

# COACHING CARDS

Make Contact

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**PRACTICAL**



England  
Rugby

# OVERVIEW

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These coaching cards have been produced to support keeping 16 to 24 year olds in the game of rugby union while maintaining the physical challenge many are looking for

## They are based upon four main principles

- 1** **Playing with friends is the main reason for continuing to be involved in rugby**
- 2** **Fun and playing games are a major reason for playing rugby**
- 3** **Modified contact games and skills that will support new, developing and returning players**
- 4** **Not everyone will want to progress to the full 15-a-side contact game**

The cards are structured to enable contact rugby to be delivered in easy stages and have been based on weekly training sessions Not everyone will progress as quickly as we would like and you may stay on a plan for more than one week

# SESSION ONE

## (STAGE ONE)

### Introduction

#### The basics:

- development of key rugby skills: handling, catching and passing
- spatial awareness
- teamwork
- develop confidence in contact
- encourage skilful play through games

#### Objectives of the session are:

- demonstrate principles of warm up and cool down
- introduce passing of the ball
- demonstrate principles of attack and defence
- introduce the concept of passing backwards
- adapt and develop basic skills

### Stage one: introduce the grab tackle

- The ball should be passed sideways or backwards
- Tackling is allowed as a grasp on the shirt below the arm-pit for approximately three seconds
- The tackled player must be allowed to pass
- The referee will call “tackle”
- Seven tackles result in a turn over
- In the tackle, the ball is the off-side line opposition players cannot advance beyond that line
- A try is scored when the ball carrier has placed the ball over the line Restart from the centre with a free pass
- No fend or hand offers are allowed
- Where the player is tackled to ground s/he has the option to pass or place the ball (where the ball is placed, the next supporting player must pass it to a teammate)

### Resources



x 10

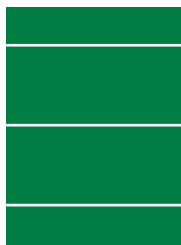


x 50



x 10

### Pitch dimensions



Minimum 7 v 7

Maximum size is  
60 metres x 30 metres

Allow an additional  
3 to 5 metres for each  
in-goal area

## Activity one: warm up

### Any directional touch game

- The ball can be passed in any direction with two hands, so support players can be in front of the ball
- The ball carrier cannot run with ball
- When the ball carrier is touched by a defender, they must pass immediately
- Defenders may not block the pass from a ball carrier that has just been touched and trying to pass

- A try is scored when ball is placed on or over the try line
- Restart in the middle with a free pass
- Warm up activity for hamstrings and quads: leg swings

### Progression

Players can run with the ball but if they are touched they must pass immediately

## Activity two: technical area practice

(10 metre square area, either as an activity or while the game is being played)

### Practice passing in pairs:

- catch – two hands
- pass – two hands
- swing the ball across the body
- with arms following through towards target

- evade
- pass before the touch
- pass into space
- keep the ball moving

### Progression

- Try this with three running across the square and back

## Activity three: grab offload game (see rules above)

- The defender can grab hold of the attacker anywhere below the shoulder
- The attacker must attempt to offload the ball within three seconds but can continue to drive forward by using their legs
- It is important that the ball carrier runs forward not sideways

- Support players must be encouraged to anticipate the touch and time their run onto the ball
- Defenders not making the touch must retreat back to their side of the pitch when a touch is made
- If the ball is not able to be offloaded quickly, allow the attacker to stop, turn and pass

# SESSION TWO

## (STAGE TWO)

### Introduction

#### The tackle:

- development of key contact rugby skills, the tackle
- develop defence
- develop confidence in contact
- encourage skilful play through games

#### Objectives of the session are:

- develop the tackle
- introduce the scrum body position (tower of power)

### Stage two: develop the tackle and introduce scrummage body position

#### Coaching points

- Keep your head to the side, your chin off chest and your eyes open
- You should be cheek to cheek
- Make sure your arms are open
- Your shoulder should be against someone's hips
- Squeeze your arms tight around their legs (ring of steel)
- Roll to make sure you finish on top and get back to your feet quickly

#### In the game, use one man scrum for restarts and knock ons

- Players should show the basic body position: TOWER OF POWER

**Remember: feet > knees > hips > core > elbows > shoulder blades > chest > head**

### Resources



x 10

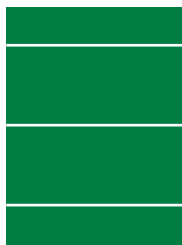


x 50



x 10

### Pitch dimensions



Minimum 7 v 7

Maximum size is  
60 metres x 30 metres

Allow an additional  
3 to 5 metres for each  
in-goal area

## Activity one: warm up

### Touch game – develop to grab tackle

- The ball can be passed sideways or backwards with two hands so support players can now not be in front of the ball
- When the ball carrier is touched by a defender they must pass immediately
- Defenders may not block the pass from a ball carrier that has just been touched and trying to pass
- A try is scored when the ball is placed on or over the try line
- Restart in the middle with a free pass

