

EDUCATION COMPETITIONS



TACKLE TECHNIQUE



INTRODUCTION & CONTENTS



In this document you will find key information relating to dangerous tackles such as hip-drop tackles and shoulder charges, plus skills, drills and activities designed to develop low tackle technique.

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2. Safe Play Code
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TACKLE TECHNIQUE

TACKLE HEIGHT & HEAD CONTACT FRAMEWORK

1. TACKLE HEIGHT FRAMEWORK LAWS

1.1 When affecting or attempting to affect a tackle, the defending player must make contact below the line of the ball carriers' armpit at initial contact and make zero contact on the neck or head of the ball carrier at any point.

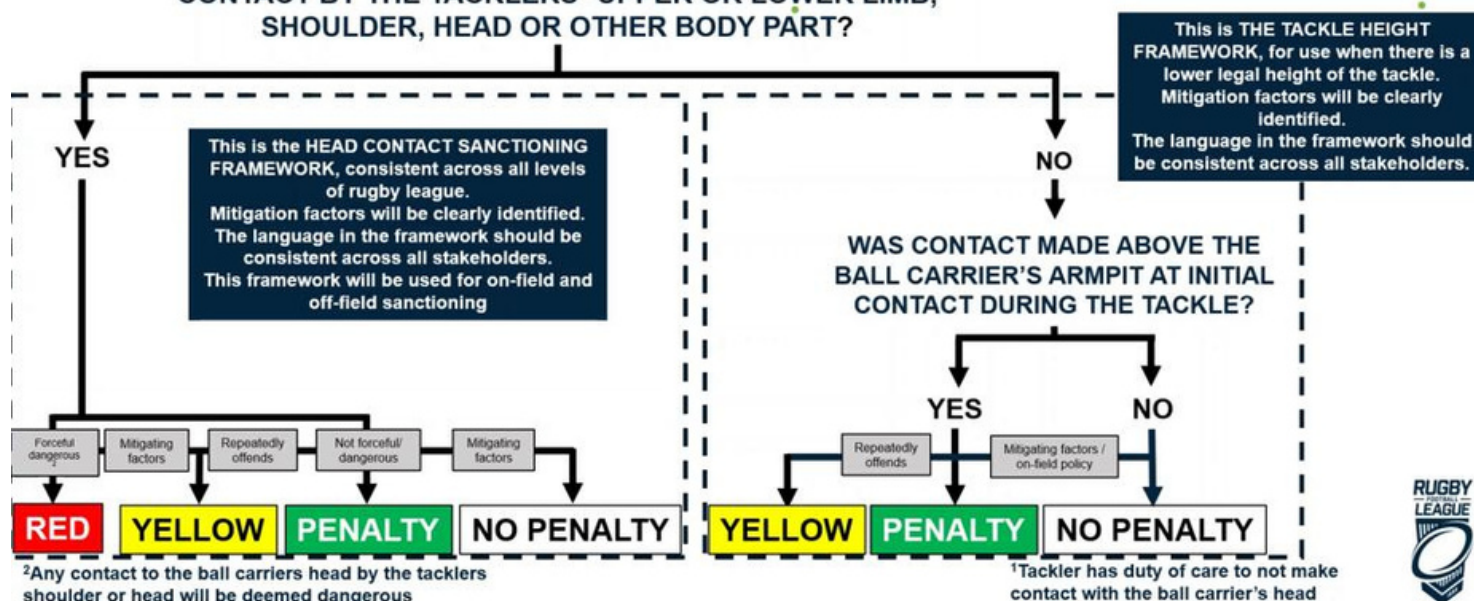
2. ON-FIELD POLICY

2.1 The following policy will apply in the case of 1.1 above
The referee may apply discretion when:

Ball carrier surrenders immediately into the tackle	Retrieving the ball from the in-goal area in an attempt to get back into the field of play To avoid being tackled into touch Surrender tackle when in close proximity to potential obstruction Diving on a loose ball and not regaining feet
Attempting to score a try	Dummy half attempts to score from 'close range.' Within close proximity of try line when the ball carrier is attempting to score a try and loses height.

