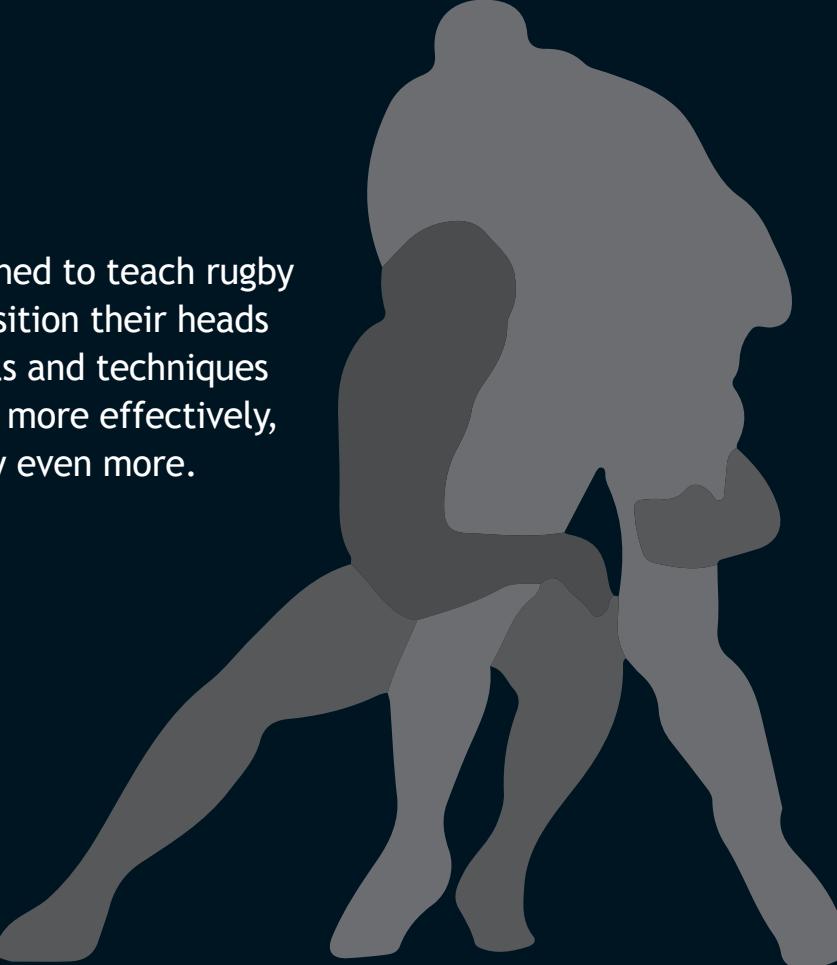




Facilitator Guide





The Tackle Clinic was established to teach rugby players where to correctly position their heads in a tackle. The following skills and techniques will help players safely tackle more effectively, letting them enjoy their rugby even more.

KEY TACKLE WORDS

>>SIGHT TARGET

Eyes on core (tummy).
Where the tummy goes
the ball-carrier goes.

>>EYES UP

Keep eyes open, back
strong, hands up and
elbows in.

>>FEET ALIVE

Go forward, small fast
steps, and balanced
so you can adjust if
needed. Get foot close
to attacker.

>>HEAD BEHIND/ HEAD TO SIDE

Head close on side for
front on and behind for
side on.

>>BRACE/CONTACT /STICK

Make firm contact with
the shoulder. Cheek in
tight!

>>THRUST & SQUEEZE

Thrust arms forward,
around the ball-carrier
and squeeze legs
together.





WARM UP ACTIVITIES

BEAR HUG TAKEDOWN

OBJECTIVE

To strengthen arms and core.

.....

EQUIPMENT

None

.....

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

.....

AREA

Small



SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size) and start on your knees.

ACTIVITY

1. Come together in bear hug position, with arms around each other.
2. Both players try to get each other down to the ground on the left by wrestling - to the left, then to right.
3. Make this into a competition i.e. best of 5.

COACHING POINTS

- » Player who gets the other player down should have their head on top of the body, so it is safe.
- » When going to ground - keep arms in (don't put a hand down as this develops bad habits).



CATCHER

OBJECTIVE

To strengthen arms and core.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

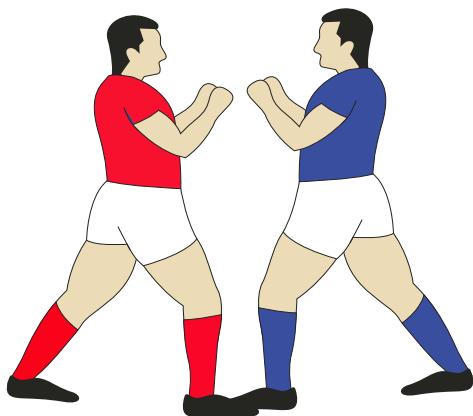


ACTIVITY

1. Start by facing each other in pairs.
2. Arms up in prayer position fists clenched.
3. When the coach calls "go" the nominated player tries to drop to their knees; the other player tries to hold them up without grabbing clothing.
4. Make this into a competition i.e. best of 5.

COACHING POINTS

- >> Punch arms around and squeeze to prevent them getting to their knees.
- >> Make this into a competition
 - 1 point if they get to ground, 1 point if they stop them getting to the ground.
- >> Swap around each time so that each player alternatively gets a turn to drop to the ground.



ARMY ARMY

OBJECTIVE

To strengthen arms and core.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

Individual

AREA

Small

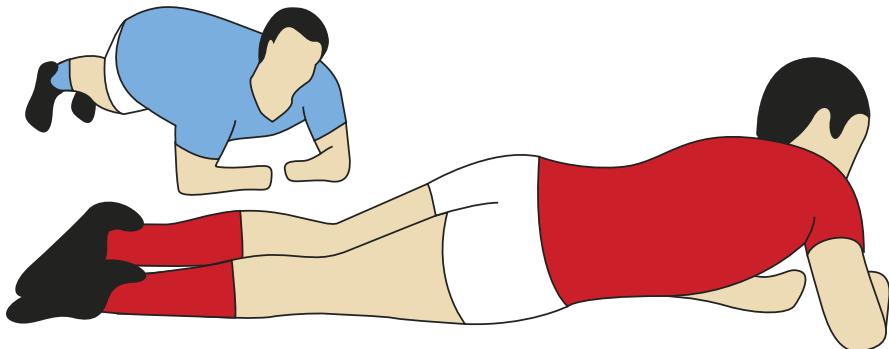


ACTIVITY

When the coach calls ARMY ARMY, players drop to the ground and pull themselves along using their forearms until coach calls run. Repeat.

