INSPIRED BY RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP ENGLAND 2021

LESSON PLAN 1

RUGBY LEAGUE 9s

CATCH, PASS AND PLAY-THE-BALL

10 GOLDEN RULES

1. Make every lesson fun.
2. Every player to take part in all the activities.
3. The lessons are a guide but do add or remove activities based on your own experiences and the competency of the players.
4. Where possible, differentiate in activities to allow players to have the appropriate level of challenge.
5. Where there are an odd number of players, always give more players to the attacking team.
6. Do not focus on specific playing positions, let them experience lots of different roles.
7. Be patient, as some skills will not be mastered by the end of the lesson.
8. Use players to demonstrate if they have expertise.
9. Use effective questioning to confirm players' understanding.
10. Ensure the teams are evenly split for Lesson 6 Intra-nines tournament.

LESSON 1 - RUGBY LEAGUE 9s

CATCH, PASS AND PLAY-THE-BALL

OBJECTIVES - TO DEVELOP PASS, CATCH AND PLAY-THE-BALL SKILLS

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LESSON OVERVIEW	1 - WARM UP	2 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	3 - GAME PLAY
ACTIVITY	STUCK IN THE MUD	CATCH, PASS & PLAY-THE BALL	9s TOUCH
% OF LESSON	15%	55%	30%
APPROX TIME	5-10 minutes	30 minutes	15-20 minutes

1 - WARM UP

STUCK IN THE MUD

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SUGGESTED TIME
5 - 10 minutes
15% of lesson time

EQUIPMENT
Balls
Cones

SET UP
20m x 20m grid

CORE SKILLS
Grip
Carry

EXPLANATION

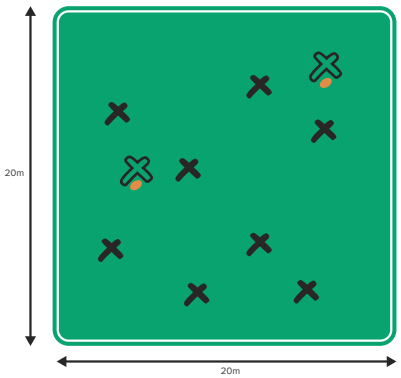
- Two chasers have a ball and must touch the other players with the ball between the shoulder and waist within the grid.
- If the players without the ball step out of the grid they are classed as being touched.
- The chaser must be holding the ball as the escapee is touched for the touch to be effective.
- When touched the players (captured) stand with their arms out. The other escapees can get them back into the game by running underneath their arms from back to front.
- When all escapees are touched, or the set time limit has elapsed, change the chasers.

VARIATIONS

- **Easier** (for the chasers) - add more chasers, narrow the grid.
- **Harder** (for the chasers) - remove a chaser, widen the grid, encourage the ball carrier to use a one-handed grip.
- **Alternate 1** - Once an escapee has been touched, they become the chaser but cannot touch the player who has touched them.

COACHING POINTS - WARM UP

- **Grip** - two hands, centre of ball, thumb and index finger greater than 90°, arched palms. Same coaching points apply when challenging with one-handed carry.
- **Carry** - centre of body, elbows out
- All participants to be active at all times. For large numbers use more than one grid.



KEY

CONE | TEAM A | TEAM B | BALL | BALL TRAVEL | PLAYER TRAVEL | NO-GO AREA | GATE | ZONE | SHIELD

CATCH, PASS AND PLAY-THE-BALL

OBJECTIVES - TO DEVELOP PASS, CATCH AND PLAY-THE-BALL SKILLS

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2 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITY 1 - CATCH AND PASS

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SUGGESTED TIME
5 minutes
10% of lesson time

EQUIPMENT
Balls
Cones

SET UP
Multiple 5m x 5m grids

CORE SKILLS
6 o'clock pass
Early catch
Scoring a try

COACHING POINTS ACTIVITIES 1 & 2

The Pass

- Ball pointing down (6 o'clock)
- Shoulders rotated
- Pass over the inside foot, opposite foot to direction of pass should be forward with the inside foot slightly behind the centre of body