TACKLE HEIGHT & HEAD CONTACT SANCTIONING FRAMEWORK

WAS CONTACT MADE WITH THE BALL CARRIER'S HEAD/NECK ON CONTACT BY THE TACKLERS¹ UPPER OR LOWER LIMB, SHOULDER, HEAD OR OTHER BODY PART?



SAFE PLAY CODE



The Safe Play Code promotes safety and good conduct. It provides the best possible on-field environment, particularly in actively controlling undesirable actions and behaviours.

Section 1 - The Tackle Zone

Tackles above the armpits

When a ball carrier is advancing in an upright position, the defender must make initial contact below armpit level. If the attacker loses height, the defender needs to change their position to avoid high contact.

Section 2 - Dangerous Tackles

Tripping

It is an infringement if the tackler uses their legs to intentionally trip another player.

Dangerous throw

If in any tackle or contact a player is lifted so that they are placed in a position where it is likely that the first part of their body to make contact with the ground will be their head or neck, then that tackle or contact will be deemed to be a dangerous throw.

Shoulder charge

Defenders are not allowed to shoulder charge the ball carrier in order to effect a tackle. Any instance where a defender runs at a ball carrier and makes no attempt to tackle, grab or hold the ball-carrier by wrapping their arms or hands, and makes direct physical contact with their shoulder or the upper arm (with their own arm tucked into the side) will be deemed to be a shoulder charge.

Hip drop

A hip-drop tackle is where a defending player in joining or committing a tackle, drops or uses their own body weight to apply pressure to an opponent's legs in such a way as to constitute an unacceptable risk of injury to the tackled player, this will constitute Dangerous Contact.

For video explaining hip drop tackles - [click here](#)

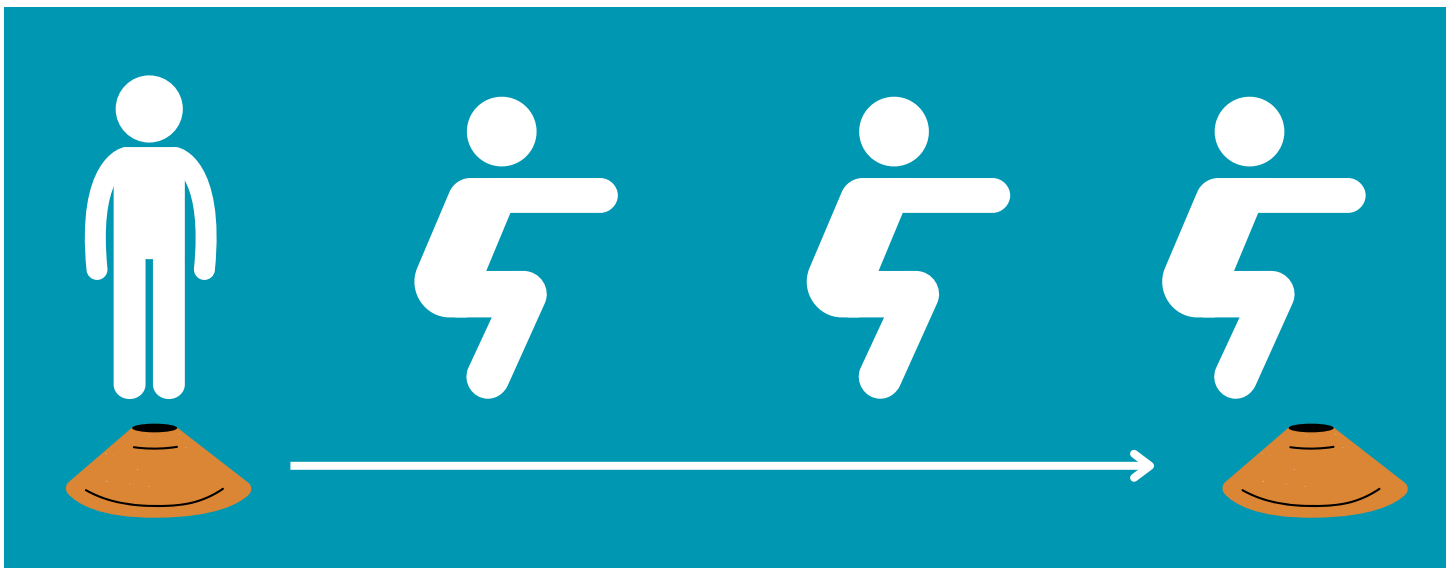
Section 3 - Verbal abuse and foul language

