

Wide Receiver Drill Catalog

University of Missouri-Rolla

As you review the following receiver drills, it is important to remember these key points:

1. Proper Wide Receiver Stance:

This is especially important for the outside receivers or any receiver which may be on the LOS. You want to have your inside foot forward, slight bend in the knees, shoulders low, and your hands held high.

The inside foot should be forward so that you have a closed stance and your chest is not exposed to any press defender.

The vast majority of times you get a pressed defender they will play inside leverage and if you have your inside foot back, then your chest is exposed to an inside leverage press defender.

The knees should be bent and the shoulders low so that you again limit the amount of space which is available to be hit right on the snap as well as helping to make the WR quicker off of the ball.

The hands should be high so that you can attack a press defender right away without first accepting a blow from him.

If your hands are not held high, then on the snap the first thing you must do is bring your hands up so you can either defend yourself against the press defensive back or bring them up to start running.



2. Proper Way To Catch A Football:

One of the biggest problems receivers have is trying to make a backhanded catch. A backhanded catch is when the ball is low and away and the receiver opens his palms to the ground. This creates a situation where upon trying to catch the football the receiver will often push the ball away from them and down into the ground. If the palms are turned up and the receiver doesn't cleanly catch the football, the ball will be knocked up into the belly or chest of the receiver and he still has a chance for the catch.

The receiver will have a better chance to run after the catch if he backhands the ball, but it is much less likely that he will make the catch. If the receiver tries to make the catch the proper way it will pull the receiver back towards the ball and make it more difficult to get up the field afterwards. But, the catch is the most important aspect of being a receiver, so don't let him turn his hands the wrong way. As soon as any coach sees one of our receivers try to backhand a ball, regardless of if the catch is made, the coach immediately says "turn your hands around!"

3. What To Do After The Catch:

It seems simple, but it is not discussed enough. Every time a WR makes a catch you should see the same progression:

- catch it, tuck it, put it away, and snap your head.
- The catch: Well, this part should be obvious.
- Tuck it/put it away: The ball should be tucked into a running position with the fingers around the point of the ball, with the forearm and side of the body to protect the ball, and both hands should be helping to put the ball away to protect it. This is important because there are going to be times when a receiver gets hit right after making the catch and you have to be able to hold on to the ball as you try to put the ball away, so keep two hands on the ball until it is put away.
- Snap your head: As the ball is being put away the receiver should snap his head to find the next defender. You snap the head instead of turning the shoulders. Do not allow the defender to hit you in the chest while you blindly turn towards him. By turning the head, you are still in a position to turn your body back away from a defender if you suddenly see one as you turn your head. It is important to note that the ball should be put away to the opposite side of the turn of the head. This will help to protect the ball because you always want to keep the ball on the opposite side of the defenders.

4. The Proper Psyche Of A Wide Receiver:

The easy or normal catch is absolutely expected to be made and there just isn't a reason why there should ever be a drop. But, explain to your receivers the importance of "making the great one." This should become a central theme for the receivers. Once you as a coach change the expectation level, the receivers will respond. Once you are able to move from simply making the catch to making the great catch, it is amazing how the psyche of the receiver will change. Suddenly, a drop of a normal pass is unthinkable and the catch of a difficult pass becomes expected.

Wide Receiver Drills

1. Warm-up: 1 Hand

Basic warm-up drill that forces the WR to catch the ball with one hand. The WR is off-set from the QB and after catching passes with one hand he moves to the other side of the QB to catch with the other hand. Can be done with QBs on the same side or on opposite sides.

2. Warm-up: Cut Off The Ball (2 Hands)

The WR will be off-set from the QB. The WR must cut off the ball, force it over his outside shoulder, then catch the ball with two hands. His hands should be extended away from his body.

3. Warm-up: Over The Top (No Turn)

The WR is 5 yards (or 10) in front of the QB with his back turned and running away. The QB drops the ball right over the top. The WR waits for the "ball" call by the other WRs then looks right over the top for the ball. He can not turn to locate the ball. Teaches the WRs to make the hardest catch they will ever have to make. They must extend their hands, elbows together, and find the ball in the last split second.

4. Warm-up: Over The Top (Turn)

Same as above, except the WR can now turn and look over his shoulder for the ball to make the catch. Teaches WRs to locate the ball and get to it even when the situation is not ideal.

5. Warm-up: Straight On Normal

WRs are coming straight on at the QB. The QB throws the ball to the chest of the WR for the easy catch.

6. Warm-up: Straight On High

WRs are coming straight on at the QB, but the QB will throw the ball high making the WR jump for the catch. Catch the ball at its highest point.

7. Warm-up: Straight On Low

WRs are coming straight on at the QB, and the QB will throw the ball about knee level. The WRs must get his hands down, pinkies together, and try to keep coming through the ball.

8. Warm-up: Straight On Left/Right

WRs are coming straight on at the QB and the QB will throw the ball to either side of the WRs. This teaches the WRs to make a catch just off of their body. We don't want the WR to get in front of the ball, just to make the catch. Not all balls are on target and we have to be able to make this catch.

9. Warm-up: From Side Normal

The QBs are to one side of the WRs as the WRs run in front. The QB makes a nice normal throw out in front of the WR who makes the catch then turns up field.

10. Warm-up: From Side High

The QBs are to one side of the WRs as the WRs run in front. The QB will throw the ball high (head level or above) and the WR will have to adjust to make the catch. The receivers must work on getting up the field after the catch.

11. Warm-Up: From Side Low

The QBs are to one side of the WRs as the WRs run in front. The QB will throw the ball knee level and the WR must get down for the catch. Run through this.

12. Warm-up: From Side Behind

The QBs are to one side of the WRs as the WRs run in front. The QB will place the ball behind the WR. The WR should turn to make the catch, not just stab at the ball with a hand.

13. Warm-up: From Side Crisscross

There are two lines of WRs that will cross (one in front of the other, with the deepest receiver the QB's target). The QB can throw the ball before they cross or after they cross, but we want the ball delivered close to the cross. This forces the WR to catch the ball in traffic with distractions.

14. Warm-up: From Side Around Defender

One person stands where the WRs will cross behind him. The QB throws before or after the defender. Same drill as above but without as much traffic.

15. Shake On A Line

Have the WRs go straight down a line and every 5 yards they have to shake. You start with 1-step and then move on to the 2-step shakes. Reinforces how to shake.

16. Releases

WRs are paired up. The offensive side will all work the releases at the same time. Work on rip, hammer (unlike a swim technique, the receiver's arm doesn't go any higher than his jersey number when defeating a jam by a defender), then shake. WRs work to the right and then to the left then switch sides.