The Catch

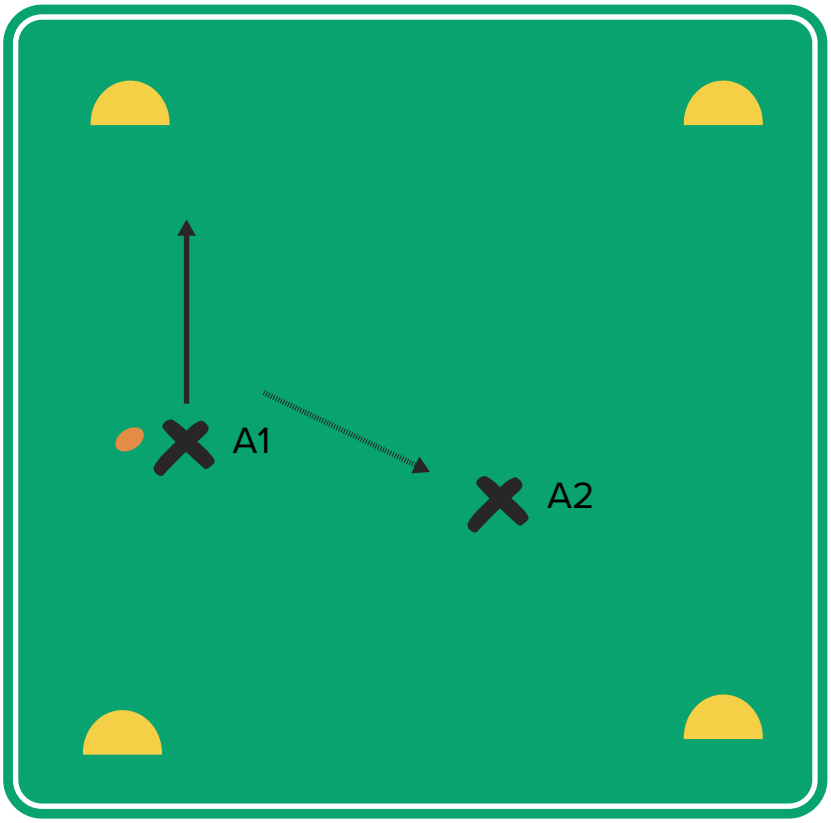
- Shoulders rotated
- Hands up - create a target for where you want to receive the pass
- Early catch off the chest and no contact with the ball on shirt

EXPLANATION

- Players A1 and A2 work up and down in a 5m grid delivering passes from either side.
- The ball must be passed backwards (in relation to the direction they are travelling).
- Ball to be placed down over the try line with two hands after a pass has been received, after which the pair turn around and repeat going in the opposite direction across the grid. For the purpose of this activity the try line is the line between the 2 cones at either end.

VARIATIONS

- **Easier -** Bring the players closer together to shorten the pass length required.
- **Harder -** If passes are being performed successfully, increase pace to jogging and then to running or widen the grid/length of the pass.



CATCH, PASS AND PLAY-THE-BALL

OBJECTIVES - TO DEVELOP PASS, CATCH AND PLAY-THE-BALL SKILLS

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2 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