Unacceptable language

The use of obscene, threatening, racist, denigrating and abusive language is not permitted. There is a zero tolerance approach to unacceptable language and behaviour based on individual's gender identity, race, age, disability, faith or sexual orientation. Any form of verbal abuse, threatening language or sledging will be referred as a serious disciplinary matter.

TACKLE TECHNIQUE: WARM-UPS

These mobility exercises with a competitive progression are good warm up exercises in preparation for teaching players good body position when introducing activities focused on the new restrictions to tackle height.



Squats

Working between 2 cones, walk out 3-4 steps and squat.

- Bend at the knees
- Keep chest upright and back straight
- Reinforce that participants must hinge at the knees

Continue until they reach the end point and repeat 3 or 4 times.

Progression: Each time that the participant squats they walk out and squat face the left hand side get up and continue towards the goal and squat to the right hand side. Continue this to the end point.

TACKLE TECHNIQUE: WARM-UPS

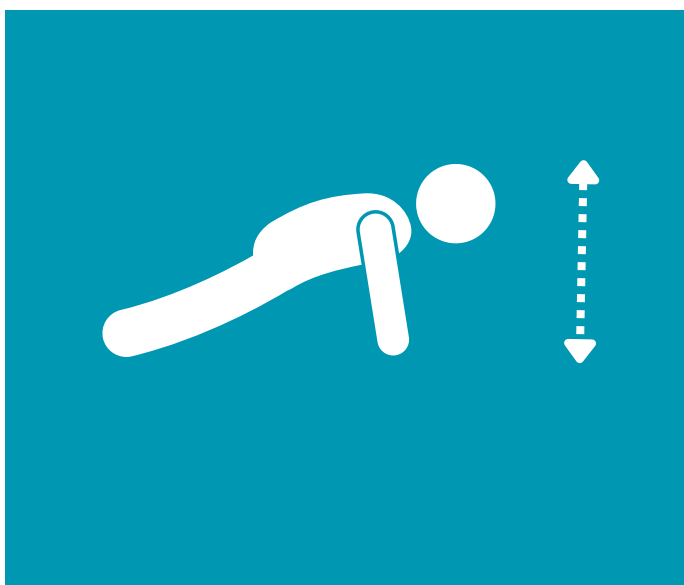


Bear Crawls

Working between 2 cones, participants start with weight on their hands and feet.

- Move to the end point by alternating movement of hands and feet to move the body forward
- Continue until they reach the end point and repeat 3 or 4 times

Progression: Bear crawl left/right from the start point to the end. Do not cross arms or legs when moving towards the end point.



Press-ups

Participants start on their hands and toes, arms and body should be straight.