17. 4 Cones: Around The Horn

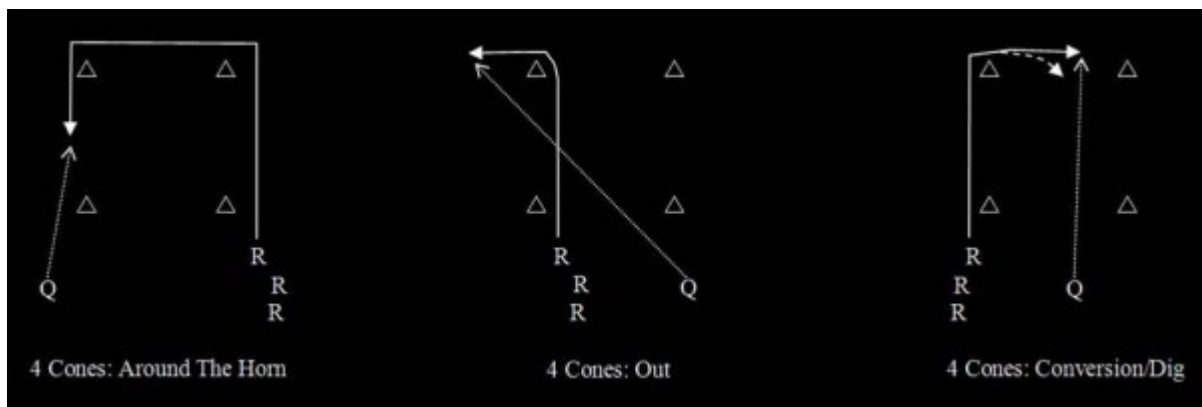
Work all the way around the cones working on great changes of direction and sinking of the hips. As they come out of the last break the QB throws them the ball.

18. 4 Cones: Out

The outside receiver will push up and go around the cone. The inside receivers will work on the out. So, they will start inside of the first cone, angle outside of the second cone, then turn on the out.

19. 4 Cones: Conversion/Dig/Control

Stay on the outside of the cones. Push up to the second cone and then work inside. If Dig, stay on the move. If control or conversion, look to sit and move only if the QB doesn't immediately throw.



20. 4 Cones: Post

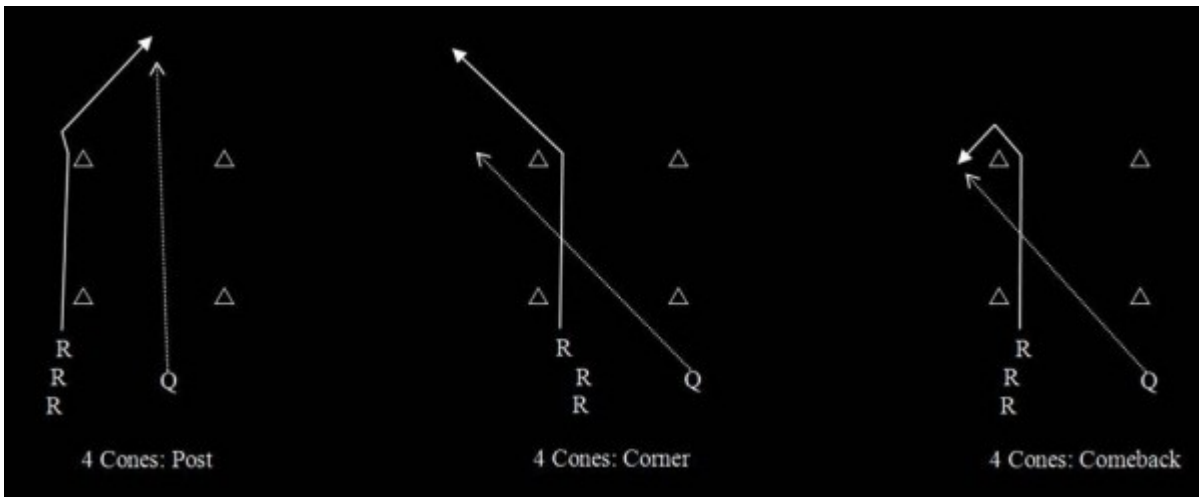
Push up to the second cone and run the Post.

21. 4 Cones: Corner

Push up to the second cone and run the corner.

22. 4 Cones: Comeback

Working on the inside of the cones, push up to the second cone and run a normal comeback.



23. Shake with cones (quick feet)

Set up the cones in a zig-zag sequence and work on breaks and shakes. The closer the cones are the quicker the WR's feet must be.

24. Pair up blocking

Pair up just like with releases and work on individual blocking. The 2 sides should be about 5 yards apart and the defender must take a drop step before reacting. Work on running the feet, good hand placement, and contact.

25. Backside/Angle Blocking

This is a great drill for the outside receivers. Set up a square and tell the offensive player he must get to the top corner before the defender. The defender must take 3 read steps before going. The offensive players need to learn that by starting out flat they can gain leverage. This is how to teach the backside blocks for the outside receivers.

26. Inside Blocking

Work on the inside receivers learning how to block on an inside run play, outside run play, and what to do if their man suddenly goes right now. They learn to get to the second level immediately, how to come flat inside instead of taking an angle that causes them to lose the block, and how to keep running their feet in space.

27. Fight the Stripper

Pair up. Only one player has a ball. As he jogs down the field, the other player will try to strip the ball by punching it out, ripping the hands apart, or chopping over the top. This teaches the WRs how to hold onto the ball.

28. Blaster

This teaches how to focus on a catch, accept contact when you catch the ball, and then how to come out the other side and still be running.

29. Drop And Recover

Same drill used with RBs. The WRs carry a ball, place a palm on the ground every time a coach says "hit", pull their heads up, and continue to run. Teaches receivers how to stay alive after the first hit.

30. Spin Upfield

When you spin you have to spin upfield and not in place. Have the WR coming up the field at the coach and then spin up the field. You can later incorporate a hand shield to try and knock the WR off balance. The WR must protect the football, spin upfield, and keep his shoulders low.

31. Dip, Bounce, or Upfield

This teaches WRs what to do once they catch the ball. As soon as they catch the football they must snap their head and find the next defender. If the defender is wide then get up the field. If the defender is even then bounce it to the outside. If the defender is deep and slightly outside, then dip him inside and beat him outside.

32. Stiff Arm

A very good weapon for a WR/TE to have. It can be either a devastating shot or simply enough to keep a smaller DB

away. Either deliver a stiff arm to chest or get to the helmet when a defender dives and direct them away.

33. Playing Catch

Every time a WR catches a ball he should catch it, put it away, and snap his head to find the next defender. At the same time, while he is waiting for the QB to throw, his feet should be buzzing.