COACHING POINTS

- » Make sure the players are using their upper body strength and not their legs or feet.



FAST FEET & VARIATIONS

OBJECTIVE

To keep feet ‘alive’.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

Individual

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Get the players to run around in free space.

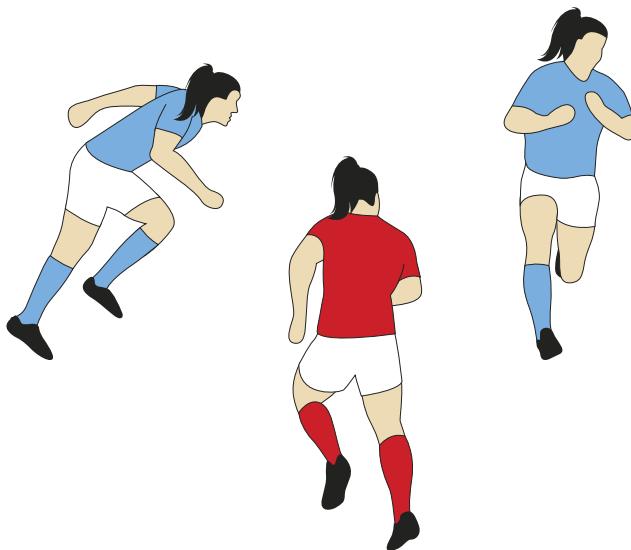


ACTIVITY

1. Players keep feet close to ground and moving fast.
2. On the coaches calls, players must face the direction they indicate i.e. left or right, down (on stomach) or up (back to fast feet).

COACHING POINTS

- >> Make sure the players keep their ‘feet alive’ and react quickly to changes.



KNEE BOXING

OBJECTIVE

To keep feet ‘alive’.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

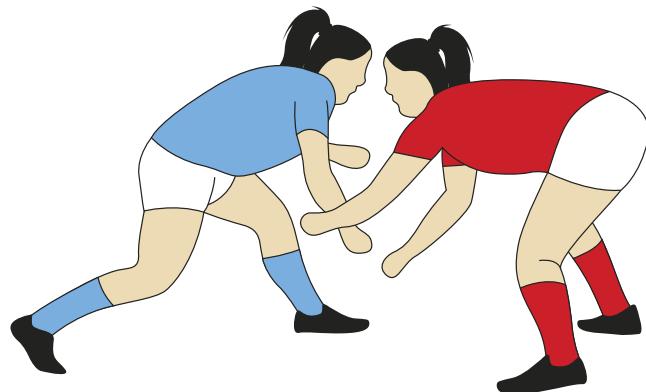


ACTIVITY

In pairs, players try to touch their opponent’s knees (1 point) or foot (2 points). Keep low and on your toes.

COACHING POINTS

- » Be in a tackle stance.
- » React quickly to opposition’s movements.



CHEEK TO CHEEK

OBJECTIVE

To warm up neck area.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

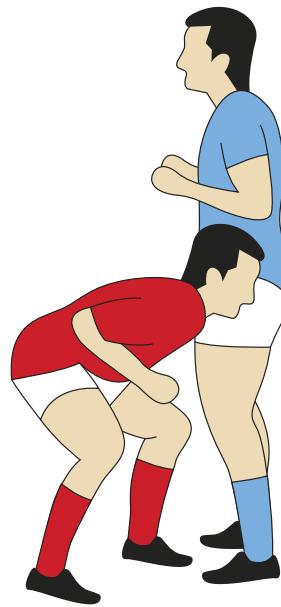


ACTIVITY

Facing each other in pairs, one player puts their cheek on the standing player's hip and tries to slightly move the player to the side. The standing player stays upright and strong, not pushing hips out. Swap cheeks and repeat five times.

COACHING POINTS

- >> Keep neck straight - don't bend to move opposition.
- >> Slow, considered movements needed.



BACK TO BACK

OBJECTIVE

Prepare upper body for the tackle.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

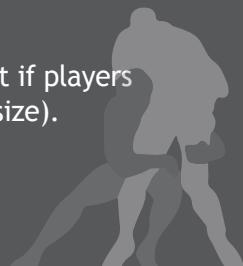
In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

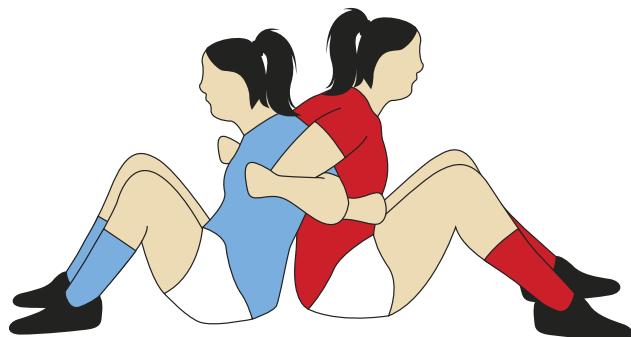


ACTIVITY

In pairs, players must sit back to back and link arms, with knees bent and feet flat on the ground. If the coach calls LEFT, both players try to roll to the left. If the coach calls RIGHT, both players try to roll to the right.

COACHING POINTS

- » Try to land on top.
- » Tighten the core.



PRONE ARM WRESTLE

OBJECTIVE

To prepare upper body and core for the tackle.

