



KIDS FIRST RUGBY

COMPETITIONS AND GAMES



For further information go to: [Englandrugby.com/KidsFirst](https://www.Englandrugby.com/KidsFirst)

GUIDE

What is the aim of this resource?

1. Developing children as confident, capable young people is at the core of the Rugby Football Union's offer.
2. Using rugby union as a vehicle for developing a young person's personal and social skills can have a dramatic impact on all aspects of their life.
3. Young people with enhanced personal and social skills are likely to be better performers and have a higher quality experience of physical education and rugby.
4. They will also be able to transfer these skills into other areas of their life as they become better at working with their peers and respecting rules and each other.

This guide supports the delivery of rugby union for children. It is based on the coaching principle of Who, What and How? and provides essential information to guide delivery.

Rugby Framework Who, What, How?



WHO?

The starting point for any session should always be to reflect upon the participants' needs. Children typically need to:

- Enjoy themselves
- Be with friends
- Learn and improve.

Learning and improving at this age is about providing children the building blocks for participation in sport, for life.

The wide-ranging Ruckley learning targets help us to focus on these areas and it is also important to look specifically within these at the appropriate movement development to ensure all children are physically literate.

Children's movement journeys are illustrated in the following diagrams and tables:

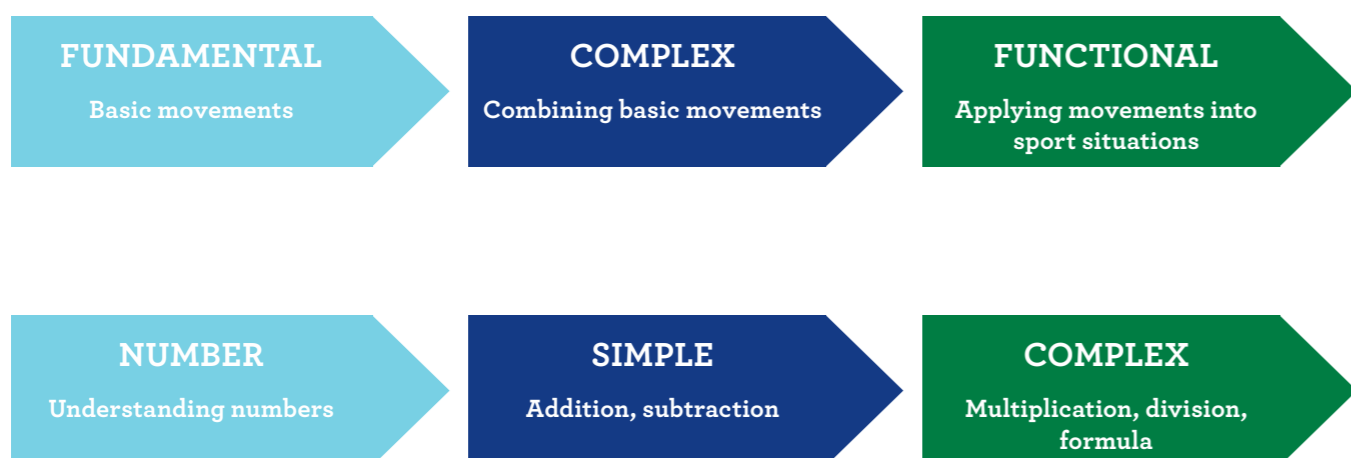
Phase of movement development	Fundamental	Complex	Functional
Description	Acquiring the building blocks	Refining and combining the blocks	Applying them in different situations
Example	Running Turning Catching Throwing	Run towards a thrower, catch, turn and throw	3v3 end zone game

Movement Development – SOL		
Stability	Object control	Locomotion
Body balance in static and dynamic movement situations	Sending, receiving and controlling an object	Movement from one point to another
Twisting	Throwing	Running forwards
Turning	Catching	Side-stepping
Stopping	Kicking	Running backwards

WHO?

The development of these movement skills can be viewed in exactly the same way as the development of children's numeracy and literacy skills:

Who? Developing Children's Movement: just like learning to read, write and count, children have to learn how to move!