34. Hot Potato

The WRs circle up (groups of 4+) and simply throw the ball back and forth. You must catch the ball before you throw it again (no tips or touch passes). This teaches focus on everything around you. To make the drill harder, you can tighten the group so there is less space between them or add multiple footballs.

35. Shuffle Toss

The WRs will shuffle in front of the QBs. The QBs throw them the ball (over hand, under hand, side arm, whatever). The WR catches it and flips it back to the QB who threw it. To make the drill harder, get the WRs closer to the QBs.

36. Reaction

2 or 3 QBs are 10 yards away from a WR. The coach is behind the WR. The coach points to a QB and the QB yells ball as he throws. The WR must turn to him immediately and make the catch. During the drill the WR must have his feet moving. This is good because there is not a lot of reaction time.

37. On The Line

The WRs all line up 10 yards away from a QB with their backs turned to the QB. On the ball call everybody must turn expecting to have the ball thrown to them. Only 1 WR will actually catch the ball but you never know who it is going to be.

38. Cut The Big Bag

You need a big blocking bag for this. The WRs approach the bag and cut it at what would be mid-thigh level. As they cut, they must roll through pulling their outside arm through the knee area. If the bottom of the bag kicks out but the top doesn't really move then they hit too low. If the top falls over but the bottom doesn't really move then they hit too high. This drill will keep moving all over the field because as you cut the bag it will move. The coach must set the bag up again and as soon as it is clear the next WR comes to cut the bag. The line of waiting WRs just keeps walking and following the drill.

39. Gauntlet

This is a combination of drills: Blaster, Drop and Recover, Stiff Arm, and Spin Upfield. You can put them in any order. Best options are: Blaster, Drop and Recover, Spin Upfield, and Stiff Arm, or Spin Upfield, Drop and Recover, Stiff Arm, then Blaster.

40. In the Box: Running

Set up a small space (5x5) with cones. You have an actual DB vs. the WR. The WR starts with the football. On the HUT the WR tries to run through the small area. The DB will try to tackle him. This is a full speed tackling/running drill. This gives the WR a chance to work on his running skills, shake, stiff-arm, power running, and protecting the ball while being tackled. The DB works on his one-on-one tackling in space.

41. In the Box: Block Or Release On A Route

Set up a small space (5x5) with cones. You have an actual DB vs. the WR. The offensive coach stands behind the defense and signals either a pass route or for the WR to block. Set up another WR behind the QB to act as a RB. On the snap the DB must read either run or pass and react. It is man coverage type of drill. This really helps to teach blocking by the WRs, running skills while reading the block of the WRs (by the other receiver lined up as the running back), and the DB must read run/pass and then either cover or fight through a block to then make the open field tackle.

Receiver Drills, Part I: Pre-Practice, Footwork and Ball Drills

[Clayt Birmingham](#)
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Pre-Practice Drills

1. Partner Catching Drills: (Stand 10-15 yards apart)

A. Catch And Tuck

- Catch ball with hands
- Tuck ball away as fast as you can
- Overemphasize looking the ball into the tuck position

B. Throw Behind:

- Receiver will turn perpendicular to the thrower
- Thrower will throw ball behind receiver
- With receivers feet planted forward, he must twist at the waist
- End with a catch and tuck

C. Over The Shoulder:

- Receiver will turn his back on the thrower looking over one shoulder.
- The thrower will toss the ball over that shoulder
- Receiver must catch an over the shoulder ball by keeping his pinkies together
- End with a catch and tuck

D. Low Ball:

- The thrower will throw low balls at the Receiver who is standing either head up or perpendicular
- The receiver must bend both at his knees and back to make the catch
- End with a catch and tuck

2. Pat And Go:

- Receivers catch and tuck softly thrown balls on the run
- One hand catches (concentration)
- Two hand catches

3. Ball Handling:

- Slap ball with both hands
- Tap ball back and forth while moving up and down your body - arms extended
- Circle ball around body - going from ankles to waist to head and back down
- Circle ball around right leg
- Circle ball around left leg
- Figure 8 weave
- Single flip
- Double flip

Footwork Drills

1. Stance:

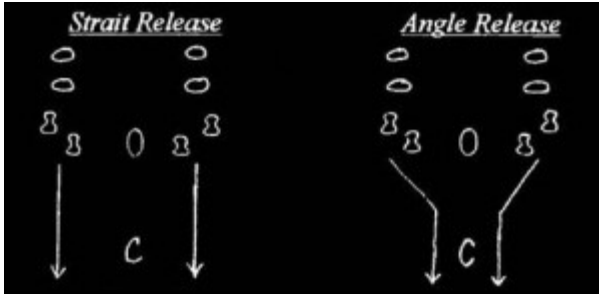
- Review stances

2. Start:

- Explode off LOS
- No false step
- Start on:
 - Called cadence
 - Live color (on one)
 - Ball movement

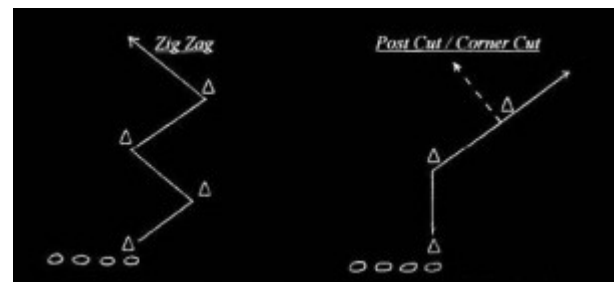
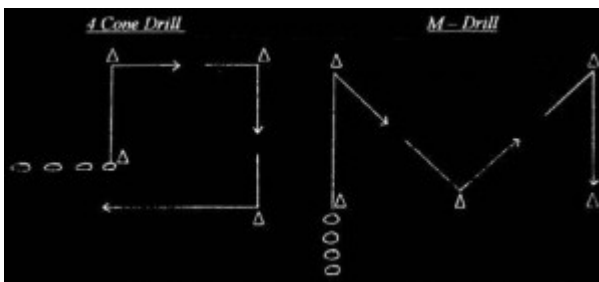
3. Releases:

- Partner up and form a straight line
- One pair goes at a time
- Walk through, half speed, full speed
- Releases: Rip, Swim, Jab, Hand slap



4. Cone Drills:

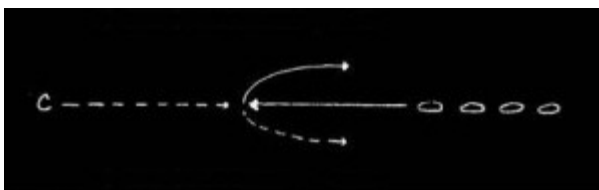
- 4 Cone Drill
- M Drill
- Zig Zag
- Post Cut/Corner Cut