EQUIPMENT

None

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

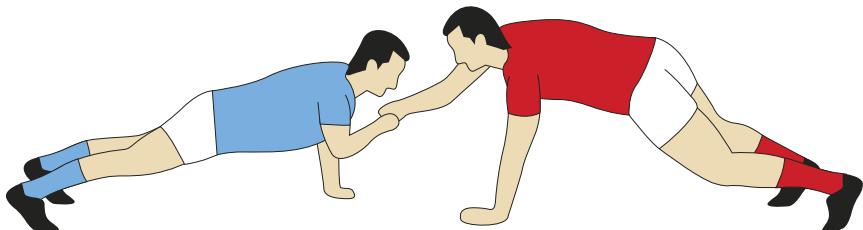


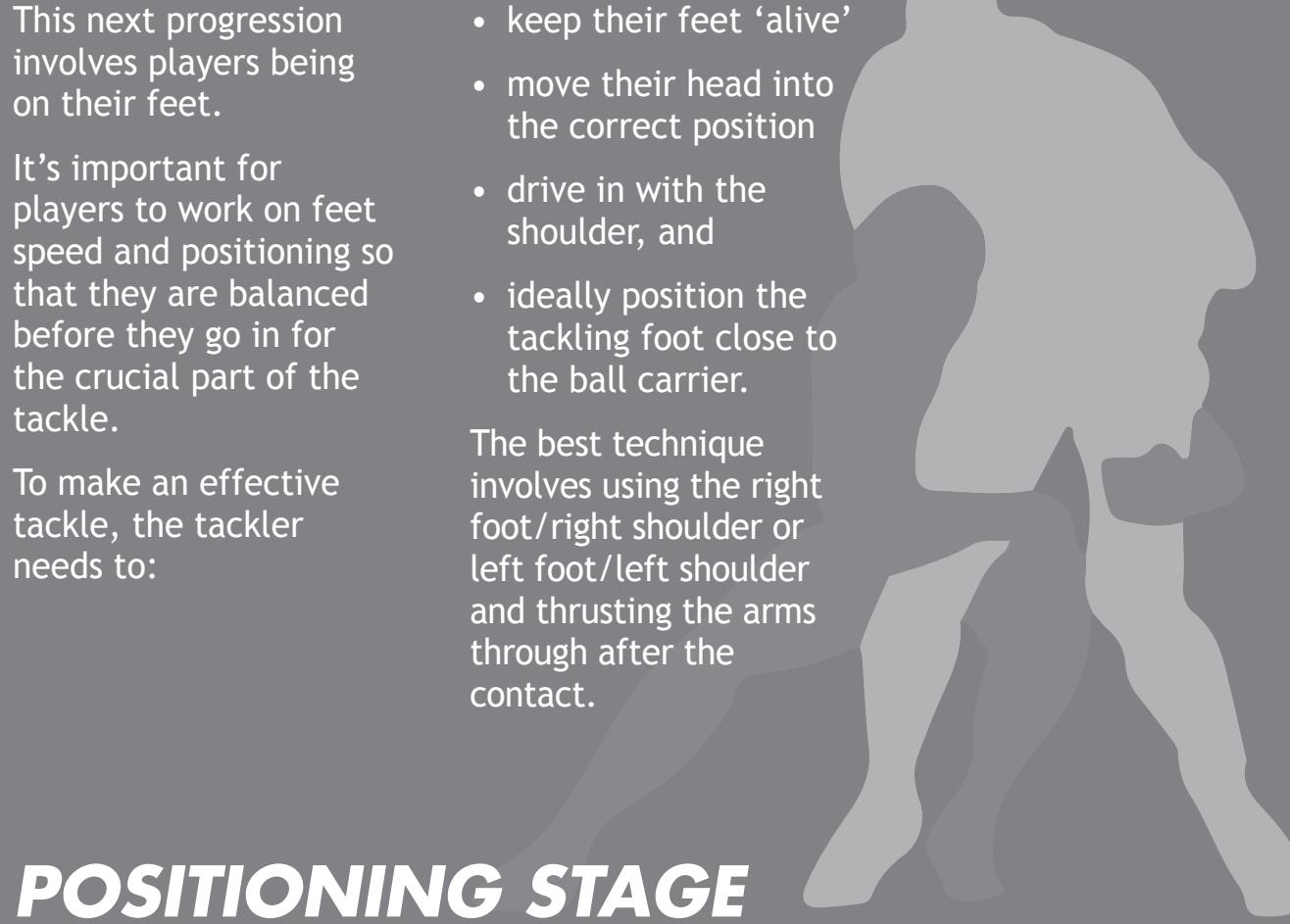
ACTIVITY

In pairs, players get into a press-up position. If the coach calls RIGHT, players hold each other's right wrists and begin to wrestle, trying to unbalance each other. If LEFT is called, left wrists are grabbed.

COACHING POINTS

>> Keep balance and tighten core.





This next progression involves players being on their feet.

It's important for players to work on feet speed and positioning so that they are balanced before they go in for the crucial part of the tackle.

To make an effective tackle, the tackler needs to:

- keep their feet 'alive'
- move their head into the correct position
- drive in with the shoulder, and
- ideally position the tackling foot close to the ball carrier.

The best technique involves using the right foot/right shoulder or left foot/left shoulder and thrusting the arms through after the contact.

POSITIONING STAGE

HOP TO IT!

OBJECTIVE

To get the feet 'alive'.

EQUIPMENT

4 cones per player

GROUP SIZE

Any

AREA

Small

SET-UP

» 4 cones $\frac{1}{2}$ metre apart.

» Player faces side onto line of 4 cones.

ACTIVITY

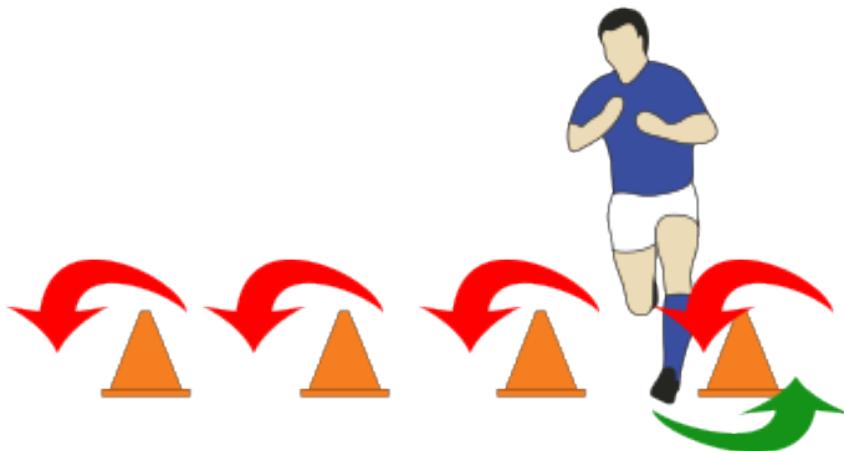
Player hops over the first cone on one foot, then back to the start on the other.