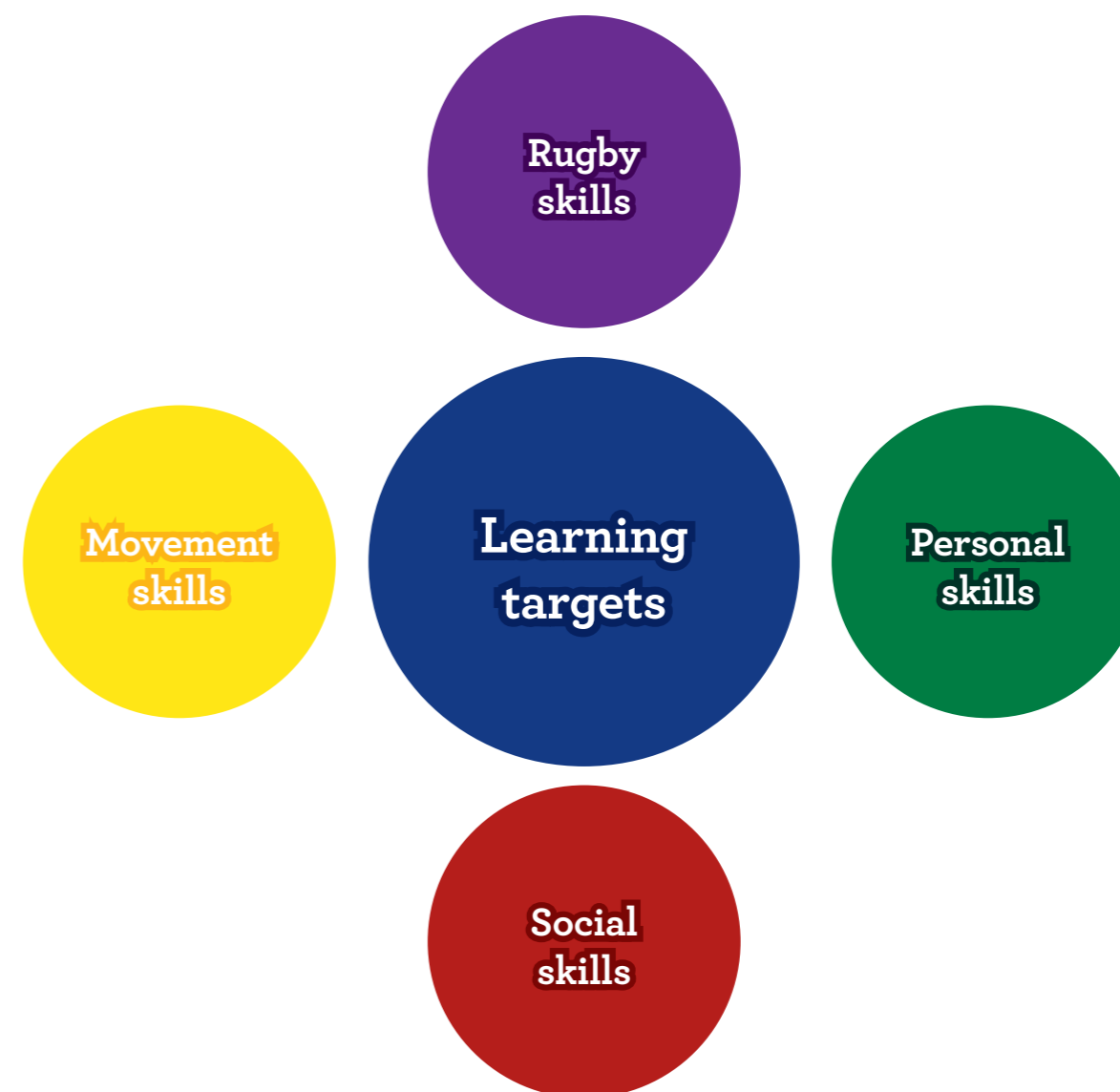


WHAT?

What do children need to learn?

This question relates to the activities that will be used to meet the needs of children most effectively. A starting point for planning the most appropriate activity to meet the needs of all children within your group is to consider the following questions:

- What are the children's previous experiences of PE, sport and rugby union?
- Which phase of movement development are the children at? Fundamental, Complex, Functional?
- What skills can the children currently demonstrate? Stability, Object control, Locomotion?
- How do the children currently perform at the Ruckley learning targets? Personal, Movement, Rugby, Social
- What 'mix' of Ruckley learning targets will challenge the children most effectively?
- How will any game link into the skills and behaviours that have been developed?



HOW?

The final element to effective coaching of children is how you will actually deliver the session. This involves planning to use a variety of strategies to fully engage the children and to meet their needs.

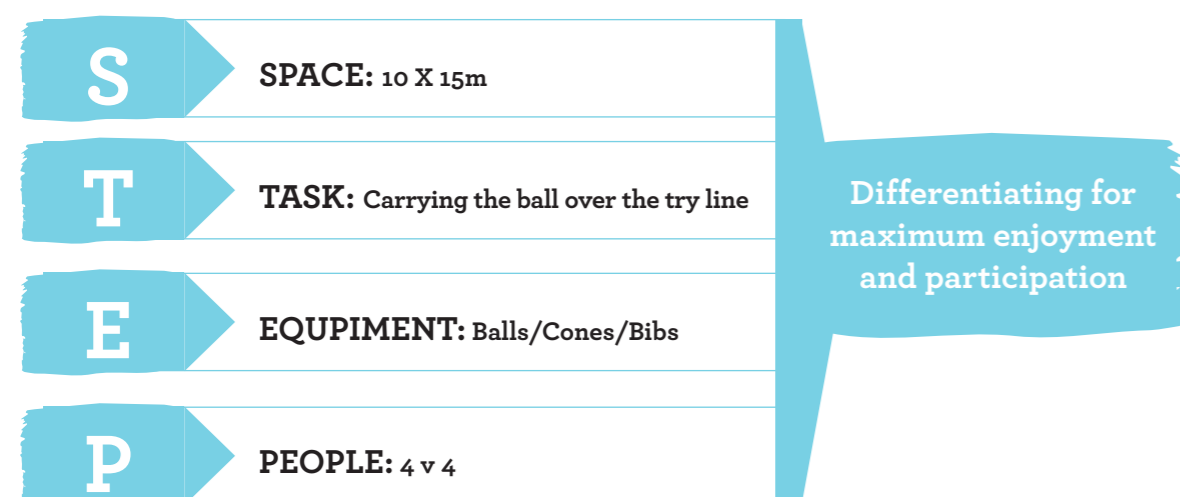
We need to remember that children of this age are motivated through reward for personal best and mastery of skills. They should be encouraged to judge their progress and success on reaching the goals that they have set themselves and this can be supported through the way that you question the children, differentiate the activity and offer positive feedback.

Examples of these strategies are illustrated below:

Different types of questions used within the Ruckley Learning Targets will engage the children in their own learning and help them to set realistic goals.