Ball Drills

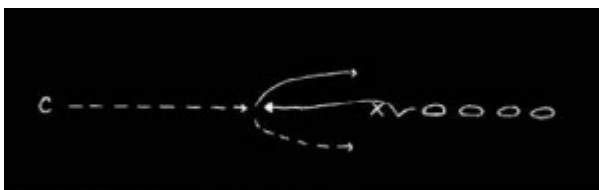
1. Burn Drill:

- Receiver will run directly at thrown ball.
- Catch ball away from body with hands
- Catch, tuck and turn upfield



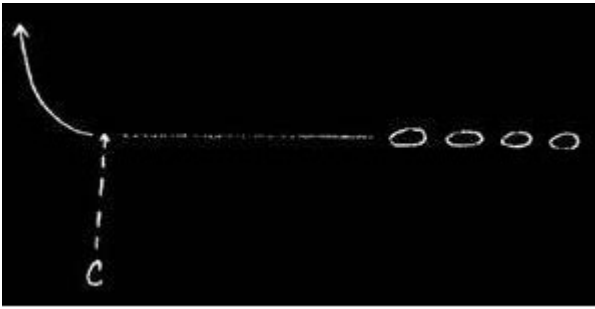
2. Release Burn Drill:

- Receiver will perform a release move before Burn Drill



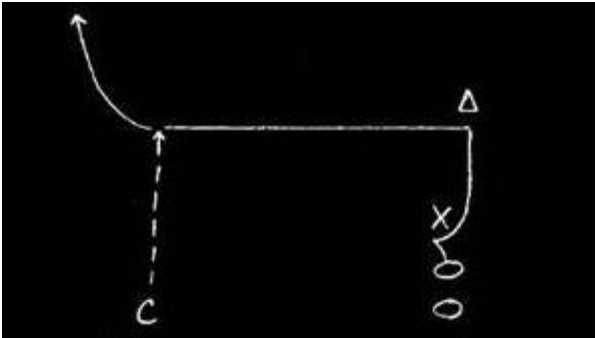
3. Side Catch Drill:

- Catch ball out in front of body, tuck, and turn upfield



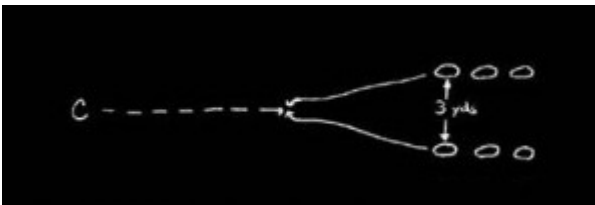
4. Release, Cut And Catch Drill:

- Receiver will perform a release and cut before Side Catch Drill



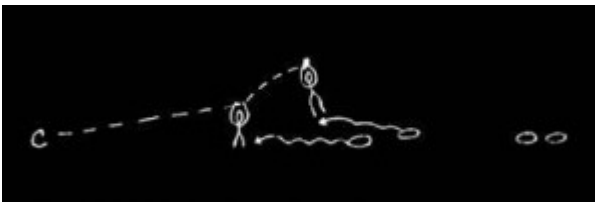
5. Dog Fight Drill:

- 2 lines, 3 yards apart, facing coach
- From receiver stance, receivers will release toward coach on his "Hit" signal
- Coach will throw ball between receivers
- Receivers will attack the ball (High point) for the reception



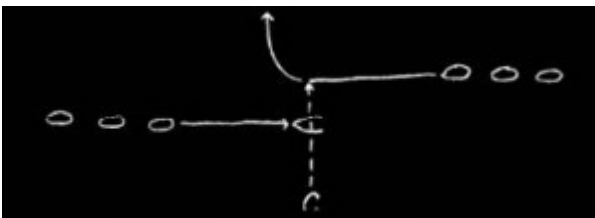
6. Tip Drill:

- Receivers will form groups of two
- Both receivers will run toward coach who will throw the ball at first receiver
- First receiver will tip ball into air as the second receiver reads and attacks ball



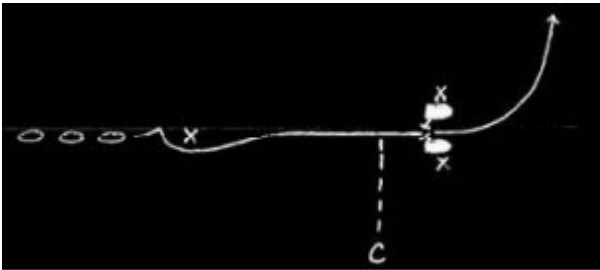
7. Distraction Drill:

- Divide receivers into two equal lines
- Front line (distraction line) will distract the back line (receiver line) by running in front of ball and obstructing vision
- Back line (receiver line) will concentrate on making the catch



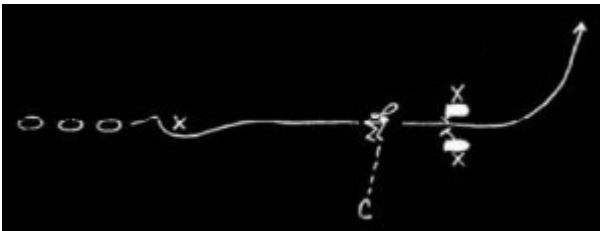
8. Wally Gator Drill:

- Receiver releases, coach throws ball from side while two receivers hits the receiver with hand shields as he catches the ball.
- Receiver must focus on ball and tuck it away quickly; courage and determination



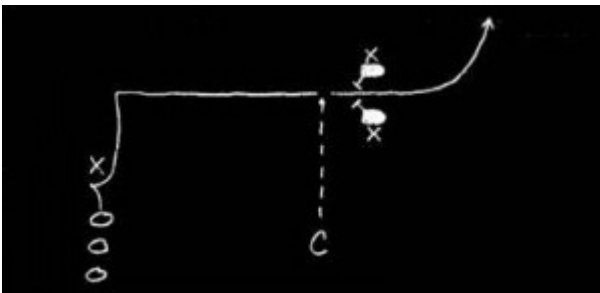
9. Wally Gator (High Catch) Drill:

- To protect the body from a highly thrown ball across the middle, the receiver will jump and bring his knees up to his chest (fetal position) as he catches and tucks the ball before impact.