COACHING POINTS

- » Small and fast hops.
- » Hands in tackle position - elbows in.

VARIATION / PROGRESSION

1. Widen area



IN AND OUT!

OBJECTIVE

To get the feet 'alive'.

.....

EQUIPMENT

4 cones per player

.....

GROUP SIZE

Any

.....

AREA

Small

.....

SET-UP

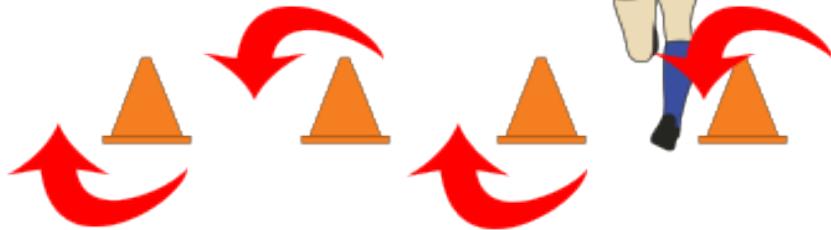
» 4 cones $\frac{1}{2}$ metre apart.

» Player faces side onto line of 4 cones.



ACTIVITY

Player starts side on to a line of cones. When the coach calls GO they run forward through the first gap, backwards through the next gap, then forwards, then backwards around the last cone. Repeat this on the way back.



COACHING POINTS

» Small and fast hops.

» Hands in tackle position - elbows in.

VARIATION / PROGRESSION

1. Sprints away after returning to start position.
2. More cones



FOOT EACH SIDE

OBJECTIVE

To get the feet 'alive'.

EQUIPMENT

4 cones per player

GROUP SIZE

Any

AREA

Small

SET-UP

» 4 cones $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1 metre apart.

» Player faces side of 4 cones with a foot either side of cones.

ACTIVITY

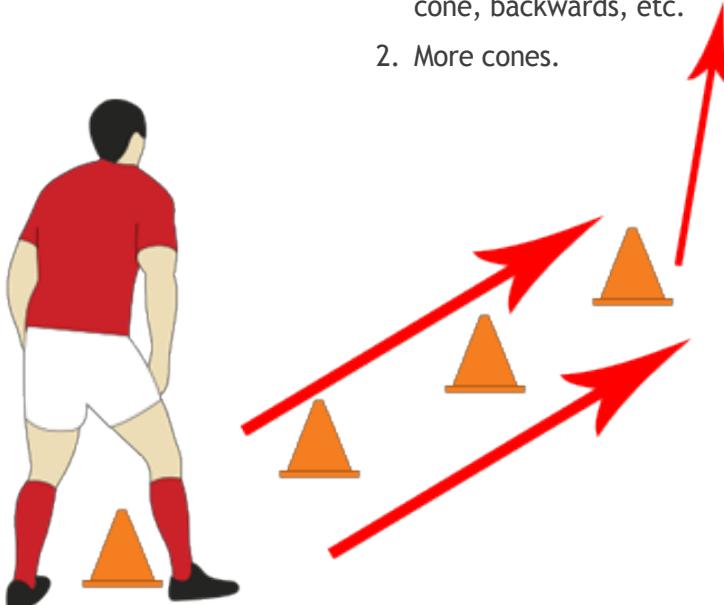
When coach calls GO, players run forward with feet shoulder-width apart, arms pumping and using small feet. At the last cone they sprint away for 5 metres.

COACHING POINTS

- » Small and fast steps, arms pumping.
- » Keep low until last cone and explode out.

VARIATION / PROGRESSION

1. Forward to 1st cone, then run backwards, then to 2nd cone, backwards, etc.
2. More cones.



SIDE TO SIDE!

OBJECTIVE

To get the feet 'alive'.

EQUIPMENT

4 rows of 4 cones

GROUP SIZE

4 to each set of cones

AREA

Small

SET-UP

» 4 cones $\frac{1}{2}$ metre apart x4.

» Player faces side on behind 4 cones.

ACTIVITY

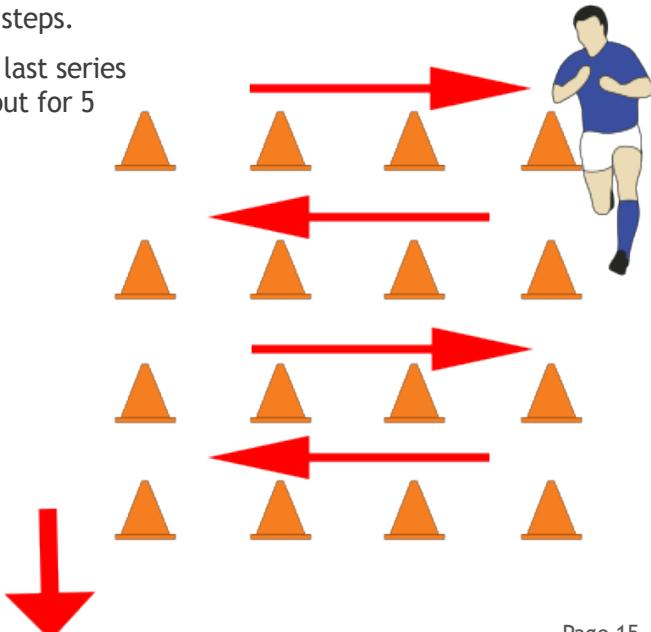
When coach calls GO, player runs sideways using small feet, hands in tackle position and elbows in. At the last cone they move back in the other direction. Repeat.

VARIATION / PROGRESSION

1. Run forward through gap, then run backwards, then forward, backwards, etc.

COACHING POINTS

- » Small and fast steps.
- » Keep low until last series then explode out for 5 metres.



GO DANCE GO!

OBJECTIVE

To get into the correct position to make an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

Cones

GROUP SIZE

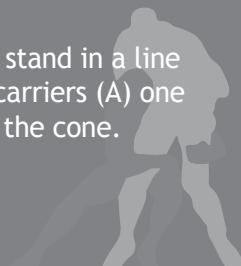
In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Tacklers (B) stand in a line facing ball-carriers (A) one metre from the cone.