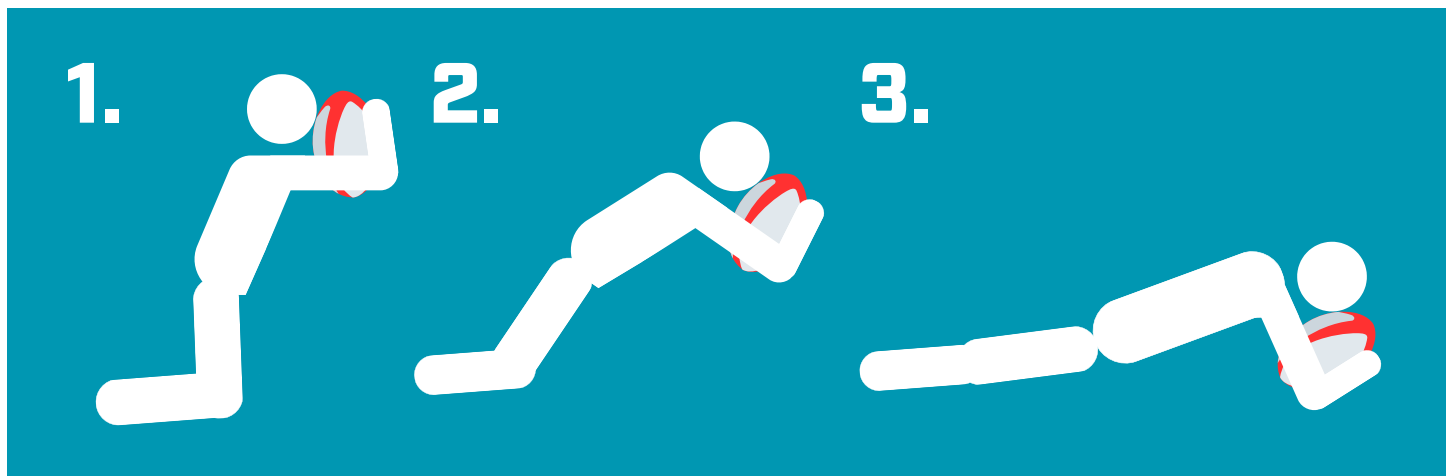
- Lower body using the elbows as the hinge down
- Just before chest touches the floor straighten arms return to the start position

TACKLE TECHNIQUE: PROTECTIVE FALLING

Learning how to fall correctly may seem like an odd idea, but it has many benefits for transferable skills into everyday life. If you ever slip/trip/fall landing safely can reduce the risk of injury, but in Rugby League it becomes even more important due to the amount of times you will end up on the floor.

REMEMBER! Always land on your bumpers (forearms, knees and glutes).

FROM KNEES



FROM KNEES BENT (LAND ON KNEES & FOREARMS)



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: PROTECTIVE FALLING



Try these more advanced progressions on a soft floor first to develop the skill (use gym mats or crash mats inside, outside practice on grass).

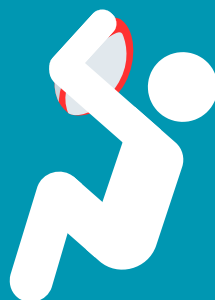
REMEMBER! Always land on your bumpers (forearms, knees and glutes).

ONTO BACK (LAND ON GLUTES AND ALLOW MOMENTUM TO ROLL YOU BACKWARDS)

1.



2.



3.



ONTO SIDE (HINGE AT THE KNEES AND LAND ON ONE SIDE OF GLUTES)

1.



2.



3.



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SKILL DEVELOPMENT



This section will teach you about the basic tackles that you can use in the game of Rugby League. There are many ways of teaching tackle technique, but the most important factor to consider is that players feel comfortable and confident to take this step in their learning. Examples of good practice for teaching the new tackle height rules are being created all the time. We welcome submissions of new ideas and recommend sharing this resource with the Rugby League community.

Thank you to Salford Red Devils RLFC and Salford Red Devils Foundation for allowing us to share the work they have done on this area. You will see examples from them in the video clips and accompanying explanations below.

KIT & EQUIPMENT



VIDEO



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: PASSIVE TACKLE

The defender should be facing the ball carrier.

The defender starts on one knee (the knee that isn't on the ground should be the same as the shoulder used to tackle).

Initial contact should be made with the defender's shoulder, followed by wrapping their arms around the body anywhere in the target area (under the armpit and above the knee). Do not interlock hands and grab hold of levers on the ball carrier.