Area of Development	Skill	Closed	Open
Movement	Stopping under control	Did you stop before running over the sideline?	What did you do to stop yourself running over the sideline?
Rugby Skills	Catching	Can you catch the ball every time?	What must you do to prepare for catching the ball?
Personal	Becoming more confident	Do you feel confident when playing rugby?	In which areas are you most confident in rugby?
Social	Working as part of a team	Did you work as part of the team?	What do you do to be an effective member of the team?

Differentiating using the STEP framework will provide variety within the activity, and challenge children at their own level of development.



COMPETITION AND GAMES

Kids First Rugby is founded upon the following principles:

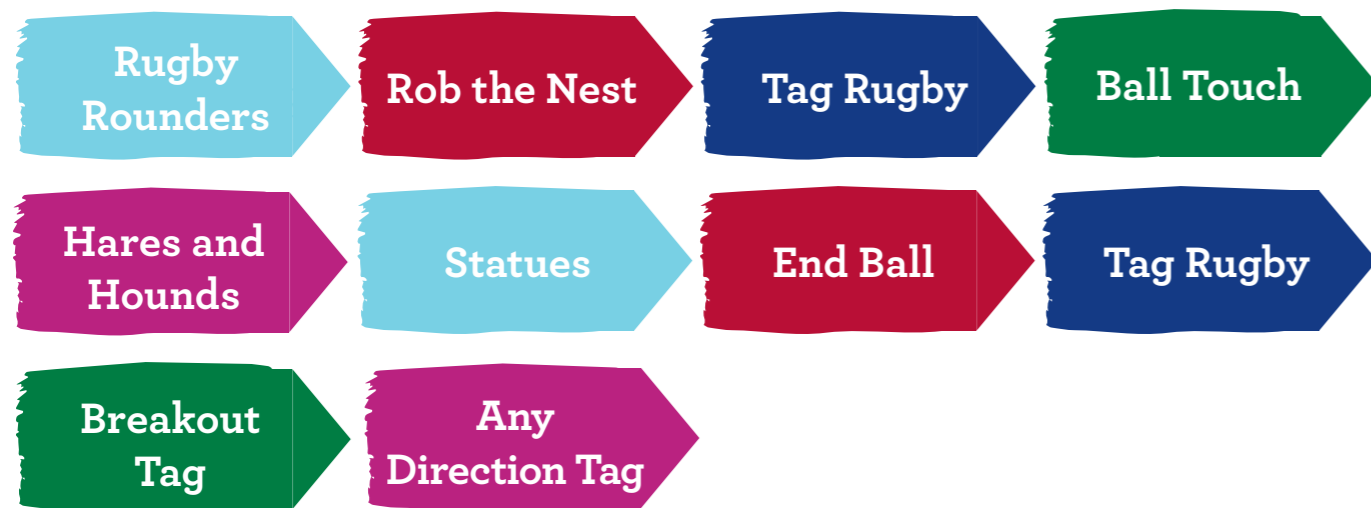
- A child centred approach – developing confident, capable young people first.
- A game for all young people with increased involvement for all.
- Reducing the influence of competition on development, an emphasis on competitive performance not competitive outcome.
- Tag Rugby festivals should involve as many children playing as many different games as possible, maximising involvement and enjoyment for all, with no overall winners.
- Here are the suggested stages of progression to support the development of young people who can play appropriate, competitive rugby union.

Stage	Beginner	Developing
Type of Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tag • 4-a-side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tag • 6-a-side
What to develop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catching, Passing, Evading • Go Forward with the Ball, Support • Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline, Sportsmanship 	
Playing Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20m x 12m (min) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20x12m at U7/Yr2 (max) • 45x22m at U8/Yr3 (max) • 60x30m at U9/Yr4 (max) • 60x35m at U10/Yr5 (max) • 60x43 at U11/Yr6 (max)
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 min per half at U7/Yr2 • 10min per half at U8/Yr3 • 15 min per half at U9/Yr4 • 20 min per half at U10/Yr5 • 20 min per half at U11/Yr6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 min per day at U7/Yr2 (max) • 50 min per day at U8/Yr3 (max) • 60 min per day at U9/Yr4 (max) • 70 min per day at U10/Yr5 (max) • 20 min per day at U11/Yr6 (max)

MEGA FEST

Competition at this stage of a child's development should be about mass participation, enjoyment and improving. The Mega Fest format encourages you to involve as many children as possible with the focus being on the competitive **opportunity** that the different games provide, not the competitive **outcomes** of the games. Reward the children for demonstrating positive personal and social skills, good movement skills as well as their rugby skills.

- Maximum 8 children per group
- Maximum of 7 - 8 minutes per activity
- Rotate so all children experience every activity
- Can you use an older England Rugby student leader to lead each activity?