ACTIVITY

1. On coach's call, tacklers (B) move feet quickly (hustle with small quick steps) as ball-carriers (A) walk quickly to the left or right of the cone.
2. The Tackler moves forward in a crouch using the small, quick steps and takes a larger step close to the ball-carrier with lead foot. As they do this the head moves to the correct side. The defender then touches them with two hands on the waist and pushes them back.
3. Go-Dance-Go implies the following:
 - move forward;
 - get in to balance with 'feet alive';

COACHING POINTS

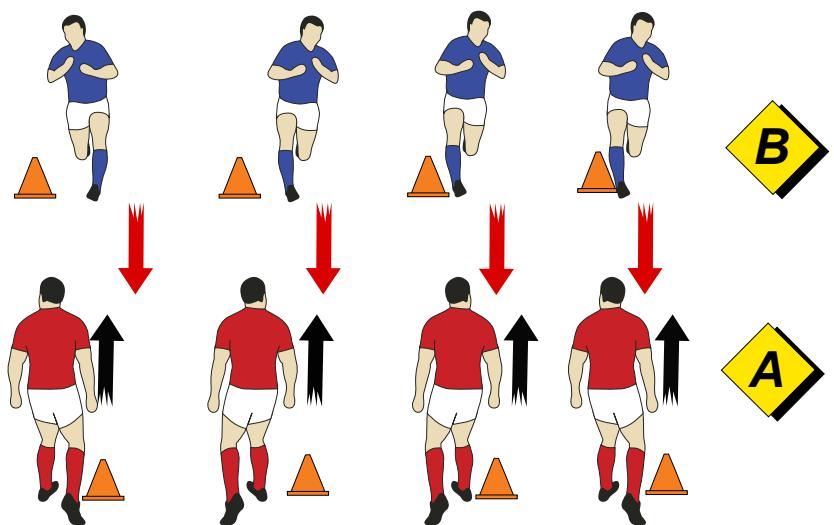
- >> Small and fast steps.
- >> Hands in a catching position - elbows in.
- >> Good tackle stance.
- >> Head to side.
- >> Step close with lead foot.

GO DANCE GO!



VARIATION / PROGRESSION

1. Increase speed of ball-carrier.
2. Widen gap of pairs (should be no more than 2m from cone).
3. As you speed up, work on making shoulder contact and wrapping of the arms. The back must be straight and strong on the hit.
4. Give ball to ball-carrier.
5. Build up to the full tackle.



MIRROR

OBJECTIVE

To get into the correct position to make an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

2 square grids

GROUP SIZE

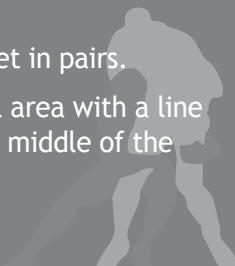
In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

- » Players get in pairs.
- » In a small area with a line down the middle of the pair.



ACTIVITY

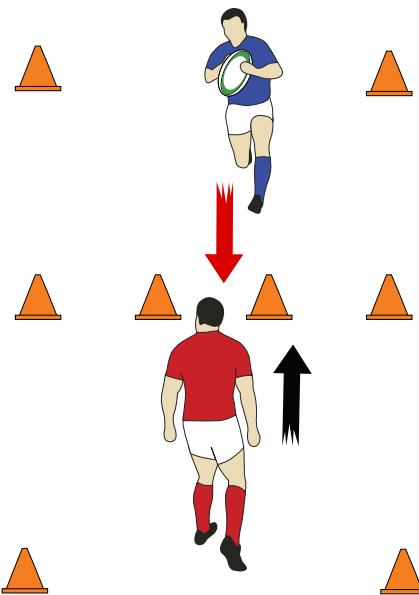
An attacker with the ball moves around their own defined area - the defender must mirror the attacker.

COACHING POINTS

- » Small and fast steps.
- » Hands in tackle position - elbows in.

VARIATION/PROGRESSION

1. Increase speed of ball-carrier.
2. Widen area.





Activities that involve players initially being on their knees.

BEGINNING STAGE

SAFE HEAD

OBJECTIVE

To practise techniques with the side/front-on tackle and falling in the tackle.

EQUIPMENT

3-4 cones

GROUP SIZE

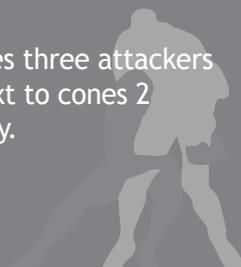
4

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Tackler faces three attackers who are next to cones 2 metres away.



ACTIVITY

On their knees, the tackler makes three tackles: two side-on and one front-on. Upon making the three tackles each player rotates, and the activity continues.

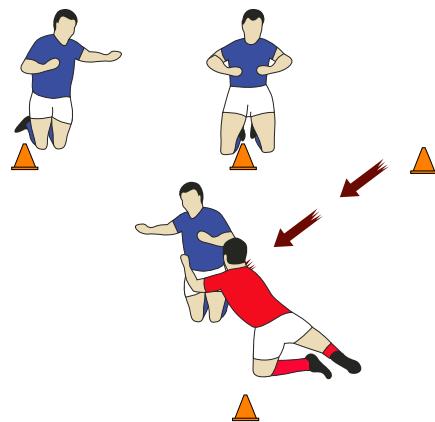
COACHING POINTS

- » Technique with confidence is the key to effective and safe tackling - it must be practised regularly.
- » Watch and correct their technique.
- » At each stage players should practise with both shoulders.
- » Eyes on the hips as the attacker approaches.
Place the head behind the attacker when making the side-on tackle and move the head to the side as the attacker comes straight on. Make firm contact with

the shoulder and thrust the arms forward around the ball carrier and squeeze them tight by holding on to your own wrist.

VARIATION/PROGRESSION

- » Build up with progressions.
- » Both on knees; tackler on knees, attacker standing; both standing.
- » This can be done 1 on 1 with runner going left, right or straight ahead.



POWER MACHINE

OBJECTIVE

To practise techniques with the side-on tackle and falling in the tackle.

.....

EQUIPMENT

3 cones

.....

GROUP SIZE

3 pairs

.....

AREA

Small

.....

SET-UP

Tackler stands facing two attackers. The tackler is facing them 1m away, positioned in the middle. All are on their knees.

ACTIVITY

1. When coach calls GO the tackler must make as many tackles as they can in 10-20 seconds.
2. One on left then on right then back to left and so on.

COACHING POINTS

- >> Technique with confidence is the key to effective and safe tackling - it must be practised with head on side, shoulder first and squeeze.