Tackler's head goes to the side of the ball carrier's body, and remains in close contact with the ball carrier's body as they are taken to the ground.



Progressions: Ball carrier tackled from;

1. Standing
2. 1-step approach
3. Walk approach



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SIDE TACKLE

The defender should be side-on to the ball carrier.

The defender approaches the ball carrier and 'loses their height' (bending at the knees into a split stance lunge position).

Initial contact should be made with the defender's shoulder, followed by wrapping their arms around the body anywhere in the target area. Do not interlock hands, and grab hold of levers on the ball carrier.

Tackler's head goes behind the ball carrier's body, and remains in close contact with the body as they are taken to the ground.



Progressions: Ball carrier tackled from;

1. Standing
2. 1-step approach
3. Walk approach



TACKLE TECHNIQUE

FRONT DOMINANT TACKLE

The defender should facing the ball carrier.

The defender approaches the ball carrier and 'loses their height' (bending at the knees into a split stance lunge position).

Head faces forward to spot the target area.

Initial contact should be made with the defender's shoulder, followed by wrapping their arms around the body anywhere in the target area. Do not interlock hands and grab hold of levers on the ball carrier.

Defender should drive with the legs, keeping their feet planted in the ground. Tackler's head goes to the side of the ball carrier's body, and remains in close contact with the ball carrier's body as they are taken to the ground.

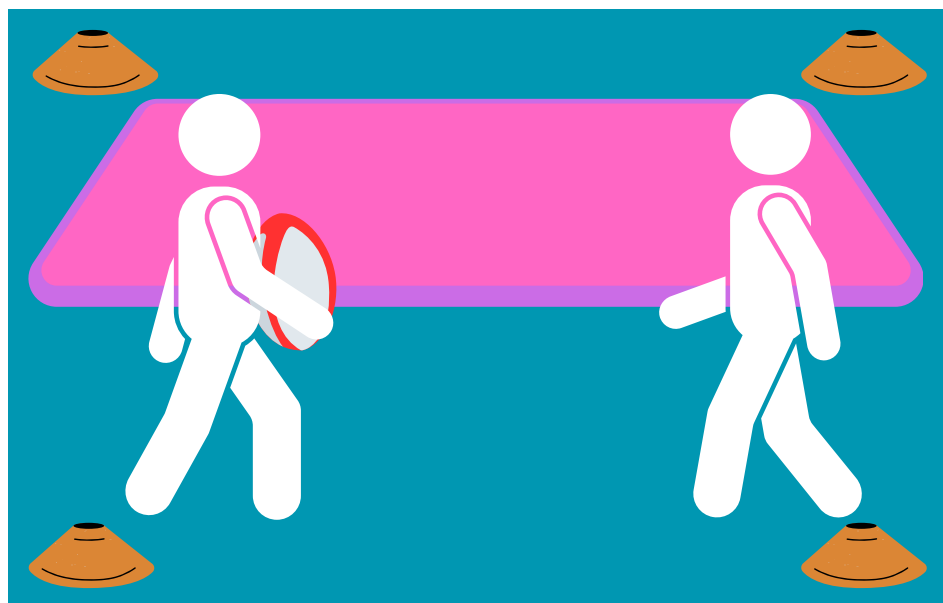


Progressions: Ball carrier tackled from;

1. Standing
2. 1-step approach
3. Walk approach



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: TACKLE PRACTICE



Practice 1 v 1
3m x 5m square
Crash mat (indoors)
Soft ground (outdoors)
Rugby Ball

