



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
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Flag Football Sample Practice Plan (60 Minutes)

Stretching (5 Minutes)

- Have the team form a circle around you far enough apart that they will not hit each other while performing the stretches
- Arm circles forward, start with small circles and gradually get bigger (Count to 10)
- Arm circles backward, start with small circles and gradually get bigger (Count to 10)
- 1 arm across your chest and pull (Count to 10, then switch arms)
- 1 arm over your head and pull (Count to 10, then switch arms)
- Toe Touches (Count to 10)
- Grab one foot behind your back (Count to 10, then switch legs)
- Side Lunges (Count to 10, then lunge the other direction)

Warm-Ups (10 Minutes)

- Form 3 groups of 4-5 players. Set the group into a square
- Let the kids play catch within their groups
- Take this time to help perfect their throwing forms as well as their receiving forms

Quarterback Drills (15 Minutes)

- **Under Center Snap Drill**
- For this drill break your team up into 3 groups of 4/5 and have them form 3 lines. The 1st kid in line will be the center, and the 2nd kid will be the quarterback.
- For this QB drill, the quarterback should be lined up directly behind the center, with knees bent and hands open. Upon hike, the center carries the ball through their legs and firmly places the ball within the quarterback's waiting hands. There should be no tossing between the center and quarterback—just a strong ball placement.
- Do this 3 times, then rotate the kids. The center will join the back of the line, the quarterback will become the center, and the next kid in line will be the quarterback.

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• **1-step drill**

- For this drill break your team up into 2 lines of 6/7. One line will be your Centers/Quarterbacks and the other line will be your receivers.
- After the quarterback throws a pass, they will become the center, the center will bounce over and join the receiver line, and the receiver will join the back of the center/quarterback line.
- To set up for this QB drill, the quarterback lines up directly behind the center, with their knees bent and their hands positioned correctly underneath.
- After the center hands off the ball, take one step backward to survey the field and find an open receiver. Once you find a receiver, open up, point your shoulders, take a step, and release the ball.
- Practice running this youth quarterback drill quickly, with several balls back-to-back. This will help you make game-time decisions quicker and more confidently during a game.

Running Back Drills (15 Minutes)

• **Simple hand offs**

- For this drill, split your team up into 3 groups of 4/5 and have them form a line.
- After the handoff the center will join the back of the line, the quarterback will become the center, the running back will become the quarter back, and the next person in line will be the next running back.
- For this running back drill, the quarterback should be lined up directly behind the center, with knees bent and hands open ready to receive the ball, the running back should be a couple yards behind him arms in proper positioning to receive the hand off.
- Upon hike the center hands the ball to the quarterback who then turns left or right based on the play call and places the ball securely in the running back's arms.

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• **Split Backfield Handoffs**

- For this running back drill, split your team up into 3 groups of 4/5. Have them form 3 lines behind the cones.
- Set up 3 lines of 4 cones running vertically, with a cone being placed every 5 yards or so.
- For this running back drill, within your groups of 4/5, one kid begins at each position (center, quarterback, RB 1 set to the quarterbacks left, RB 2 set to the quarterbacks right) if you have a group of 5 one kid will sit out.
- After the handoff, the center becomes the quarterback, the quarterback becomes RB1, RB1 becomes RB2 and RB2 would become the center.
- For this running back drill, the quarterback should be lined up directly behind the center, with knees bent and hands open ready to receive the ball, the running backs should be a couple yards behind him set to the left and right, arms in proper positioning to receive the hand off.
- Upon hike the center hands the ball to the quarterback who then turns left or right and hands it off to RB1 or RB2 based on the play call and places the ball securely in the running back's arms.

Defensive/Flag Pulling Drills (15 Minutes)

Before we dive into flag pulling drills, let's first break down the proper way to remove the ball-carrier's flags. The biggest mistakes players make are grabbing the flag at the wrong spot, not aligning their body correctly, and overrunning the ball-carrier. Instead, using these techniques consistently will improve your chances of removing the ball-carrier's flags.

- **Correct stance:** The initial position you want to take when pulling an opponent's flags is similar to the stance you would take in tackle football—the difference is that you're pulling their flags instead of physically tackling the player. First, align yourself in front of the ball-carrier, which will give you more time to pull their flags and make it difficult for them to get around you. Then, square up your shoulders and slightly bend your knees, keeping your eyes on the flags (not the player).
- **Break down.** As you reach your opponent, think about breaking down defensively by shuffling your feet as you slow your speed. Remember to align your body and position yourself in front of the ball-carrier as you break down.

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- **Two hands, two flags.** Always use both hands to go for both flags. If you try to just pull one flag with one hand, or one flag with two hands, your odds of successfully “tackling” the ball-carrier decrease tremendously.
- **Aim for the base of the flag.** Our league has Triple Threat Belts where the entire belt comes off when a flag is pulled. You should always try to pull the flag as close to the base of the belt as possible. Grip it firmly and yank straight down in a swiping motion.

The Gauntlet Flag Pulling Drill

- For this flag pulling drill, split your team into 2 lines. One line will be your offensive line, the other will be your defensive line.
- Set up a 5-yard by 5-yard zone with cones, this will be the playing area for this drill. Have your lines a safe distance away from the edges of this zone
- For this flag pulling drill, take the first kid in the offensive line and put them against the first kid in the defensive line.
- Have them lay down facing opposite directions on opposing sides of the zone.
- Upon the whistle, both players will need to stand up, turn around and attempt to score on offense, and pull the flags if you are on defense.
- The player from the offensive line will rotate to the end of the defensive line, and the defensive player will rotate to the end of the offensive line.

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Zig Zag Drill

- This flag pulling drill is great for all ages as it breaks down the exact steps needed to remove the ball-carrier's flags.
- For this flag pulling drill, have a set of players line up in two staggered vertical lines about 5 yards apart. They will remain stationary, facing forward with their hands on their hips. They will represent offensive players. A defensive player should start facing the staggered line with enough room to get a running start.
- To start this flag pulling drill, the defensive player runs to the first stationary player in the line. As they reach their target, they need to break down, square up, and quickly remove both flags using both hands. Then, they sprint to the next staggered player in the line and practice the same motions. The drill is complete after they've reached every player and removed their flags.
- The zig zag drill is a great way to practice breaking down as you meet the ball-carrier. To do this effectively, keep your knees bent and stay low so you can easily slow your speed and shuffle back and forth as needed.

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