- >> Watch and correct their technique.
- >> Points taken off if there is bad technique.
- >> The defender has their eyes open and is sighting the target. They drive in with the head to the side and shoulder making a strong contact via a straight back, thrust the arms forward around the attacker and squeeze their arms together by grabbing their own wrist. Bounce up and get ready for the next tackle.



ONE ON THREE

OBJECTIVE

To practise techniques with the side/front -on tackle and falling in the tackle.

EQUIPMENT

5 cones

GROUP SIZE

4

AREA

4m x 2m

SET-UP

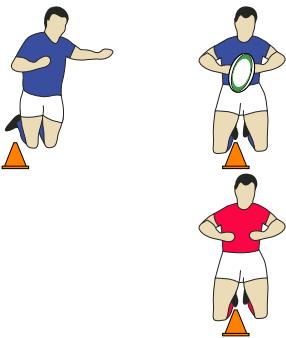
There are three attackers, all on their knees. All positioned in a line about 2m apart. Defender, also on knees, is facing in the same direction as attackers, is 2m in front of attackers in line with middle defender. Middle attacker has a ball.

ACTIVITY

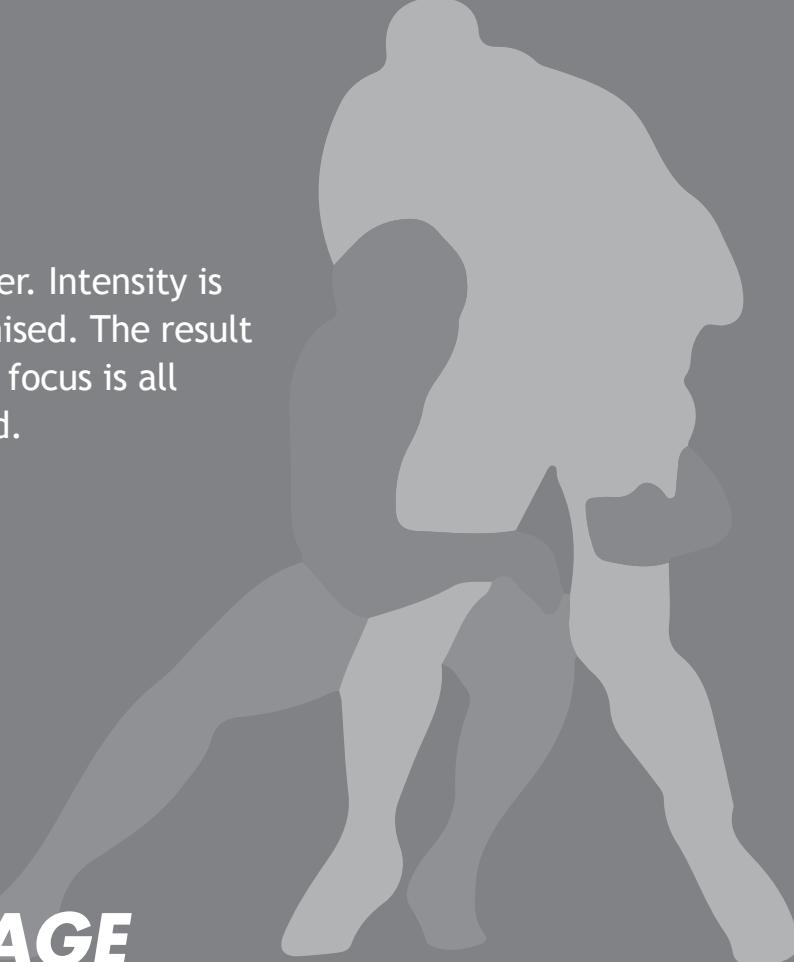
- When coach calls GO the ball is passed either left, right or held. Only one pass can be made.
- Defender turns to face attackers and tackles the attacker who is advancing with the ball and trying to get past the defender.

COACHING POINTS

- Technique with confidence is the key to effective and safe tackling.



- Watch and correct their technique.
- Eyes are up, and the defender sights the hip area of the player to be tackled.
- The defender moves forward or sideways maintaining their view of the tackle region.
- They move their head behind the attacker for a side-on tackle and to the side of the attacker if the attacker is heading straight at the defender.
- As the head moves the defender moves forward off their knees to firmly plant the shoulder and thrust the arms through and around the attacker.
- Drive the knees upwards and squeeze the arms together forcing the attacker backwards or sideways.



This is where it all comes together. Intensity is raised but safety is not compromised. The result is a live tackle situation, but the focus is all about the positioning of the head.

ADVANCED STAGE

CONE ATTACK

OBJECTIVE

To complete an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

6 cones

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

4m x 2m

SET-UP

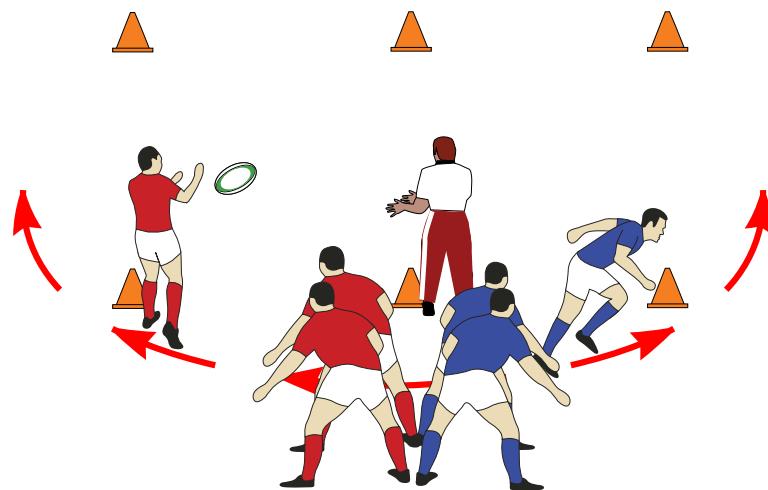
Have 3 cones spaced at 2m intervals.

ACTIVITY

Lined up behind the middle cone are paired players. The coach calls GO and passes the ball to an attacker. Both players then run around the outside cone on their side and then toward each other where an effective tackle is made.