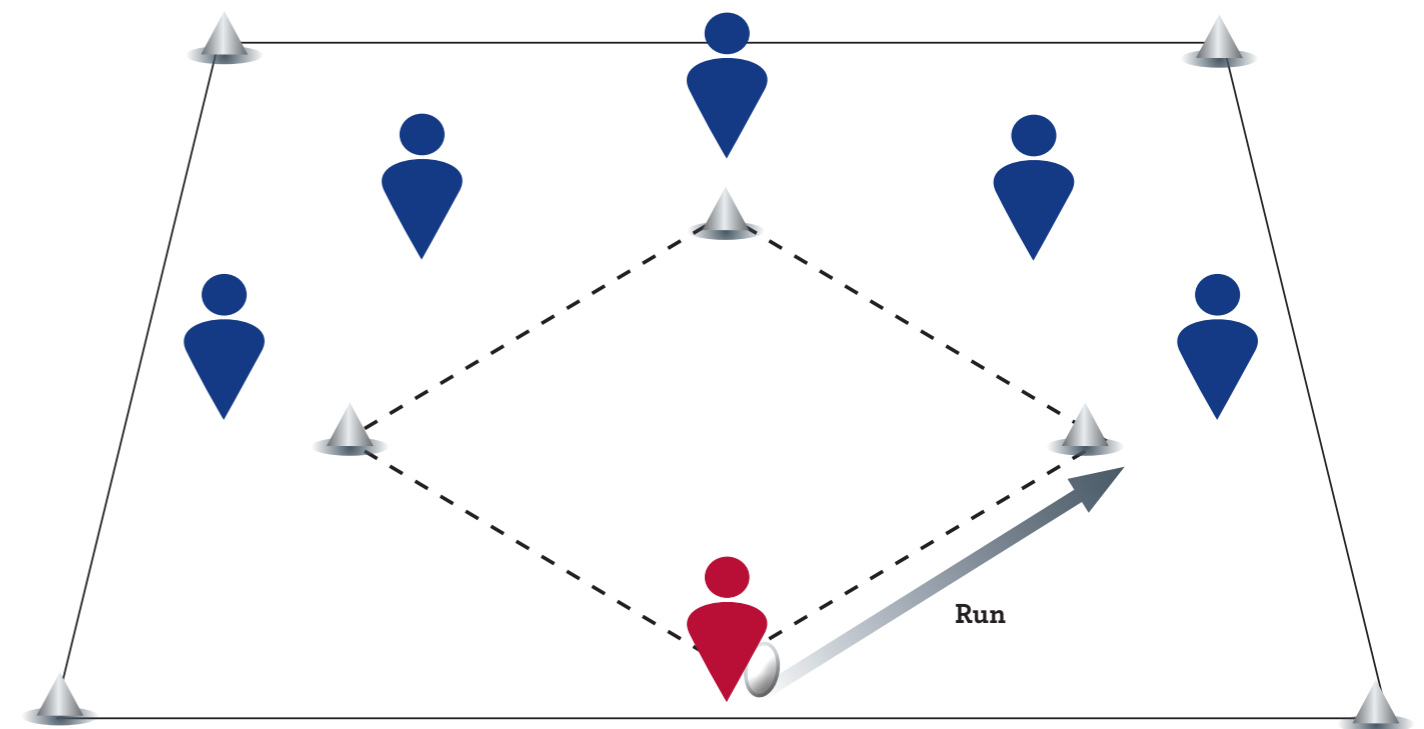
RUGBY ROUNDERS

The batting player kicks or throws the ball forward to put it in play. Make sure that the size and shape of the ball is appropriate to the age of the players. To get the batter out, the fielders may catch the initial kick or throw before it bounces or complete three passes before the batter gets all the way round the cones and back to the base cone.

The fielders develop their passing, catching and communication skills. The batter is encouraged to think tactically with regard to their initial kick or throw and subsequent running decisions.

Ideas for Progression:

- Change the shape of the working area: bigger to make it harder for the fielders and easier for the batter, or smaller to make it easier for the fielders and more difficult for the batter. Ask the fielders to tag the ball on the batter as they run around the bases to get them out. When moving onto the tagging progression, encourage the batter to work on their evasion skills.