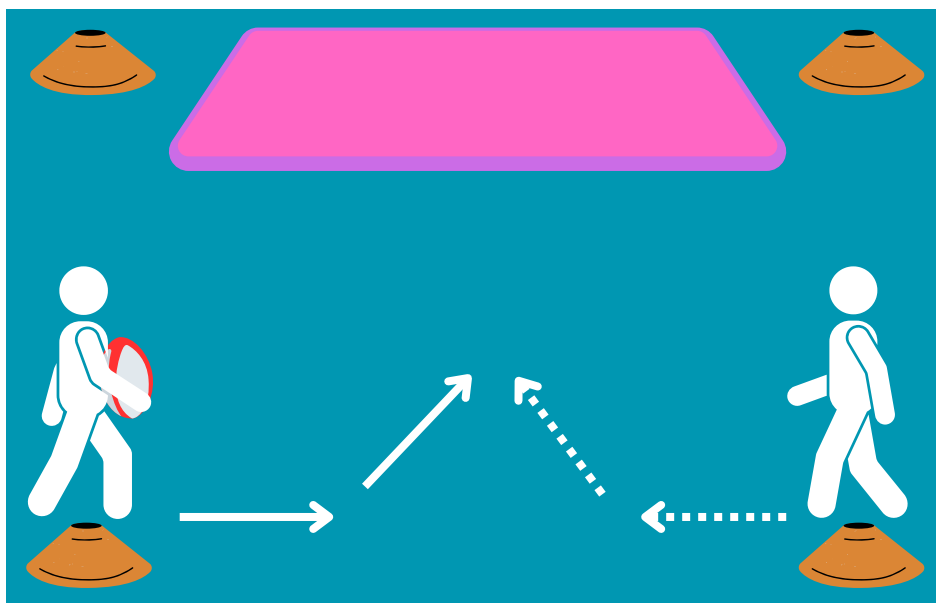
- 1. Standing
- 2. 1-step approach
- 3. Walk approach

Arced approach

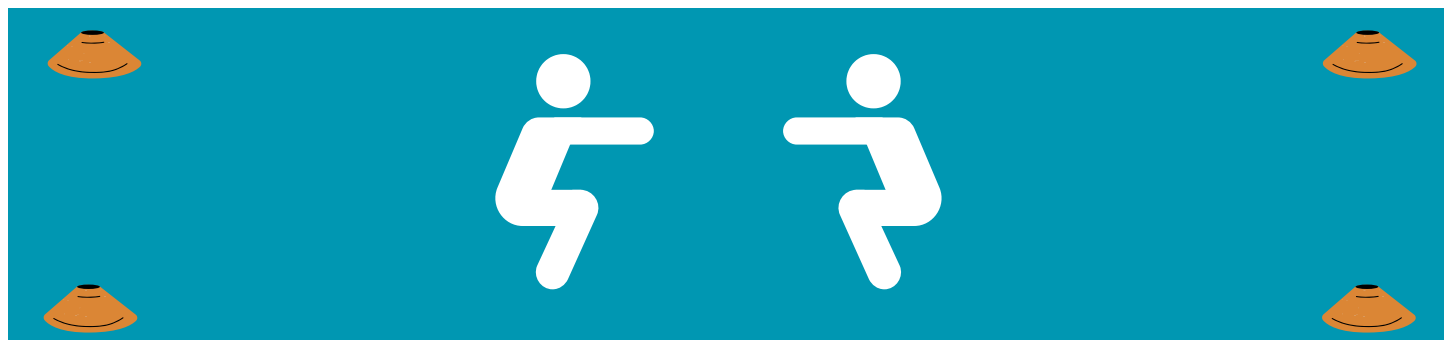
Ball Carrier actions:

- 1. Arc left
- 2. Arc Right
- 3. Aim straight

- 1. Standing
- 2. 1-step approach
- 3. Walk approach



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SKILL ACTIVITY

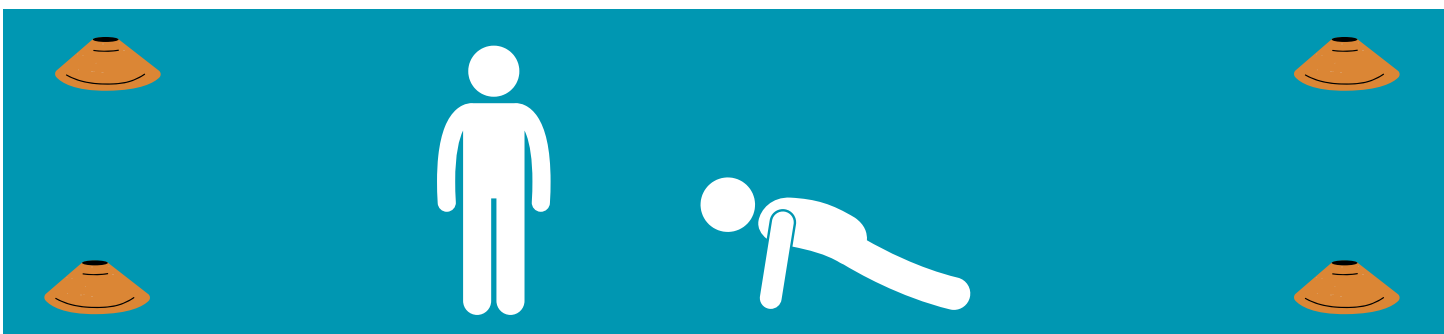


Knee Tag

Split into pairs or a group of three (depending on numbers). The aim of this activity is to use your hands to tap your opponent's knee; inside or outside. The participant making the most 'taps' wins. Participants should keep their own score.

Use the squat and lunge movement to move around the area.

Participants should hinge at the knees and not at the hips, so they don't expose their back to their opponent. If a player makes a tap on their opponent's back because they are bent over and hinging at the hips, they automatically win the round (*reaching around the opponent's body to tap the back is not allowed).



Heel Touch

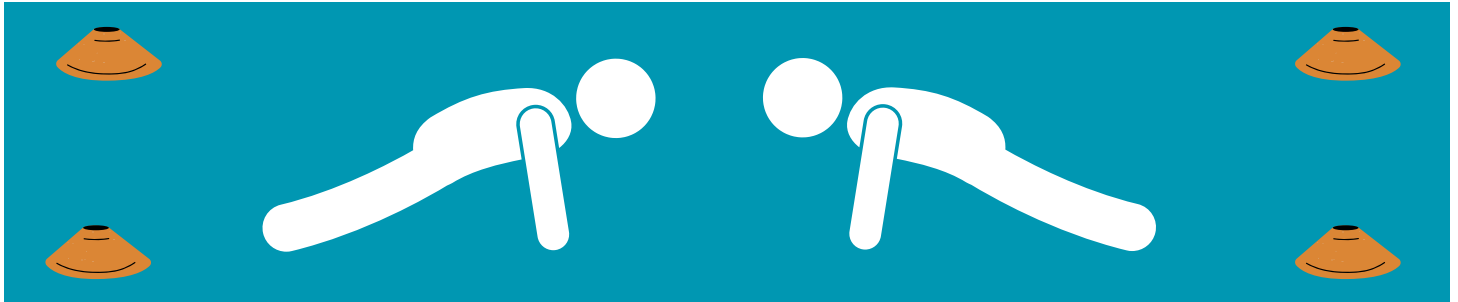
The aim of this activity is to use your hands to tap the ankles of your opponent who is in the press up position.

The 'tapper' should remain stood up, aiming to be light on their toes and reaching to the opponent's ankles and tap them.

The opposition remains in the press-up position, using their hands as 'claws' and using their feet to drive their mobility (on appropriate terrain e.g grass/4G, encourage use of studs to gain traction in the ground).



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SKILL ACTIVITY



Press-up Taps

The aim of this activity is to tap their opponents elbows without losing their balance. Participants start in the press-up position facing each other. A point is awarded each time they successfully make contact with their opponent's elbow. Participants should count their own scores.

Press-up Arm Pull

To progress the activity above, participants remain in the press-up position but now attempt to get their opponent onto the floor by pulling away the arms of their opponent. Please see protective falling to ensure that participants are landing on their 'bumpers' to remove risk of injury.