COACHING POINTS

- » Take up space.
- » Sight the target - eyes on the hips.
- » Keep eyes open and on the target.
- » Get in to a crouch with a straight back, elbows in and begin using small fast steps as you approach the attacker.



CONE ATTACK



- >> Move your head to the side of the attacker or behind if coming in from the side.
- >> As the head moves to the side take a large step in close to the attacker and plant your shoulder firmly on the target area.
- >> Thrust the arms around the attacker and squeeze them together by locking your wrist and your hand together.

VARIATION/PROGRESSION

1. Make the area smaller
2. All players run out and tackle their partner.



TURN & TACKLE

OBJECTIVE

To complete an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

Ball

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

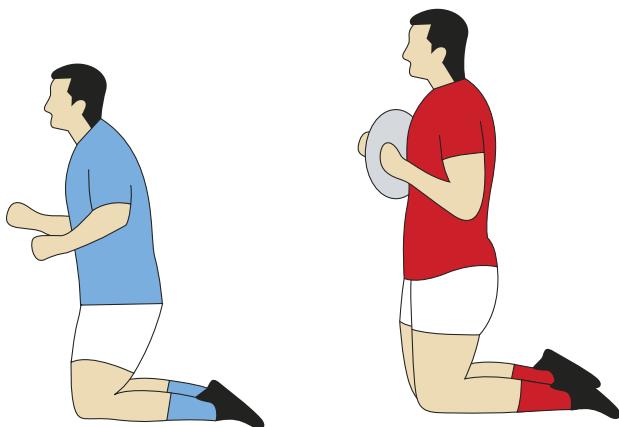


ACTIVITY

Either on knees or standing, tackler faces same direction as attacker. When tackler turns to face ball-carrier, who runs or walks to the left, right or straight ahead, the tackler completes tackle.

COACHING POINTS

- » Move your head to the side of the attacker or behind if coming in from the side.



TACKLE PASS

OBJECTIVE

To complete an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

Ball

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

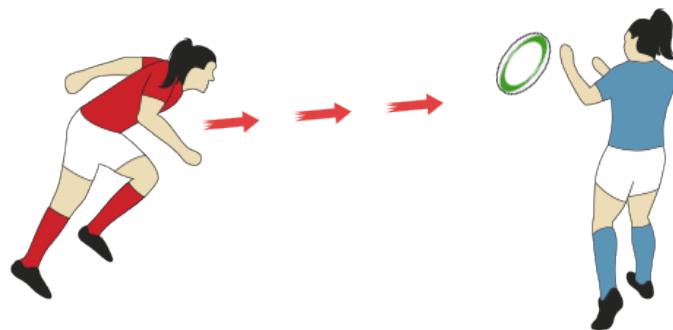
Pair up (best if players are similar size) facing each other about 2-3m apart.

ACTIVITY

1. Player holding ball passes it to partner. Player with ball then becomes the ball-carrier and runs or walks to one side of partner, who becomes the tackler.
2. Tackler completes tackle.

COACHING POINTS

- » Move your head to the side of the attacker or behind if coming in from the side.



TACKLE LINE

OBJECTIVE

To complete an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

4 cones and ball

GROUP SIZE

In pairs

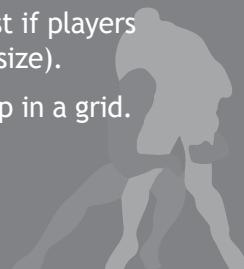
AREA

2m x 2m grid

SET-UP

Pair up (best if players are similar size).

Cones set up in a grid.

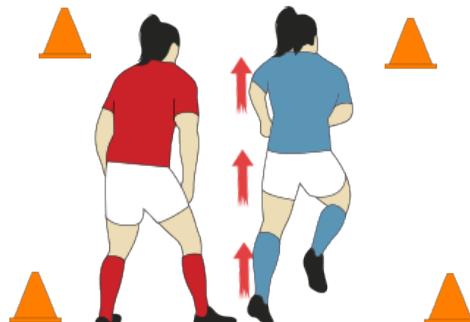


ACTIVITY

Player holding ball runs to line and heads back. As they turn, tackler moves forward and completes the tackle.

COACHING POINTS

- >> Move and adjust feet to meet ball-carrier.
- >> Move your head to the side of the attacker or behind if coming in from the side.





EXTRA ACTIVITIES

PASS AND TACKLE

OBJECTIVE

To complete an effective tackle.

EQUIPMENT

4 cones

GROUP SIZE

5

AREA

4m x 4m

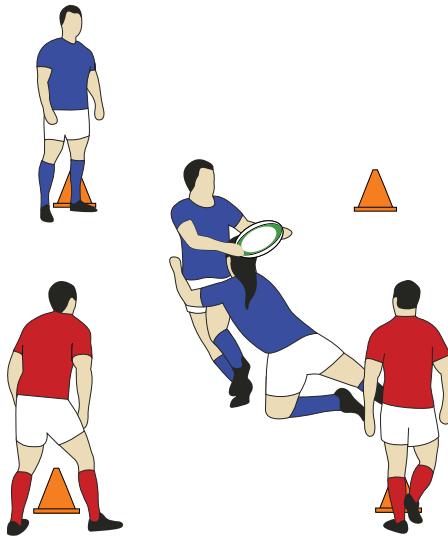
SET-UP

Place cones in a grid.



ACTIVITY

Have one player on each cone, they are the attackers. The player in the middle is the tackler who starts in possession of the ball. The tackler passes to one of the attackers and they run to left or right of tackler who completes tackle, regains ball and passes to another attacker.



COACHING POINTS

- » “GO” -Take up space, sight target, eyes up.
- » “DANCE”- crouch, feet alive, elbows in.
- » “GO”- position the head to the side, big step in close to the attacker, shoulder on, drive and stick, thrust & squeeze.

VARIATION/PROGRESSION

1. Make area smaller or bigger
2. Can be done on knees with younger players.

LOOKING AND THINKING

OBJECTIVE

Tackling the correct person.

EQUIPMENT

3 cones, 2 hit-shield (black and white)

GROUP SIZE

3

AREA

Make a triangle with cones
2m apart

SET-UP

In 3s, 2 players hold a hit shield - one white and one black.

ACTIVITY

In threes, two players hold a hit shield (one white hit shield and one black hit shield). One attacker calls GO and the attackers holding the hit shields move forward. They then call a colour and the defender tackles that coloured shield.