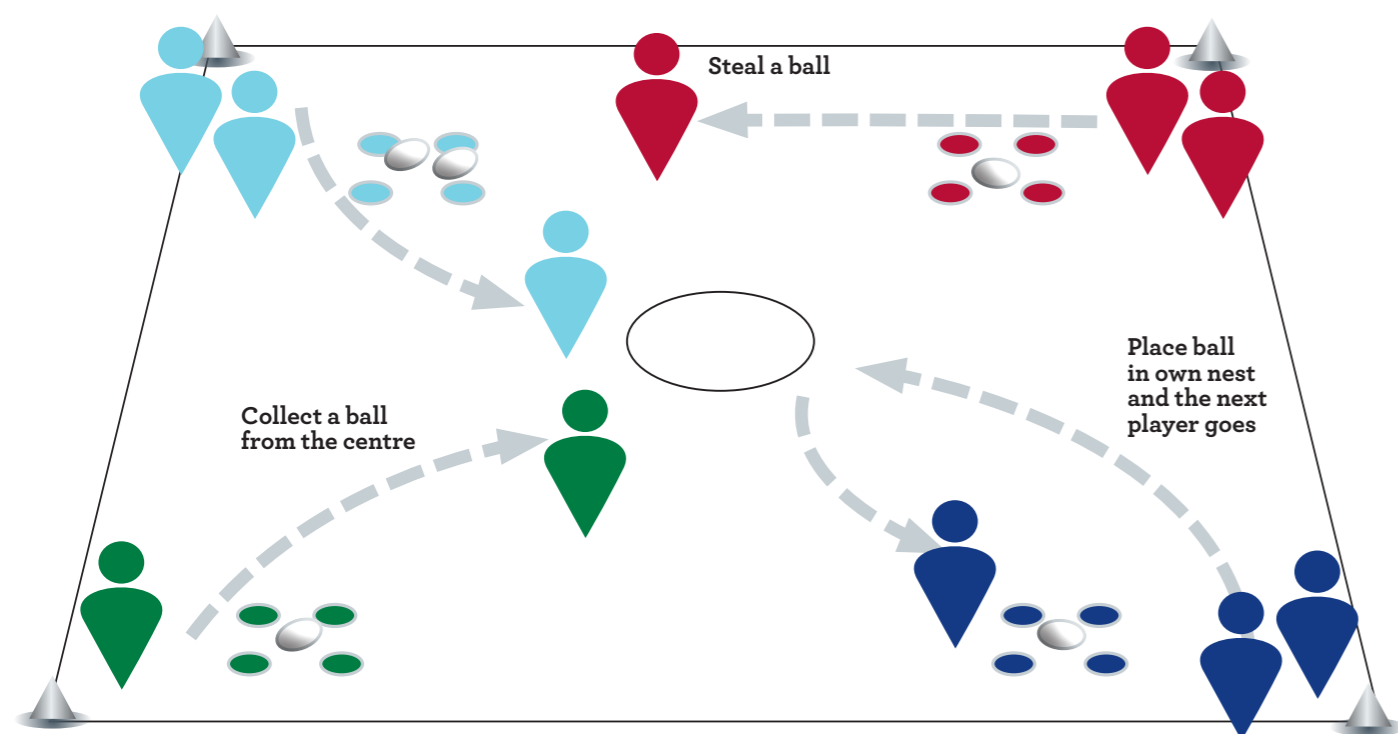


ROB THE NEST

The players work in pairs. Starting at the cones on the corner of the big square they take it in turns to run and 'rob' a ball from the nest in the middle - marked out by a smaller square (cones can be used instead of balls in the nest). They run to bring the ball back to the corner, placing it on the floor to score a try. After all balls are gone from the nest players can 'rob' balls from other nests. The winner is the team that has the most balls in their nest after one minute.

Ideas for progression

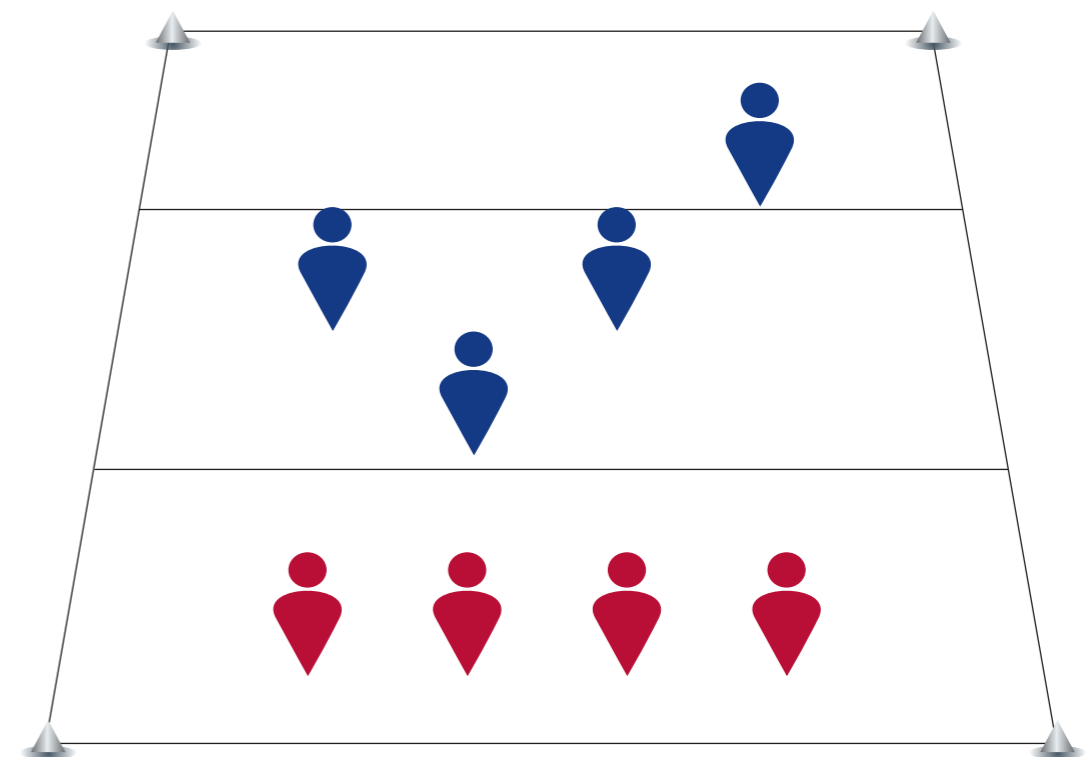
- Put tag belts on the players. If they are running back to their nest with a ball in their hand and are tagged by an opponent they have to hand the ball over to him or her.
- This helps to develop evasion and decision making skills. Add a different coloured ball called the 'Golden Egg' Whoever has that ball at the end of the activity is the winner regardless of their total number of balls stolen.



PLAYING TAG RUGBY

Teachers and Coaches should see this as an opportunity to teach within games. All games should be both inclusive and competitive. A free flowing & continuous game should be encouraged, and the rules offer core guidelines to the game, with enough flexibility for you to adapt to the needs and abilities of the players. You should refrain from intervening too often and should only do so if a) it is dangerous/potentially dangerous b) there is an injury or c) there is an obvious and significant advantage to one side.

1. Tag belts clearly visible, excess strap tucked away, 1 tag each side.
2. Ball should be passed sideways or backwards.
3. Ball carrier should pass when tagged within approx 3 metres or approx 3 seconds.
4. Opponents must allow them to pass and try hard to get in front of the ball (off side).
5. Ball carrier cannot continue to play until both tags are attached.
6. Tagger cannot continue to play until s/he has returned tag.
7. A try is scored when the ball carrier has placed the ball over the line. Re start from centre with free pass from the game manager or one of the players.
8. If the ball carrier is tagged within approx 1 metre of the try line a score can be made.
9. No Physical contact (including fending off with hands, or ball)
10. If a free pass is awarded the opposition should be 3 - 5 meters back (depending on pitch size), toward their own try line. Free passes may not take place within 3 metres of the try line.
11. Players may not dive on the ball.
12. The knock on rule (when a player drops the ball forward) does not apply for beginners, but can be brought in when children are more experienced.