Press-up Shoulder Wrestle

The aim of this activity is to overpower your opponent and force them backwards or off balance. Participants start in the press-up position facing each other. Participants should press tackling shoulders together and engage in a contest only using their shoulders.

Short steps and leg drive are key in this activity.



TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SKILL ACTIVITY



Arrowhead



For this activity you need a tackle bag. Lay on the middle of the bag like a tackle has been made. Place your head to one side and make three leg drives. Switch the side your head is on and repeat the leg drives.

Progression: Add in a 360 roll, find your feet (studs) and drive the legs again.

Win the Corner



Cone out a square area (appropriate size for your players). The aim of the activity is for the attacker to reach the opposite corner of the square by forcing the defender backwards, using only forward leg drive. The defender stands square at the hips to the defender with one shoulder in their opponent's sternum and the other underneath the arm pit, and attempts to resist the push. Progression: The defender will naturally wrap their arms to control the attackers movement; to prevent this add a constraint that they are not able to use their arms and hands in any kind of wrap. Remember the short steps driving the legs on both the attack and defence.

Dip & Drive



The defender and attacker will interlock their shoulders, one above and one below. Both begin the activity pushing against each other just to hold position. On the coaches word the nominated defender will dip below the armpit and drive the attacker backward using a leg drive and hooking a lever. Swap the shoulders and alternate the roles.

TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SKILL ACTIVITY



Drive Back



For this activity we are progressing the Dip and Drive by adding a rugby ball in to make the activity more realistic to a game.

The defender will start wrapped under the armpit and the attacker starts with a static leg drive. On the coaches word, the defender will dip and drive the attacker backwards, hooking a lever. Coaches to 'safety net' the back of defender to make sure they don't go to ground.

Progression: Both players take a couple of steps back so they are just off contact, allowing the defender to practice their footwork and approach position. Defender takes short steps and leads with the shoulder and the same leg. Practice tackling on both sides.

Laser Focus



Work in a group of three. The tackler will be in the middle of square aiming to tap the attackers knees / thighs using the correct footwork and shoulder. The two others in the group will take it in turns to move across the square both in a straight line; one vertically and one horizontally. The defender works on alternate attackers, using short steps, bending at the knee and leading with the shoulder to make contact with the attacker.

Tackle Gates



The aim of this activity is to start introducing contact at a higher velocity. Set out a line with different coloured cones half way across a grid. Attackers and defenders start on opposite sides of the grid. The coach calls out a coloured cone and the attacker will run out in the direction of the cone. Once the attacker has moved the defender will follow the run and approach to make a tackle, aiming to meet them over the advantage line (coned line).

TACKLE TECHNIQUE: SKILL ACTIVITY



Tackle Gates with Traffic



Progressing the Tackle Gates activity; Add some barriers (e.g. tackle / shields) in the spaces between the cones. Repeat the same drill as above, but this time with the defender having to navigate the additional 'traffic' distracting them in between them and the attacker, ensuring they still choose the correct knee and shoulder to tackle with on contact.

Bag Hit & Catch



For this activity you will need a tackle shield. The aim is for the defender to always hit the bag below a specific target area (sometimes they have a logo or branding in the middle on the shield, or it can be marked with tape). Player A will hold the shield and move it in different directions to test the focus of the defender, then throw the shield towards the defender. The defender should hit the shield with the shoulder in the correct target area. This exercise is good to represent the different heights of players, unpredictable movements players make prior to contact and encouraging hitting underneath the ball. Make sure of a strong leg drive post contact.

Progression: Tackler starts the drill touching the bag; take 3 steps back then the bag is thrown and the tackler meets the bag with the shoulder.

Full Shield Tackle



For this activity you will need a tackle shield. The aim is to practice a tackle at near full speed, while maintaining the correct body position and knee / shoulder / head co-ordination. This is a 1 vs 1 with the attacker holding a tackle shield. Starting positions should be 10 meters apart. On approach, the tackler should make shorter steps just prior to contact, and post-contact offer a strong leg drive. Swap the tackling shoulders.