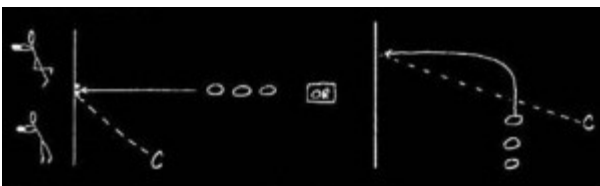
10. Wally Gator (Cut) Drill:

- Release, Cut, Gator, Turn Up Field



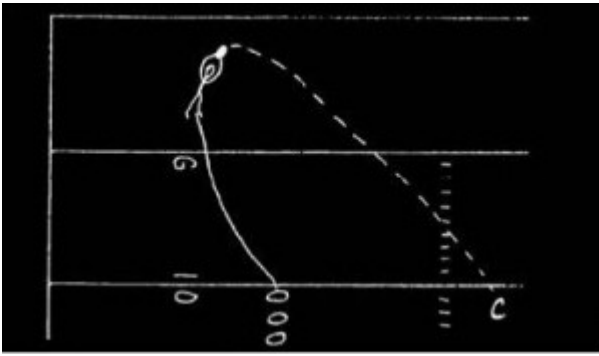
11. Toe Touch Drill:

- Two footwork techniques when catching the ball going out of bounds:
 - Toe Drag (One foot)
 - Toe Tap (Shotgun feet)



12. High Point Drill:

- When running a fade close to the goalline a receiver must attack and high point the football when thrown short and/or high

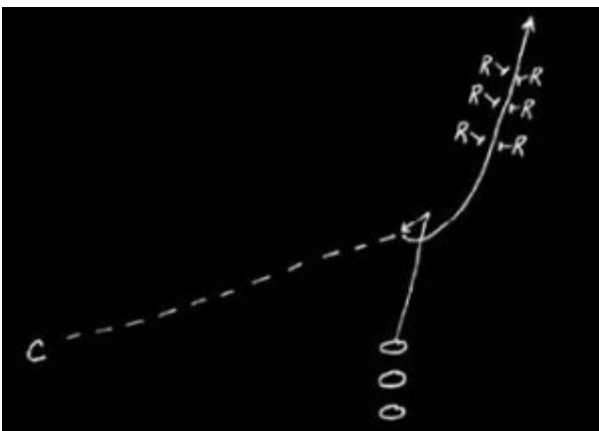


13. Bad Ball Drill:

- While running passing tree routes, throw bad balls at the receivers to make them “sell out” and make the difficult catch.

14. Gauntlet Drill:

- Receiver will catch the ball on a short route and run through each receiver as they try to strip the ball away (right and left hand)



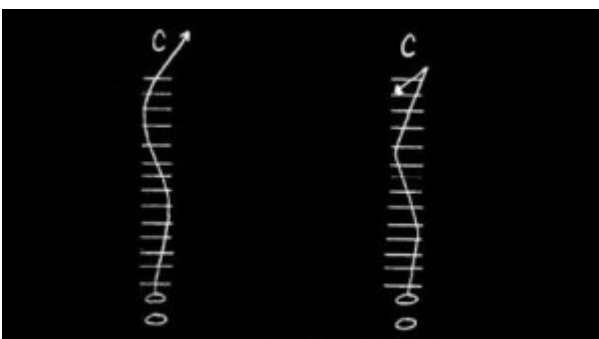
Receiver Drills, Part II: Route Drills

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1. Weave Drill:

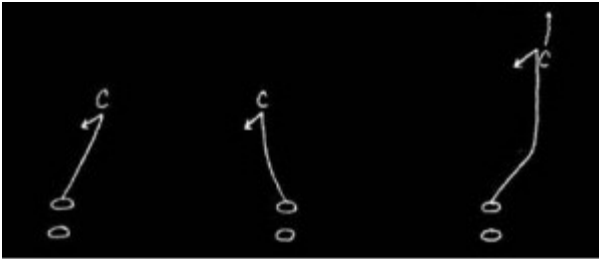
- Work to get inside the framework of the defender no matter what technique the defender is playing.
- Try to get on top of DB's toes
- Run drill on hash mark. Weave from inside shoulder to outside shoulder never going off the hashmark.
 - Add burst
 - Add hard plant

Receiver Drills
Part I: Footwork and Ball Drills
Part III: Blocking Drills



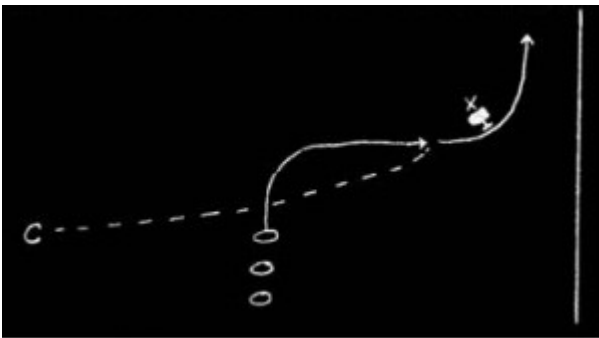
2. Framework Drill:

- Explode out of stance at angle to attack corner and get in his framework in different routes.



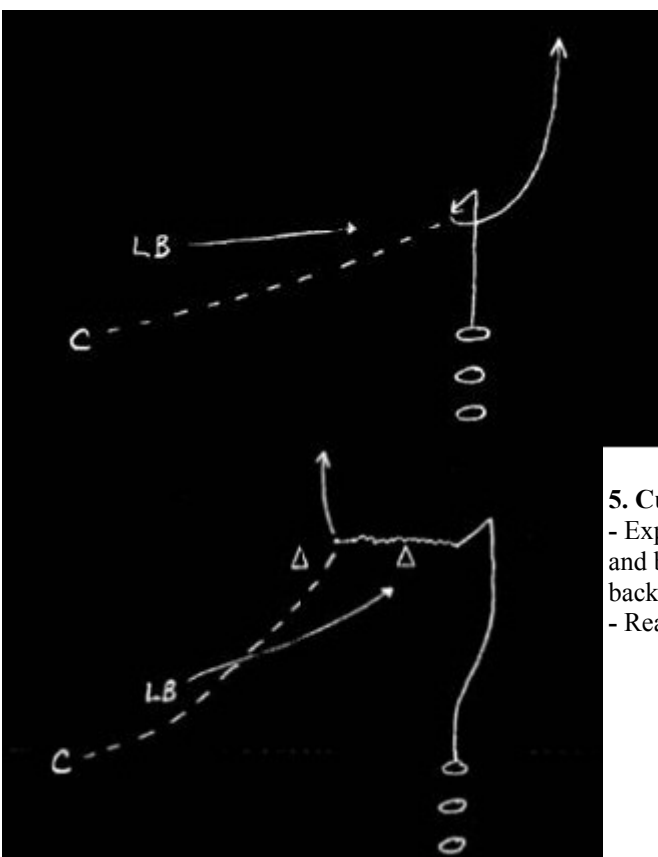
3. Speed Out Drill:

- Explode off the ball. Plant outside foot on 3rd step and roll into route attaining a depth of six yards. Snap head around on the break and be ready for the ball.
- Catch, tuck ball in outside arm, dip shoulder, and run up sidelines.
- Extra receivers will greet receiver after the catch by hitting them with hand shield.