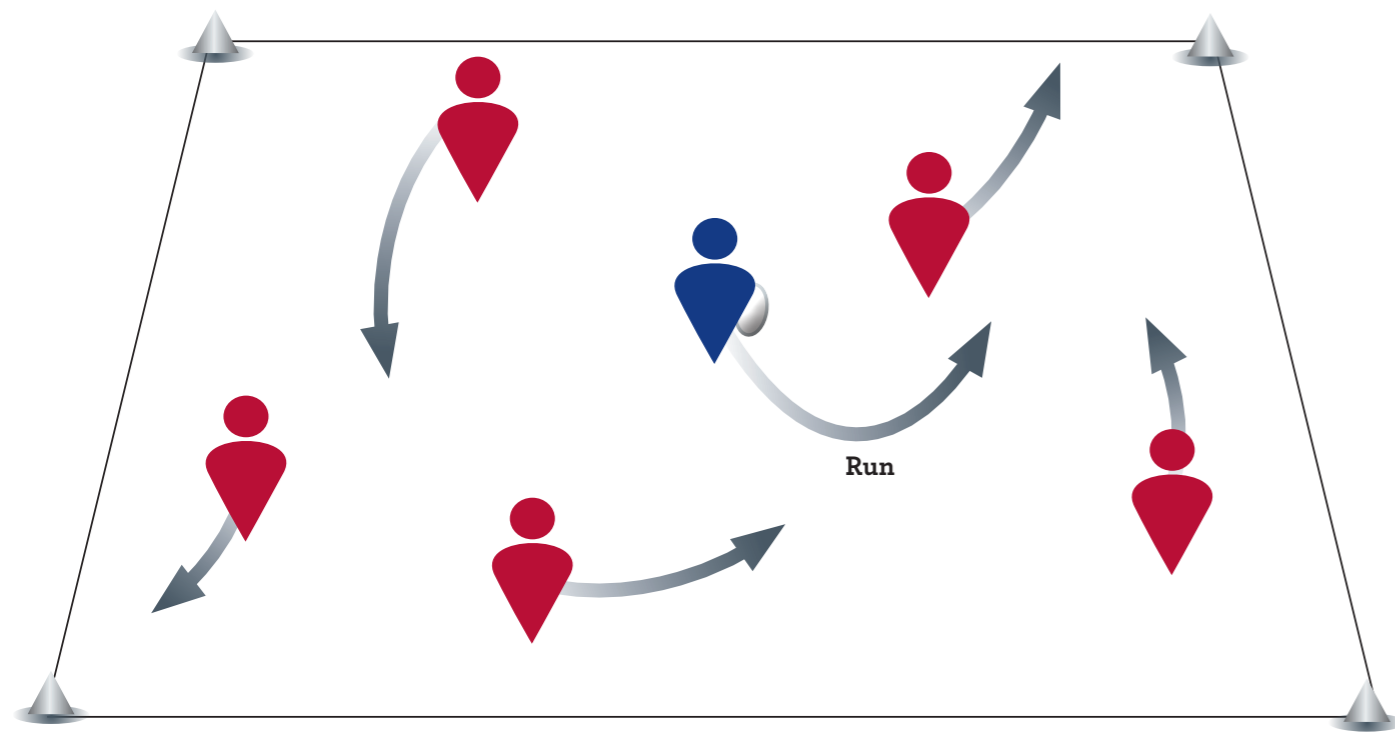


BALL TOUCH

- Each player has an opportunity to be a chaser.
- Starting position: Chaser stands in the middle of the grid and carries the ball in both hands.
- Coach to time one minute for each chaser.
- The chaser has to touch the other players as many times as possible with the ball.
- Coach to keep the score of the chaser who has the highest points.
- Players to remember their score and see if they can beat their best score the next time we play Ball Touch.

Ideas for Progression

- Change the shape of the working area, e.g. long and narrow, round, bigger.