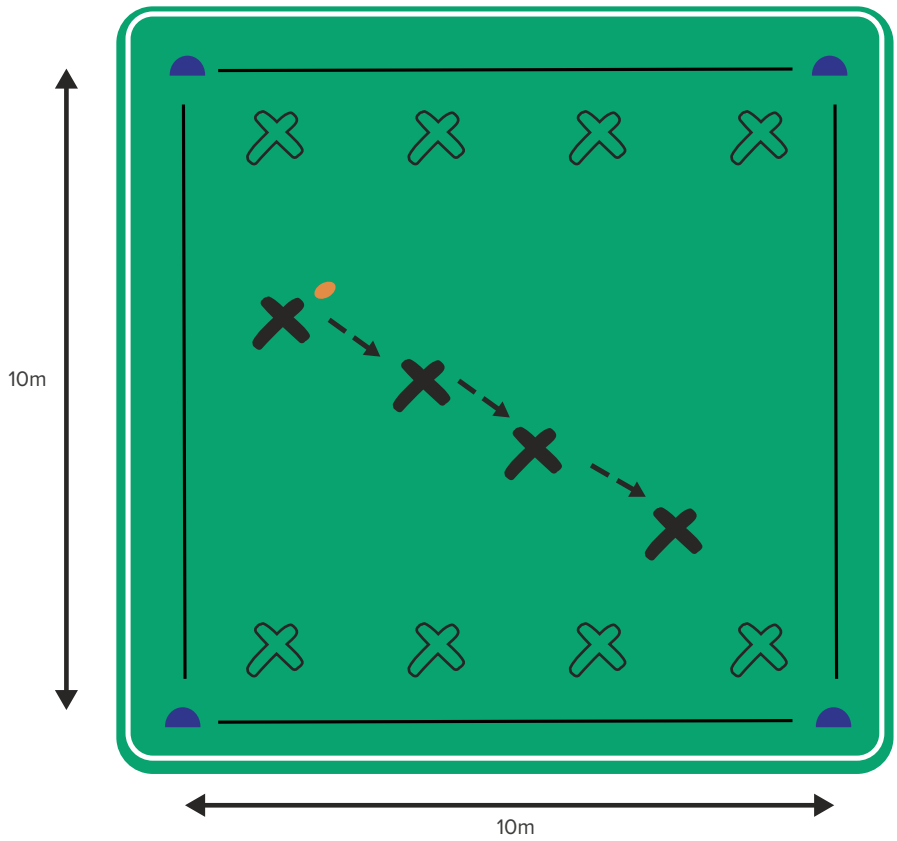
ACTIVITY 2 - PASSING BACKWARDS

EXPLANATION

- In groups of four, line up in equal spacing across the grid and pass the ball backwards along the line, initially at walking pace progressing to jogging and running once players are comfortable. The line should be staggered as per diagram to encourage a backwards pass.
- Once the ball reaches the player at the end of the line they can pass the ball onto the player at the start of the next line and so on.
- Start the ball from both left and right and interchange the position of the players in the line.

VARIATIONS

- **Easier -** Bring the players closer together to shorten the pass length required.
- **Harder -** If passes are being performed successfully, increase pace to jogging and then to running. Widen the grid to increase length of pass. When the ball has been passed to the end of the line, encourage the players to adjust their speed and position to realign so the ball can be passed back down the line.



ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SUGGESTED TIME
10 minutes
15% of lesson time

EQUIPMENT
Balls
Cones

SET UP
10m x 10m grid

CORE SKILLS
6 o'clock pass
Early catch

COACHING POINTS ACTIVITIES 1 & 2

The Pass

- Ball pointing down (6 o'clock)
- Shoulders rotated
- Pass over the inside foot, opposite foot to direction of pass should be forward with the inside foot slightly behind the centre of body

The Catch

- Shoulders rotated
- Hands up - create a target for where you want to receive the pass
- Early catch off the chest and no contact with the ball on shirt

CATCH, PASS AND PLAY-THE-BALL

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2 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITY 3 - PLAY THE BALL

EXPLANATION

- Players move around the grid carrying the ball waiting for teacher's call: back, side, belly, forearms/knees. Once the call is received, the player goes to ground as per instruction, regains their feet and plays-the-ball.
- Player then moves to recover/pick up a ball from the ground and the drill continues.
  NB: Play-the-ball is the action of rolling the ball backwards with your foot along the ground after a tackle has been made.

VARIATIONS

- **Easier** - Stick to the easier movements of forearms/knees and belly.
- **Harder** - Challenge players to carry and play the ball on their non-dominant side.

