the football / QB (WRs are on the left hash of field). Next, have the players form a line to the left of the football / QB and begin to have them work on the easier routes first, repeating each twice per player. Finally, have the players form a line to the right hash of the field or the right of the football / QB and begin the drill again – pointing out how the routes are flipped when on the right side of the field. Route running is an art. Don't forget to have them work on their cutting and coming back to football when running the routes.

Receivers Passing Tree



B. Team Hand-off Exchange (All Divisions)

With this drill, you can have a number of players work on the proper way to give and receive a hand-off. Divide your players into 2 lines approximately 20 yards away from each other. A player from one line starts with the ball. On the coach's whistle, the player with the ball races down field (maintaining the proper grip on the football). Once the player reaches the 1st player in the other line, the player with the ball hands the ball off to that 1st player. That player is now the ball carrier and races down field towards the other line. Emphasize holding the ball properly when running, good hand-off exchange (hand-off acceptance target, and good hand-offs into target). This is a great drill to use if you are employing reverse, double or triple reverse plays that rely on a smooth hand-off to be effective.



C. Flag Pulling – “The Guantlet” (All Divisions)

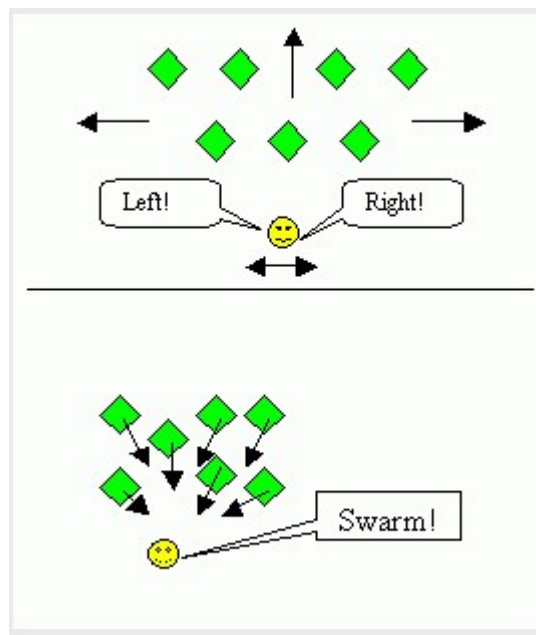
With this drill, line up four cones on the field: 7-10 yards long and 5 yards wide (see diagram). Set one player between one set of cones to represent the Defense and the remainder of the players behind the other cones to represent the Offense. All players should have a flag belt on. On your go (try mimicking a QB's cadence) handoff the football to the first player and send them toward the defender trying to get around the defense while staying inbounds. Once the defense pulls the flag or gets beat send the next player. Repeat this for 3 to 4 kids in a row. Instruct the defense to drop the flags on the ground and the offense to not pick them up until after the drill. Try to get the offense to use spin moves or different speeds to avoid having the flag pulled. Should the defender miss a flag and encourage them by explaining that in a game they will have teammates that will help swarm the offense and pull the flag. This is a team sport!

To make the drill more challenging, ask the defender to pull the flag within the first 5 yards of the field. You may want to increase the length of the field from 7-10 yards to 10-15 yards and adding cones to designate the first 5 yards. Remember, have fun while running this drill, make sure each player gets a turn pulling flags and do not forget to Offense while running this drill.



D. Swarm Drill (All Divisions)

This is a great drill to work on flag pulling and getting your defense programmed to swarm the flag. Set up your players in two or three rows (depending on how many players you have) all facing in the direction of the coach. There should be 5 feet between each player (left and right of them and front and back of them). The coach holds a football calls out a cadence to mimic an offense. On the coach's go, the football is raised in the air, when the coach points the football left the players move left, points right they move right, puts his arm back to pass they move back, upon yelling out swarm the players all swarm the coach and everyone must touch him or her with one hand.



E. Agility Drill

Junior and Senior divisions: The maze drill combines sprint, parallel shuffle, back pedal, and 45 degree drop. Players begin by sprinting to cone #1 and sprinting around it and then they pivot into a shuffle. At cone #2 pivot into a back pedal at a 45 degree angle towards cone #3 while still in a back pedal. Once coming around cone #3, turn and sprint at a 45 degree angle around cone #4 and then go into a shuffle, keep the feet shoulder width apart, "Z" in the knees and chin over the knees. Finish the drill by turning and running a hard five yards once hitting the fifth cone.

Rookie division, coaches should use four cones only (corner cones) and have the players run to each cone, circle the cone and continue until they run past cone #4.