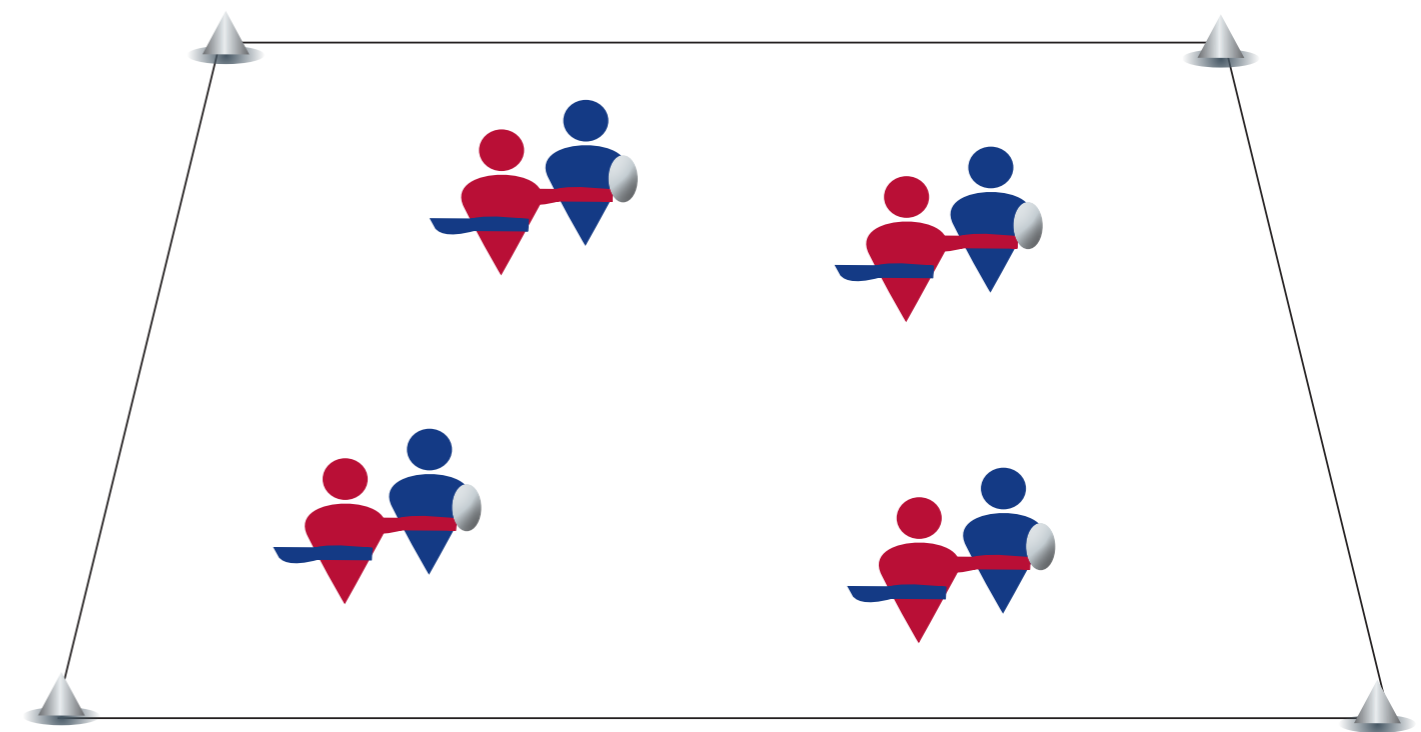


HARE AND HOUNDS

Arrange the players in pairs with one holding a ball in both hands. The pairs begin by standing side by side within the working area. On 'GO' the ball carrier (hare) tries to lose the partner (hound). After a short while, the coach blows the whistle to stop. All the players must stand still (freeze). If the hound can tag the hare, without moving their feet or falling off balance, the hound gains a point. If not, the hare gains the point. The coach can now reverse the roles. This can be repeated a number of times and each individual should keep their own score.

Ideas for Progression

- Team Challenge i.e. all the original hares are in one team and all the original hounds are in the other team. The coach can keep the scores, which are added up after each turn. Use different size and weight of ball/objects to carry.

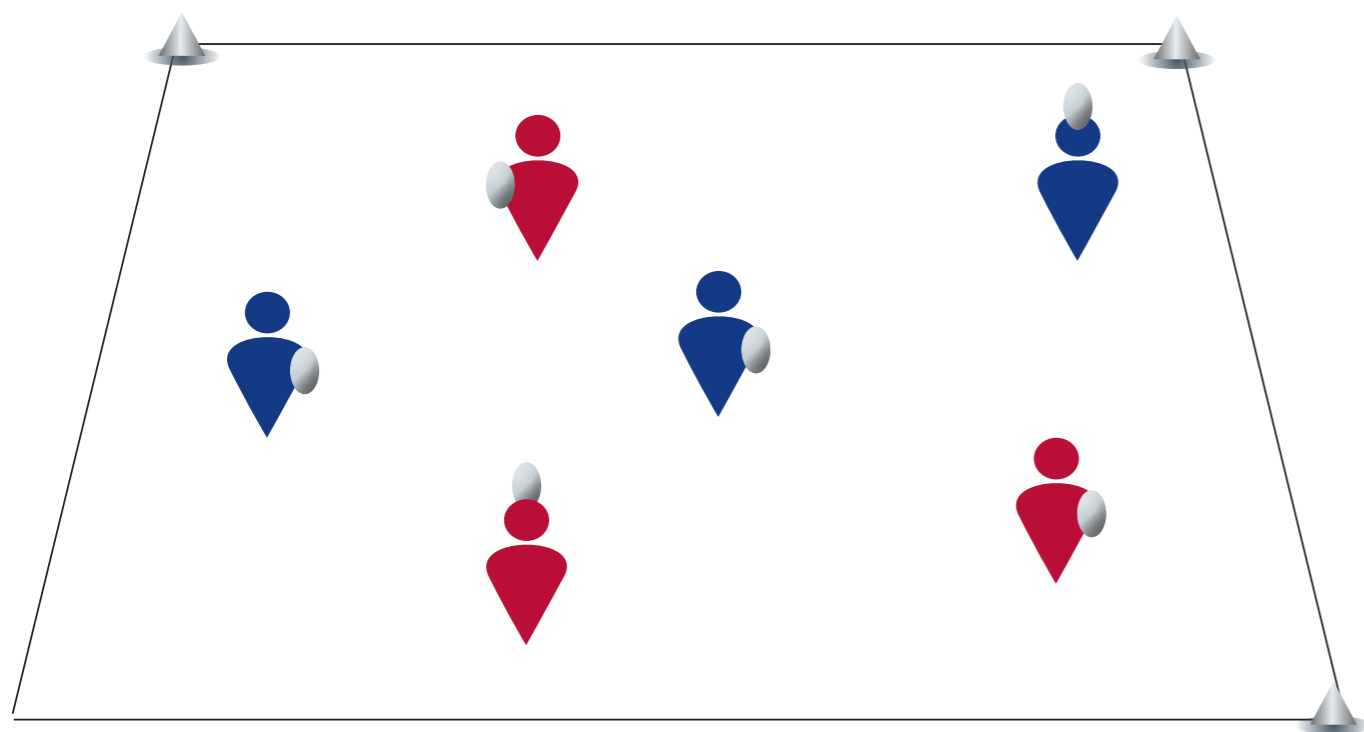


STATUES

All players should be holding a ball. Divide the group into pairs and each pair will have a turn at being the chasers. The first pair on the command of 'GO' turn the other players into statues by touching them with the ball. The ball must be held in both hands at all times. A player who is touched must then stand still and hold their ball above their head and in both hands. The chasers continue turning the other players into statues until everyone has been caught. The coach should note the time that the pair has taken to complete their turn. The winning pair is the pair who turns everyone into a statue in the shortest possible time. The goal should be to turn all players into statues within two minutes.