4. Hitch Drill:

- Catch, tuck, read linebacker

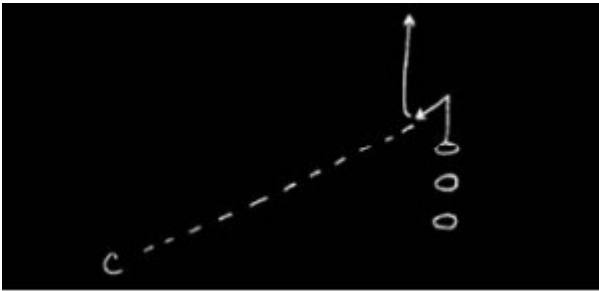


5. Curl Drill:

- Explode off ball and threaten defender deep using the weave and burst. Plant outside foot at 12 yards and turn inside working back to ball.
- Read Linebacker drop to find and settle in a window.

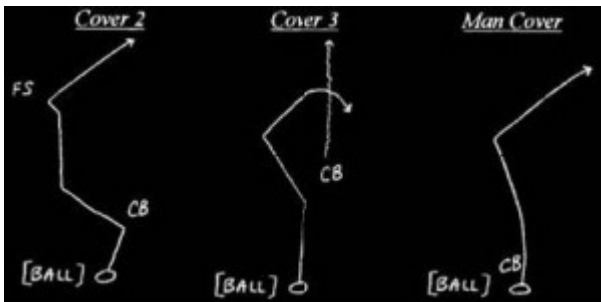
6. Curl And Go Drill:

- Run last steps of curl pattern, plant on outside foot, drive back to the ball, catch, tuck, and drive back up field.



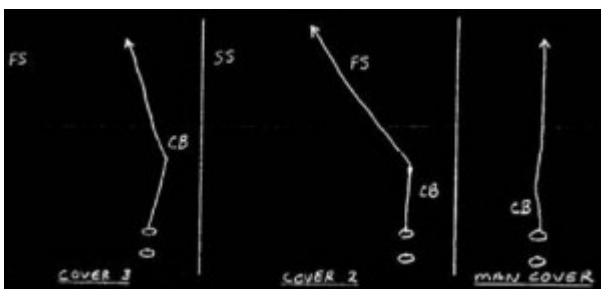
7. Route Variations Vs Different Coverages:

- Corner route: Post break is at approximately 10 yards trying to get DB to open hips. The sideline break is at approximately 13 yards with inside foot. Burst out of cut and assume ball is overthrown.



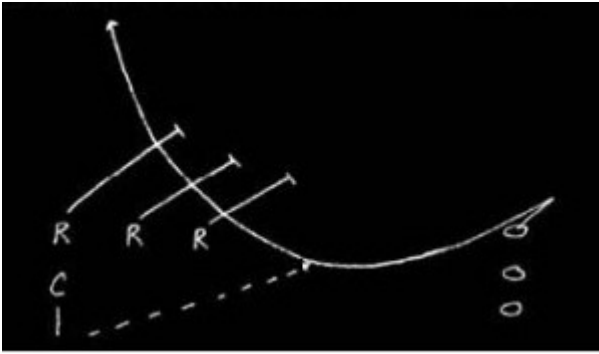
8. Beat-Em Post Drill:

- Beat-em post simply means to take what the DB is giving you. It is a deep route with the option to break outside, inside, or to continue vertical depending on positioning of defender.
- Explode off ball directly at the Corner. Once cushion is broken, work off of position of defender. May use change of speed or weave to assist against high defender.



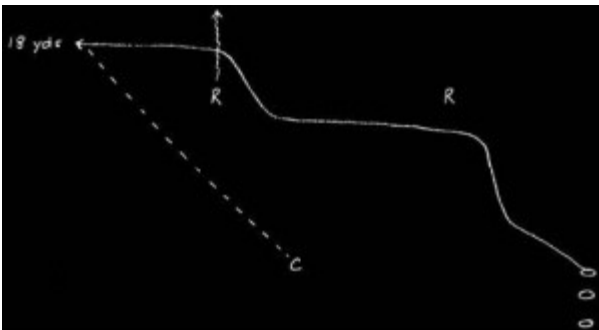
9. Rocket Drill:

- 3 short angle steps to outside, belly back behind LOS, catch, tuck, and turn up field behind the linemen's blocks.
- Extra Receivers will simulate linemen's responsibilities.



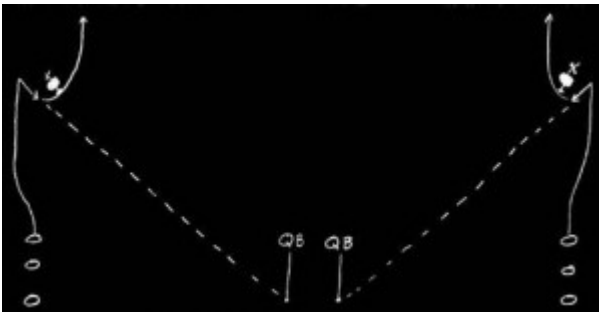
10. Staircase Drill:

- (OVERDRAG) - Reduce split, angle release to get in framework of defender, press vertical, flatten route, press vertical again, and flatten route again at 18 yards.
- Place one or two cones (or extra receivers) to simulate safeties.



11. Route Recognition Drill:

- Receivers will run a technique sound route called by the coach or QB. After route and catch, coach or other receiver will simulate a defender hitting receiver by using a hand shield to hit the receiver after the catch.

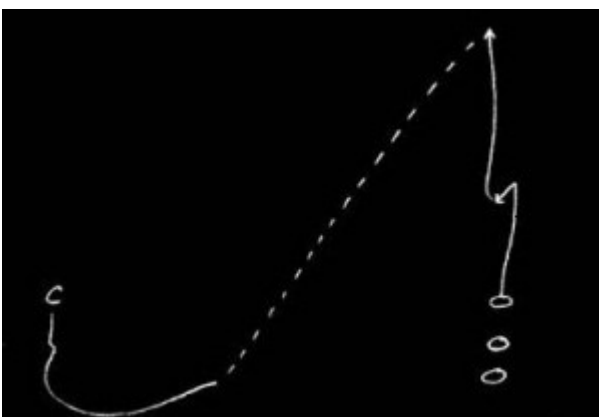


12. Scramble Drill:

- Receiver will run a technique sound route called by the coach or QB. After route the receiver must read the QB scrambling and continue to move to get open.