COACHING POINTS

- » Keep feet alive
- » Being in balance so that they can drive off either leg (crouch, small fast steps, elbows in and ready to thrust and eyes focused on the correct side.)
- » Shoulder on, head in tight and arms thrusting through.
- » Head on correct side.

VARIATION/PROGRESSION

1. Make area smaller or bigger.
2. Have another row of hit-shields.

FALLING IN TACKLE

OBJECTIVE

To fall safely in the tackle.

EQUIPMENT

Cones

GROUP SIZE

In Pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Pair-up (best if players are similar size).



ACTIVITY

One player in each pair holds the ball in two hands and gets tackled by the other player.

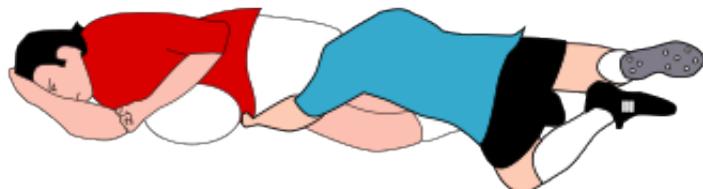
COACHING POINTS

- » Player positions the ball away from the point of contact and turn toward support during contact.
- » Tuck shoulder under and roll on to upper back.
- » Position body between the ball and opposition.

- » Quickly reach out and place the ball at arm's length away from the opposition.

VARIATION/PROGRESSION

Older players can keep driving forward in the contact and hit the ground with the ball controlled underneath their chest. They must then quickly recoil at the hips and reach back as far as possible and place the ball as far away from the opposition as possible.



TACKLE CLINIC HEAD MOVEMENT DRILLS

OBJECTIVE

To adjust quickly to get head in correct position.

EQUIPMENT

Noodle, ball and string

GROUP SIZE

In Pairs

AREA

Small

SET-UP

Par-up.



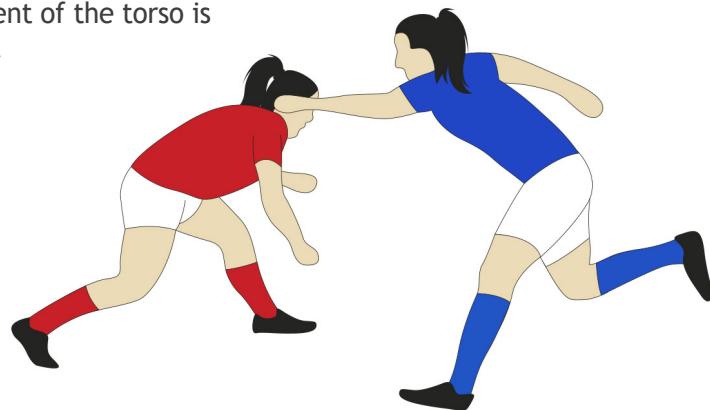
KEY FACTORS

- » Sight your target throughout
- » Keep balance in tackle stance
- » Don't get distracted by legs, eyes or legs
- » Adjust your upper torso - Don't adjust (move) your head
- » Bend knees - then move.
- » Very small step adjustments.
- » U or triangle shaped movement of the torso is needed.

ACTIVITY

Shoulder Tag

1. In pairs get within arm's length of each other.
2. One player tries to touch other players shoulder using left or right hands.
3. Avoid by moving torso left and right or leg back to drop.



TACKLE CLINIC

HEAD MOVEMENT

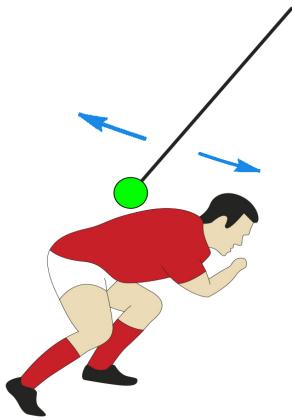
DRILLS



ACTIVITY

Swinger

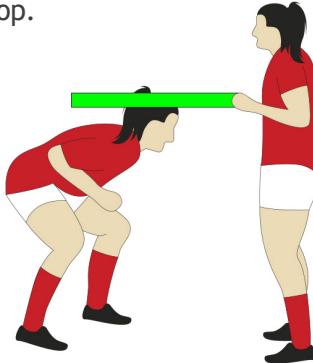
1. From a roof, cross bar or basketball hoop, hang string and tennis ball.
2. Stand with your nose on the ball. Swing the ball forward and away from you.
3. As the ball moves toward you, slip head to either side.



ACTIVITY

Bob and Weave Noodle

1. This is a very simple drill in which one partner will hold a pool noodle in front of them and the person performing the drill will bob and weave under the pool noodle.
2. Start by just standing still - then bob and weave forward as the noodle holder moves backwards. You can also use a piece of rope or string.
3. Start at chin level then drop.



TACKLE CLINIC

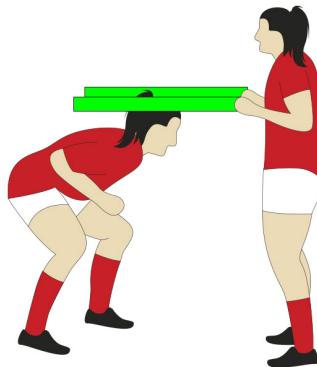
HEAD MOVEMENT DRILLS



ACTIVITY

Bob and Weave Noodle 2

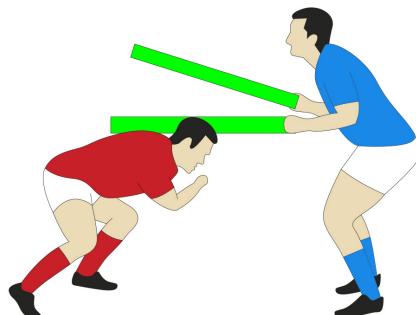
1. This is a very simple drill in which one partner will hold 2 pool noodles in front of them and the person performing the drill will bob and weave under each pool noodle. Left, middle, right, etc.
2. Start by just standing still - then bob and weave forward as the noodle holder moves backwards.



ACTIVITY

Action Noodle

1. Advanced drill for those with great technique.
2. With 2 pool noodles - partner can tap you on shoulder (left or right) and you move to avoid. To advance you can also swipe noodles in a lateral motion, so you need to bob down by moving back leg.



INCLUDE YOUR OWN ACTIVITIES