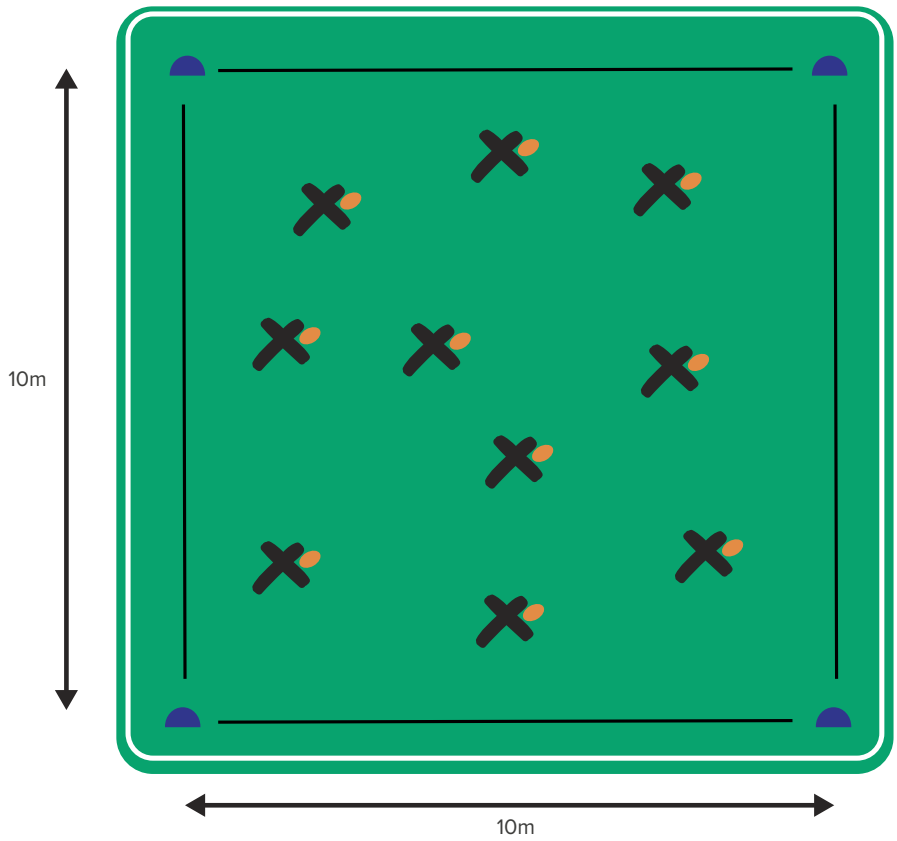
ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SUGGESTED TIME
10-15 minutes
15% of lesson time

EQUIPMENT
Balls
Cones

SET UP
10m by 10m grid-adjust according to numbers to provide safe space

CORE SKILLS
Playing the ball (Snap, Sweep, Touch)



COACHING POINTS ACTIVITIES 3

Forearms/knees - 2 movements

- Sweep leg around
- Touch the ball with your foot to roll it backwards (using the sole of your foot)

Belly-3 movements

- Snap knees to chest
- Sweep leg around
- Touch the ball with your foot to roll it backwards

Back or Side - 4 movements

- Roll towards the ball
- Snap knees to chest
- Sweep leg around
- Touch the ball with your foot to roll it backwards

CATCH, PASS AND PLAY-THE-BALL

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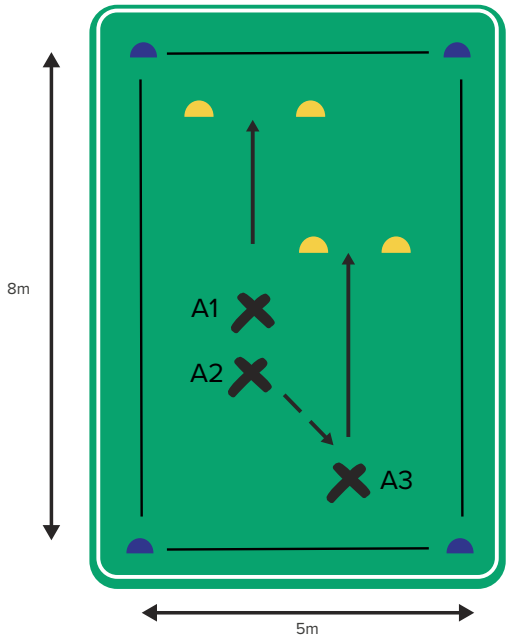
2 - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITY 4 - DUMMY-HALF PASS

EXPLANATION

- From the diagram, A1 plays the ball and the player stood behind the play-the-ball in the dummy-half position (A2) passes from the ground to A3 who catches the ball at pace and runs to the cones.
- The dummy-half (A2) follows A3 and the drill is repeated on the opposite side. A3 plays the ball when they reach the cones and A2 passes the ball from the ground to A1 who will now run onto the ball towards the second set of cones.
- Rotate the player in the dummy-half position and repeat the drill so that all players have an opportunity to practice a dummy-half pass.



ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SUGGESTED TIME
5 minutes
10% of lesson time

EQUIPMENT
Balls
Cones

SET UP
5m by 8m grid

CORE SKILLS
Playing the ball
(Snap, Sweep, Touch)
Dummy-half pass
Timing of run
Early catch

COACHING POINTS - WARM UP

Approach

- Move to position close to play-the-ball
- Scan the opposition defence (to count numbers and decide the best option)
- Foot position-nearest foot to the receiver pointing at the receiver and other foot next to the ball in close proximity
- Sit- knees bent, back straight and head up
- Head and upper-body towards the target/ receiver

Pass

- Pass from the ground in one movement
- Follow through with fingers and hand pointing towards the target/receiver
- Stay Alive - get ready for the next play

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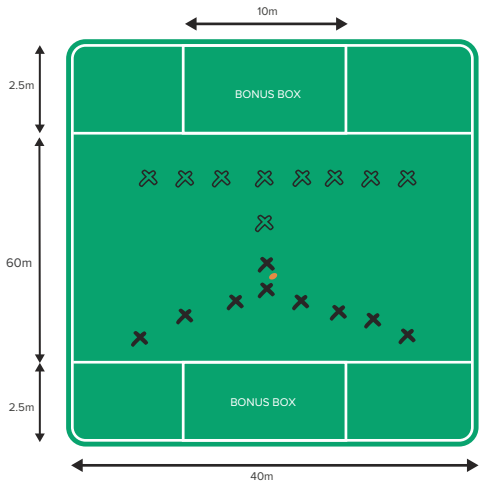
3 - GAME PLAY

RUGBY LEAGUE 9S TOUCH

EXPLANATION

- Split the teams equally, playing 9-a-side where possible.
- Attack has six plays to advance up field starting from half way.
- Ball must be passed backwards.
- Defenders make a tackle by touching the player in possession of the ball with two hands.
- Once a tackle has been made, the defender who makes the tackle will stand in front of the play-the-ball as a marker and the rest of the defence will retreat back 5 metres from the play-the-ball until the dummy-half has picked up the ball at which point they can advance to effect the next tackle.
- If the ball is passed forward or dropped, the defending team are given the ball where this error occurred and restart with a play-the-ball
- Teacher to control play-the-ball.
- 4 points for scoring in the in-goal area with tries being scored in the bonus box worth 6 points.
- If a player goes into touch whilst in possession, the ball is brought back in 5 metres onto the field of play and the defending team start with a play- the-ball.
- If a team fails to score in their six plays, the ball is handed over where the last touch has been made and the other team start their set of six plays.

NB the ball cannot be kicked in this game.



END OF LESSON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How does it affect the game when somebody plays the ball quickly compared to when the play-the-ball is slow?
- If the ball is dropped, why is it dropped? Did the passer not follow through with their hands? Was the pass too high or too low? Did the catcher not have their target/hands up for an early catch?
- Is the dummy-half passing the ball from the floor or are they standing to make the pass?

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SUGGESTED TIME
15/20 minutes
30% of lesson time

EQUIPMENT
Balls
Cones
Bibs

SET UP
60m by 40m grid

CORE SKILLS
Grip
Carry
Early catch
6 o'clock pass
Play-the-ball (Snap, Sweep, Touch)
Dummy-half pass

COACHING POINTS - GAME PLAY

- **Grip**-two hands, centre of ball, thumb and index finger greater than 90°, arched palms
- **Carry**-centre of body, elbows out
- **Pass** - ball pointing down, shoulders rotated, pass over inside foot
- **Catch** - Shoulders rotated, target/ hands up, early catch off the chest
- **Play-the-ball** - Snap, Sweep, Touch
- **Dummy-half** pass- approach, scan, foot position, sit, pass from ground and follow through