- General Rules:

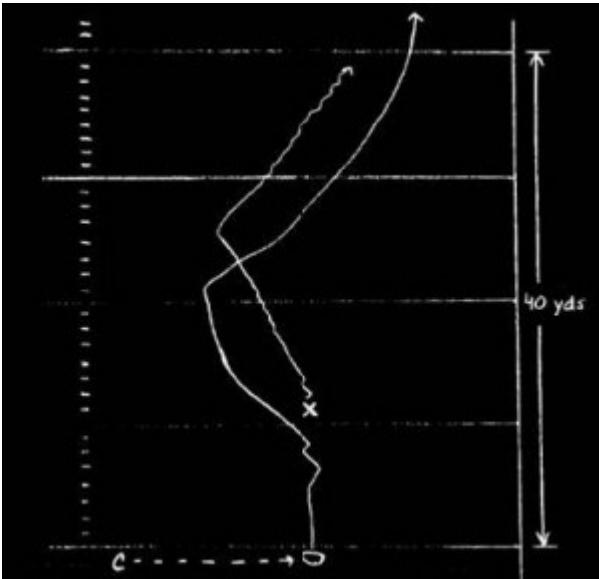
- Deep route = work back to QB
- Short route = work deep



- QB scrambling Right = work right
- QB scrambling left = work left

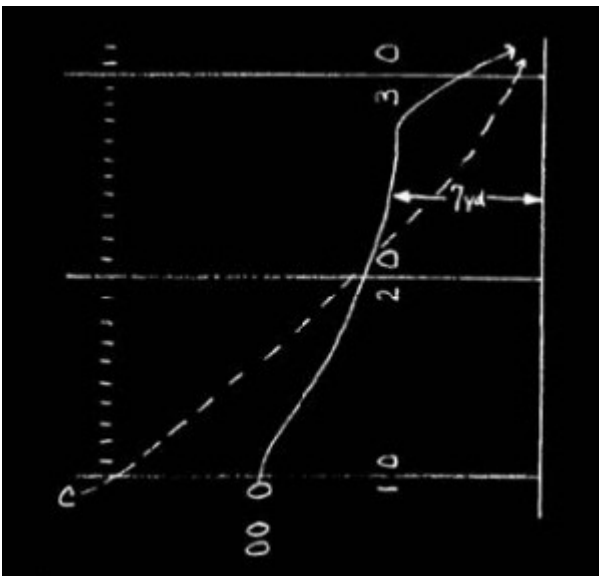
13. Shake-N-Bake Drill:

- Receiver will work on setting up defender after the catch to get Yards After Catch (YAC).



14. Fade Drill:

- Force an outside release
- Build A Box (Allow 7 yards from sideline to execute the over the outside shoulder catch)
- Stay inside the ball
- Modification to drill:
 - Use a defender (Bump Man)
 - Use body as a shield (Pressure defender with inside shoulder)



Receiver Drills, Part III: Blocking Drills

[Clayt Birmingham](#)
[Emporia State University](#)

Receiver Drills

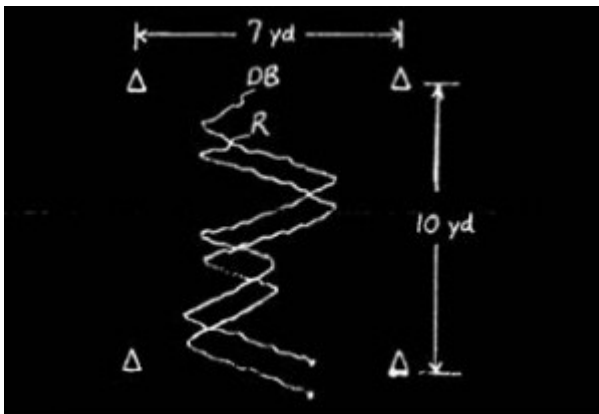
Part I: Footwork and Ball Drills Part II: Route Drills

1. Stalking Technique

- Receiver should focus on aiming point when coming out of stance
- When DB breaks down, receiver breaks down
- Keep body between defender and ball
- Good football position
- Keep shoulders square
- Effort

2. Mirror Drill:

- With 4 cones, form a 10 yd x 7 yd rectangle
- Form groups of two: One receiver and one DB
- Receiver will stalk DB without using his hands
- Shuffle - quick feet - stay in front of defender

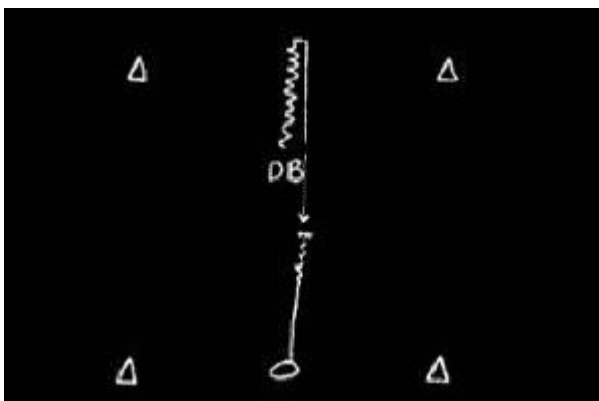


3. Pistol Pecks Drill:

- Add hands to the mirror drill

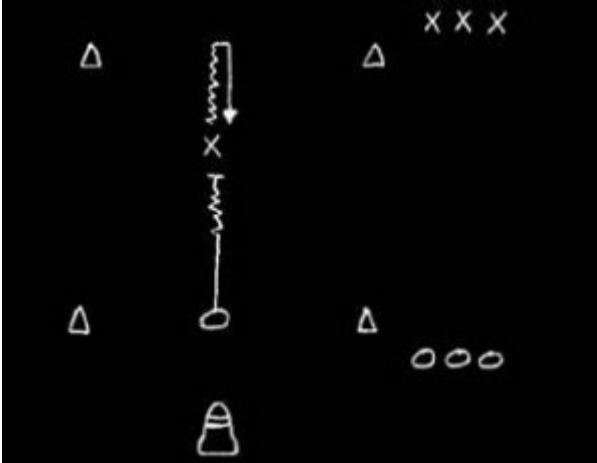
4. 4-Cone Stalk Drill:

- With 4 cones, form a 10 yd x 7 yd rectangle
- Form groups of two: One receiver and one DB
- Receiver will start in stance with DB 7 yards away
- On "HIT" call, receiver will release and DB will backpedal. On the whistle the DB will plant and attack up field. The receiver will stalk the DB using the STALKING TECHNIQUES found on page 1 of Blocking Drills.