Ideas for Progression

- Statues can be freed by players who are not chasers, touching the statue with the ball they carry. The statue is once more alive to run around the grid. After one minute the coach shouts 'STOP' and counts how many statues remain. The number of remaining statues becomes the score for that pair of chasers.

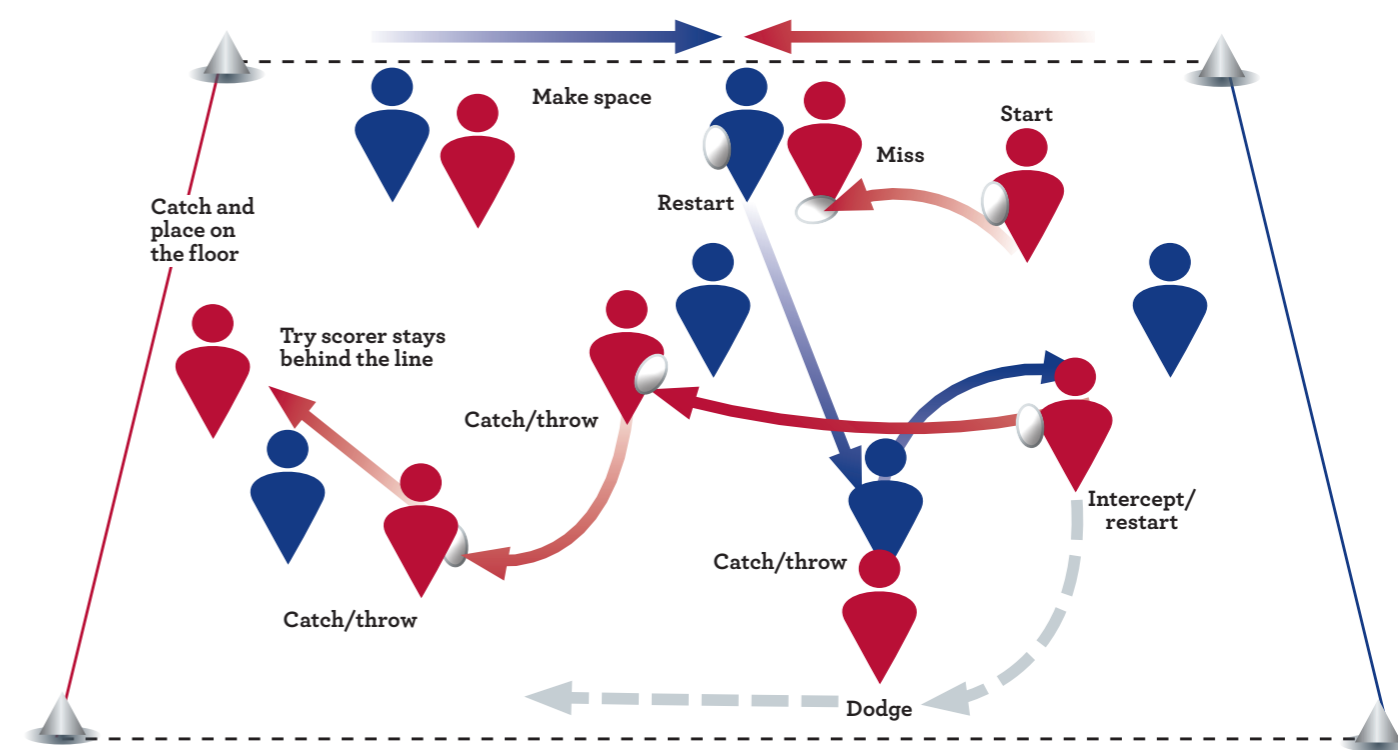


END BALL

- One player from each side must stand in the score zone at the end of the pitch and act as a scorer. The team in possession of the ball may score a point by passing the ball to their scorer without dropping a pass or having the pass intercepted. The scorer must stay within the score zone but may move anywhere within the zone to receive a scoring pass. Change the scorers after every score. After each point is scored, the scorer passes the ball to the opposition and the game starts again.
- At the start of the game, allow the players to make any type of pass in order to progress up field. The ball holder cannot move or be tackled so the teammates need to find space to receive a pass. If the team in possession does not make a successful pass e.g. the ball goes out of bounds, goes onto the floor or is intercepted by an opponent, the ball goes to the team who were not in possession. The game restarts with a free pass from where the incident occurred.

Ideas for Progression

- Passes must be below shoulder height, pass with one hand and catch with two. Make scoring zone smaller. Change shape or size of the pitch or overload one team. Any player in the team may enter the score zone to catch and score.



WHAT'S NEXT?

WANT SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

Check out the Skills Series with Eddie Jones

(www.englandrugby.com/skillsseries)

Familiarise yourself with Regulation 15

(www.englandrugby.com/regulations)

Age Grade Codes of Practice – Are you in?

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