Warm up activity for hamstrings and quads: leg swings Another activity is a wrestling exercise: from lying flat on your back on the floor, try to turn your partner onto their front

### Progression

Players can grab tackle and offload (as per previous session) There are no restrictions on number of tackles, this is unlimited

## Activity two: technical area practice

(10 metre square area, either as an activity or while the game is being played)

- Develop tackle technique in pairs (see separate card)

Progression	Tackler	Ball Carrier
1	Squatting	Standing
2	Squatting	Walking
3	Standing	Walking
4	Standing	Jogging

### Scrum technique

- Use a tackle pad for your partner to hold and player to set against, keeping a good position
- The partner is then to stand with two hands in-front of them and the player to set against them, again, keeping a good position
- Introduce the 1 v 1 and engagement sequence:

### “CROUCH – BIND – SET”

## Activity three: tackle/grab offload game (see rules above)

### Rules

- The defender can tackle or grab the attacker anywhere below the shoulder
- The attacker must attempt to offload within three seconds but can continue to drive forward by using their legs

- It is important that the ball carrier runs forward not sideways
- Defenders not making the touch must retreat back to their side of the pitch when a touch is made
- If the ball is not able to be offloaded quickly, allow the attacker time to stop, turn and pass

# SESSION THREE

## (STAGE THREE)

### Introduction

#### The scrum and contesting for the ball:

- development of key contact rugby skills: scrum
- develop contesting for the ball (1 v 1)
- develop confidence in contact
- encourage skilful play through games

#### Objectives of the session are:

- develop the tackle
- introduce the three man scrum body
- introduce the principles of ruck

### Stage two: developing the tackle and introducing scrummage body position

#### Coaching points

- Keep your head to the side, your chin off chest and your eyes open
- You should be cheek to cheek
- Make sure your arms are open
- Your shoulder should be against someone's hips

- Squeeze your arms tight around their legs (ring of steel)
- Roll to make sure you finish on top and get back to your feet quickly

#### In the game, use one man scrum for restarts and knock ons

Players should show the basic body position:  
TOWER OF POWER

**Remember: feet > knees > hips > core > elbows > shoulder blades > chest > head**

### Resources



x 10

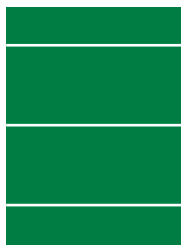


x 50



x 10

### Pitch dimensions



Minimum 8 v 8

Maximum size is  
60 metres x 30 metres

Allow an additional  
3 to 5 metres for each  
in-goal area

## Activity one: warm up

### Presentation touch game – develop to grab tackle

- The ball can be passed sideways or backwards with two hands, so support players can now not be in front of the ball
- When the ball carrier is touched by a defender, they must go to ground and present the ball on the ground and on their own side with two hands
- Defenders must retreat five metres
- A try is scored when ball is placed on or over the try line
- Restart in the middle with a one man scrum

Warm up activity for hamstrings and quads: leg swings Another activity is a wrestling exercise: from lying flat on your back on the floor, try to turn your partner onto their front

### Progression

Players can grab tackle and off-load as per the previous session, there are unlimited tackles, with the ball carrier working hard to get to ground

## Activity two: technical area practice

(10 metre square area, either as an activity or while the game is being played)

### Develop the three man scrum (see separate scrum card)

- Positions and roles
- Binding on own team
- The put in and strike
- Groups have a go with no opposition (groups of four = 3 x players and 1 x coach or referee)

- Progress to three versus three
- Groups of seven or eight = 3 v 3 + 1 or 2 coaches or referees
- Reinforce COUCH-BIND-SET engagement sequence
- Demonstrate binding on opposition and head position in scrum

### Progression

Introduce driving technique at the breakdown: one ball carrier, one tackler plus one from each side

## Activity three: tackle/grab offload game (see rules above)

### Rules

- The defender must tackle or grab the attacker anywhere below the shoulder
- The attacker must attempt to offload within three seconds but can continue to drive forward by using their legs

- If tackled to the ground, the ball must be won by driving (pushing) the opposing extra man off the ball
- Only one player from each side can contest the ball



# SESSION FOUR

## (STAGE THREE)

### Introduction

#### The competitive scrum and contest for the ball:

- development of key contact rugby skills - scrum and lineout
- develop contesting for the ball (2 v 2)
- develop confidence in contact
- encourage skilful play through games