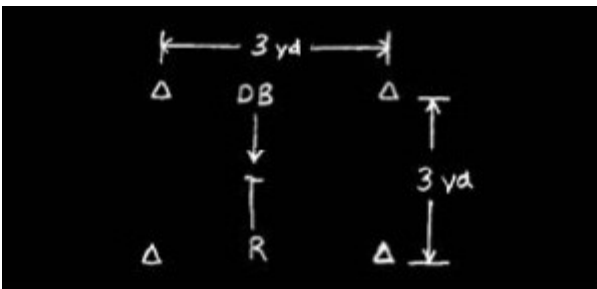
5. Competition Stalk Drill:

- With 4 cones, form a 10 yd x 7 yd rectangle
- Form 2 equal teams (one team wears helmet beanies)
- Receiver will start in stance with DB 7 yards away
- On "HIT" call, receiver will release and DB will backpedal. On the whistle the clock will start as the DB will plant and attack up field. The receiver will stalk the DB using the STALKING TECHNIQUES.
- The DB has 5 seconds to attack and touch the standing dummy, which is located 5 yards behind the LOS.
- A score should be kept and winners should be awarded (soda, etc.).



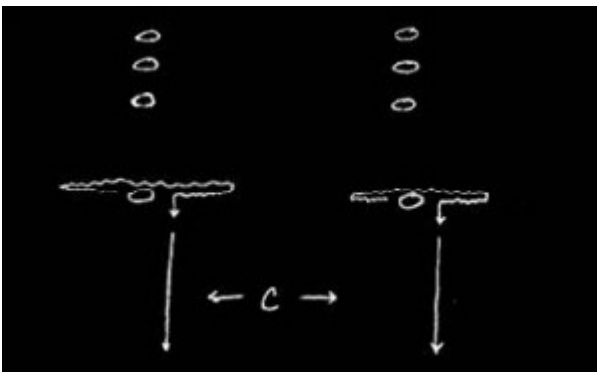
6. Tuff Man Drill:

- With 4 cones form a 3 yd x 3 yd square
- The receiver and DB will stand 3 yards apart. On the "HIT" call the DB will try to run through the receiver while the receiver will perform an aggressive stalk block holding his ground.



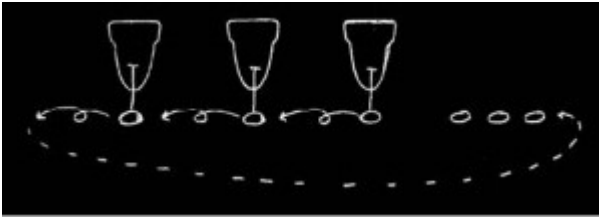
7. Quick Feet Drill:

- Two receivers out at a time, ten yards apart
- On coaches directional signal the receivers will shuffle from side to side.
- When coach yells "OUT," receivers will do an up/down and sprint out.
- Good football position, quick feet, and the ability to change directions quickly



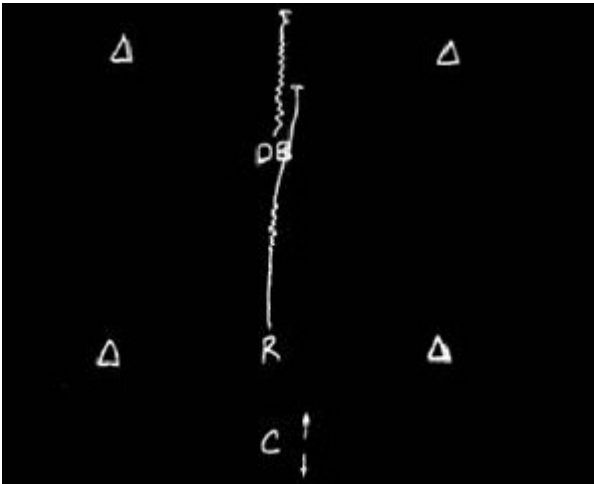
8. Sled Stalk Drill:

- With a 3-5 man sled, receivers will chop feet in front of sled bag. On the command "punch" the receivers will "pistol peck" the bag in front of them.
- After 2 or 3 punches, a whistle command will tell all 3-5 receivers to seat roll to the next bag, chop feet and continue the above commands.



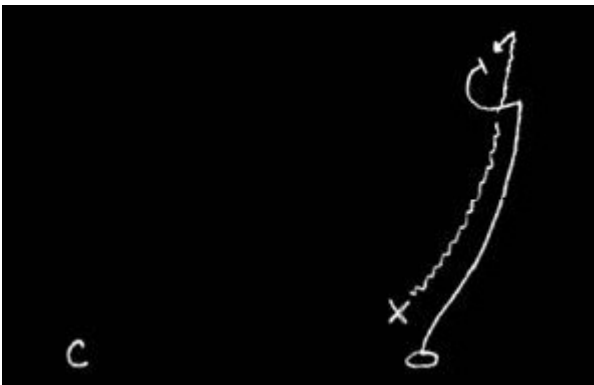
9. D-Back Read Drill:

- With 4 cones, form a 10yd x 7yd rectangle
- Form groups of two: One receiver and one DB
- Receiver will start in stance with DB 7 yards away
- The coach will stand behind receiver and tell the DB to come up hard and attack or play a soft corner by hanging back and hesitating.
- On "HIT" call, receiver will release and DB will backpedal. If DB comes up hard the receiver should break down and use proper stalking technique. If DB is playing soft and hangs back the receiver must attack the DB to prevent the DB from making the tackle on a break away run by the RB.



10. Run-Off Block Drill:

- If the cornerback is playing a bump man and his eyes are focused on the receiver and not the ball we will use a run-off block.
- This simply means to act like you are running a fade route. As the DB follows, the receiver must watch for the DB head to turn and look back inside. When the DB does this, he has taken his eyes off the receiver. The receiver will quickly swim his way to the inside of DB and perform stalking technique.

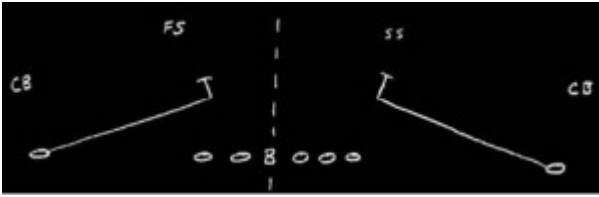


11. Backside Cut-Off Drill:

- When performing a backside cut-off block the receiver must take the proper angle on his release to get to the safety,

which is usually located in the middle of the field.

- The receiver must take an angle to where the safety will be and not to where he is aligned before the snap.
- If receiver cannot get to safety, he should work back to the corner to his side.



12. Cut Block Drill:

- Place stand up dummy approximately 5 yards away from receivers (coach will hold dummy up)
- On "HIT" command, the receiver will use good technique to explode out of his stance and perform a cut block on the dummy by aiming knee high, keeping head up, driving arms through, and striking the dummy with shoulder pad.



13. Stalk And Cut Drill:

- On "HIT" command, the receiver will explode out of stance, stalk dummy, and on "CUT" command cut dummy.



[Receiver Drills, Part I: Footwork and Ball Drills](#)
[Receiver Drills, Part II: Route Drills](#)