

# SMALL BLACKS U7 INDIVIDUAL SKILLS



## INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

NZ Rugby recommend the following individual skills. Each set of skills are the focus for the below age groups and should be the focus for the coach. But it is unrealistic to presume that the team you are in charge of has all these skills therefore a coach should always work on promoting and developing all the skills. Please note: It is important to understand that many of these skills are progressive and repetitive therefore all levels should include the basics of running, handling and evasion skills.

## U7 SKILLS

### RUNNING WITH THE BALL

**Objective:** To run effectively with the ball in two hands.

#### Key Factors

- Fingers spread on each side of the ball.
- Carry ball about chest height.
- Elbows pointed in.
- Consider options.

#### Coaching Points

- Hold ball in two hands - fingers down the seam.
- Use to:
  - ▶ Evade players with ball in two hands.
  - ▶ Draw a defender.
  - ▶ Go through a gap.

#### Common Errors

- Tucking ball when running or evading.
- Ball carried too high or too low.
- Unable to get leg speed with hands on ball.



## BASIC PASS

**Objective:** To maintain continuity of play by passing to a teammate in a better position.

### Key Factors

- Run straight.
- Hold the ball in two hands.
- Run at defender.
- Look at receiver.
- Swing arms.
- Follow through.
- Pass at chest height in front of receiver.
- Complete pass, support.



### Coaching Points

- By running straight down the field or towards the closest defender the passer draws a defender or defenders. The passer commits a defender preventing them from assisting in defence elsewhere.
- Hold ball in two hands.
- Standard pass - fingers down the seam.
- Look at receiver to assist accuracy of pass.
- Turning inside shoulder, thigh and hip to the defender reduces the risk of injury.
- A straight follow-through to the target by the passing hand reduces error. The elbows and wrists can be used to fine-tune the pass's speed and flight.
- The standard pass is the preferred option in most instances because it is quicker and easier to catch and pass.
- Players should be equally proficient passing off either hand.
- By following through, the passer is able to guide the ball to the target area. This is at about chest height just in front of the receiver. The receiver is therefore able to catch the ball without reducing running speed. In addition, the catcher is able to catch the ball without looking down. This will enable the ball to be caught while observing opponents.
- Once the pass has been made, the passer should support the receiver.
- A pass is only as good as the ease with which it can be caught.

### Common Errors

- Running with the pass.
- Not having a straight follow-through.
- Not passing to target area.
- Trying to spiral pass.

## RECEIVING PASS

**Objective:** To catch the ball so that the attack can be continued.

### Key Factors

- Chin up, eyes open.
- Move onto ball straight.
- Extend hands towards ball. Fingers spread.
- Watch ball into hands.
- Choose best option.



### Coaching Points

- By positioning with depth the receiver can move forward onto the ball, the receiver will be able to maintain running speed and retain vision of opponents.
- The passer can move left or right, creating space on the other side for the receiver to run into.
- By extending the hands (fingers spread) in the direction the pass is coming from, the receiver provides the passer with a target. In addition the ball can be caught earlier, giving the receiver more time to decide on what to do next.
- By catching the ball with soft hands the receiver is able to make an immediate pass.
- The options that can be chosen are to pass, take the ball into the 'tackle', and run, depending on the situation. This may depend on the position on the field, but generally will depend on the positioning of opposing players.

### Common Errors

- Not presenting target.
- Not meeting ball early.
- Hands too rigid.
- Taking your eyes off the ball.

## BALL FAMILIARISATION

**Objective:** To become familiar with the rugby ball shape, size and flight.

### Key Factors

- Run with the ball in two hands.
- Pick up the ball and put it down with two hands.
- Throw it into the air and catch it.
- Move the ball around your body.



## Coaching Points

- Come up with as many different ways of using the ball. They don't have to be conventional.
- Bring instruction into this series of skills. i.e. getting correct technique for catching ball in the air.

## TAP KICK AND PASS

**Objective:** To restart the game so the game can continue.

### Key Factors

- Place ball on ground.
- Move ball slightly forward using the side of your foot.
- Pick up the ball with two hands.
- Make an accurate pass.



### Coaching Points

- Ensure the ball lies on the ground.
- Ensure player crouches over the ball to pick the ball up with two hands.

### Common Errors

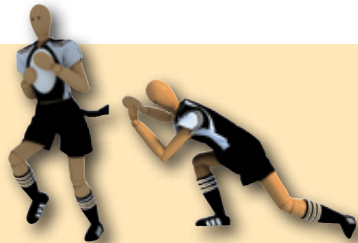
- Holding the ball and bring foot up to tap.
- Not keeping eyes on ball.

## NON-CONTACT TACKLE (RIP)

**Objective:** To Rip the flag (Rippa) to constitute a 'tackle'.

### Key Factors

- Eyes on opponents hips
- Body position – legs bent; back straight; head up.
- Arms above hips.
- Reach for flag.



### Coaching Points

- It is important that the 'tackler' gets into a position to make the tackle. Too often the player stands and waits for the attacker.
- Defense should move forward to close the space.
- Keep eyes on target area.

### Common Errors

- Only one hand used.
- Player standing too upright.
- Player must be in a pre-tackle stance.

## SWERVE

**Objective:** To evade opponents while running, without becoming isolated.

### Key Factors

- Ball in two hands.
- Run toward defender
- Change pace and/or direction of movement.
- Position ball away from defender.
- Accelerate into the space.



### Coaching Points - Swerve

- Run towards the defender.
- Change direction by veering away into the outside space.
- Accelerate to take advantage of the defender's hesitation:
  - ▶ By running towards the defenders they are forced to slow down to make a 'tackle'. The player changes direction close enough to commit yet avoid the defender.
  - ▶ To prevent the defender from recovering, it is important to accelerate away as fast as possible.
  - ▶ All players should be encouraged to use natural flair and ability.

### Common Errors

- Not running at the defender.
- Changing direction too early or too late.
- Not accelerating forward immediately after the sideways movement.