#### Objectives of the session are:

- to develop competitive scrummage
- to introduce the lineout
- to introduce conditioned kicking

### Stage three - developing the scrum and introducing the line out

#### Coaching points

#### Line out

- Movement forward and back - lose your opponent
- Throw - feet square, knees flexed, keep head and chest high

- Three player scrum (competitive)
- 2 v 2 lineout (non-competitive so no lifting)
- 2 v 2 competition for the ball at tackle area
- Conditioned kicking

### Resources



x 10

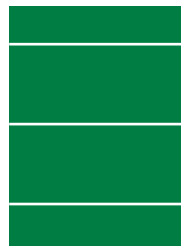


x 50



x 10

### Pitch dimensions



Minimum 8 v 8

Maximum size is  
60 metres x 30 metres

Allow an additional  
3 to 5 metres for each  
in-goal area

## Activity one: rugby netball game; develop to Aussie rules (kick, catch, pass) game

- The ball can be passed in any direction with two hands, so support players can be in front of the ball All passes should be overhead
  - The ball carrier cannot run with ball
  - When the ball carrier is touched by a defender, they must pass immediately
  - Defenders may not block the pass from a ball carrier that has just been touched and trying to pass
  - A try is scored when the ball is placed on or over the try line
  - Restart in the middle with a free pass
- Warm up activity for hamstrings and quads: leg swings

## Activity two: technical area practice

(10 metre square area, either as an activity or while the game is being played)

- Develop the line-out, with emphasis on the throw and the jump
- Foot work
- Movement: losing an opponent (dummy movement to trick your opponent into jumping early)
- Going forward, straight-up and backwards
- Two handed catch above the head
- Bring the ball down under control
- Presentation of the ball to the receiver
- **Kicking (in pairs): key factors of the point of contact**
- Ball hold (forward tilt) and ball drop (you are looking to minimize the distance to foot): the bottom point of the ball should connect with the foot
- Head and shoulder position: need to be over the ball
- Left shoulder stays in at point of contact
- Foot position at point of contact
- Balance and core stability: need to be tight at point of contact

## Activity three: contact game

### Rules

- Contested scrum
- Contested line-out (so no lifting)
- Contest at the breakdown

### Conditioned kicking allowed:

- grubber or drop kick to start and restart the game; the receiving side must be back 7 metres

### A free kick is awarded to the non-offending side and taken on the centre of the half way line if:

- the ball does not travel 7 metres
- the ball goes into touch directly from the kick off
- the ball is made “dead” (ball crosses goal line and touched down by defensive team)
- if the ball travels 7 metres and goes indirectly into touch then the defending team will be awarded a free kick where the ball crossed the line of touch

# SESSION FIVE

## (STAGE FOUR)

### Introduction

#### The competitive five-man scrum and line-out:

- development of key contact rugby skills – scrum and line-out (with support in air)
- develop complete contest for the ball at the tackle area
- encourage skilful play through games

#### Objectives of the session are:

- to develop competitive scrummage
- to introduce a supported line-out
- to introduce unconditioned kicking

### Stage four

- Five player scrum (non-competitive initially)
- 4 v 4 lineout (competitive so lifting is permitted)
- Complete competition for the ball at the tackle area
- Unconditioned kicking

### Resources



x 10



x 50



x 10

### Pitch dimensions



Minimum 8 v 8

Maximum size is  
60 metres x 30 metres

Allow an additional  
3 to 5 metres for each  
in-goal area

## Activity one: grab touch game; develop to tackle

- The ball can be passed sideways or backwards with two hands, so support players can now not be in front of the ball
- When the ball carrier is grabbed by a defender, they must pass immediately
- Defenders may not block the pass from a ball carrier that has just been touched and trying to pass
- A try is scored when ball is placed on or over the tryline
- Restart in the middle with a three man scrum

Warm up activity for hamstrings and quads: leg swings and shoulder rolls

### Progression

Progress activity 1 to a full tackle game with ball presentation Six tackles take place and then on the last tackle the team kicks away

## Activity two: technical area practice

(10 metre square area, either as an activity or while the game is being played)

- Develop supported line-out with the emphasis on safety
- Develop the lifting technique - from base (big muscle groups)
- Look at the hand position on shorts and legs

### Five man scrum (see separate scrum card)

- Introduction of second rows
- Bind on each other
- Foot positioning
- The crotch and side bind
- Position of the shoulder on props rump

## Activity three: full contact game (10 v 10)

### Rules

- Contested scrum (develop the five man scrum, which is initially uncontested)
- Contested line-out but with no lifting
- Contest at the breakdown
- All kicking allowed