



INTRODUCTION TO TOUCH RUGBY
SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4
LESSON BOOKLET



SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4

INTRODUCTION TO TOUCH RUGBY

INTRODUCTION TO TOUCH

Touch Rugby is a fast paced, non-contact form of rugby, which was developed in Australia and is now a sport in its own right which is played all around the World. Touch Rugby is predominantly a mixed sport, fostering a fun and competitive environment where players of all genders, ages, abilities and backgrounds can pick up a ball and play together. Games are usually played on an area half the size of a standard rugby or football pitch and are 6-a-side (although teams of up to 14 players are permitted, as rolling substitutions take place throughout games due to the speed of the game and the repeated running involved). The aim of the game is simple - to score a try without being touched by a defender.

This teaching resource is an introduction to the sport of Touch Rugby and includes an overview of the skills required, the basic rules and tactics in an example 8 week scheme of work, which is designed to develop and assess technical skills and tactical game understanding competency. Schools are also able to add their own assessment criteria to each lesson as required. **Follow this link to find information on all of the Priority Touch Resources available at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced Level: www.prioritytouch.com.au/aff/6/** (note: England Touch members receive a 10% discount on subscriptions to the Priority Touch website and schools membership to England Touch is **free**).

HISTORY OF TOUCH RUGBY

- Touch Rugby (or “Touch Football” or “Touch” as it is also known) is a game which was originally derived from Rugby League back in the 1960s, as a non-contact version to play outside of the official season to enable focus on handling skills, evasive running and conditioning and to rest from the contact elements of the game.
- Touch Rugby has now grown into a sport in its own right with 52 Nations affiliated to the Federation of International Touch (FIT).
- Touch Rugby is Australia’s largest social sport with approximately 700,000 participants and a 52% male / 48% female gender split.
- Touch Rugby is also played throughout primary and secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities in Australia and the Queensland All Schools competition alone attracts 525+ school teams annually.
- Touch Rugby is part of the rugby family with transferable skills and pathway opportunities into the contact rugby codes.

BENEFITS OF THE GAME

- Natural fit to the National Curriculum and a great team invasion game (especially for the Spring and Summer Terms).
- Easy for teachers to teach and officiate and for students to learn (and also teach and referee themselves as young leaders).
- Simple game rules and limited equipment needed.
- Inclusive - mixed gender (co-ed), mixed age and mixed ability.
- Adaptable formats for children with SEN or disabilities.
- Playable on a variety of surfaces (grass, 3G or hockey pitches, indoor halls, concrete playgrounds, etc).
- Physical health benefits in moderate to vigorous cardiovascular exercise (**British Heart Foundation** - www.bhf.org.uk - ETA charity partner) and various mental health benefits (**Brave Mind** - www.bravemind.co.uk - ETA charity partner).
- Develops excellent physical literacy skills: running, agility, throwing, catching, balancing and jumping.
- Develops excellent interpersonal skills: teamwork, leadership, communication, respect, resilience, creative problem-solving and decision-making.
- Offers participation and/or competition opportunities (intra-school and inter-school events for inclusion or competition).
- Offers talent pathway development opportunities at regional and national level, as well as High Performance level for England.

ENGLAND TOUCH ASSOCIATION

- Touch Rugby was introduced into England in the early 1990s.
- The England Touch Association (ETA) was officially recognised by FIT in 1995 and Sport England in 2003.
- There are rapidly growing numbers of younger participants in schools, junior clubs and junior teams in leagues.
- New Schools Touch Rugby Competitions were launched this year in partnership with Try Sports: www.try-sports.com.
- The ETA is hosting the Touch World Cup in Nottingham in July 2024, which will feature 180+ Teams from 40 Nations competing in 13 Divisions (4,000 participant athletes, coaches and referees).
- There are 20 National England Squads in mixed, men’s and women’s formats and youth, opens, seniors and masters divisions.
- Regional Youth Divisions for Touch Rugby in England are 12s, 14s, 17s and 19s.
- International Youth Divisions for Touch Rugby are 15s, 18s and 20s.

CONTACTS & PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

- **Schools Development:** schools@englandtouch.org.uk
- **Try Sports Schools Competitions:** www.try-sports.com
- **Where to play Touch Rugby (club and league exit routes):** www.englandtouch.org.uk/play/where-to-play/
- **Regional Youth Development Pathways:** www.englandtouch.org.uk/play/the-nationals/map-and-contacts/
- **General Manager:** sammie.phillips@englandtouch.org.uk



SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4

INTRODUCTION TO PRIORITY 10

INTRODUCTION

- This Introductory Unit is designed to introduce Touch Rugby to teachers and students, as well as to provide a platform for further Touch Rugby development within the **Priority 10 Framework**: a conceptual framework for teaching Touch Rugby focussing on 10 key areas.
- The following exercises are for use in lessons and are intended to be simple to learn and aimed at the introduction of Touch Rugby in schools.
- This Unit covers a teaching period of 6-8 weeks with 6 weeks of lesson topics, followed by 2 weeks of modified and full games revisiting or reviewing specific technical skills development or tactical game understanding in game scenarios. Teaching notes, example questions and definitions are included to provide teachers with further knowledge and to help with questioning and observations for assessment purposes.
- A typical lesson will incorporate a **Priority 10 Concept**, which is the focus area of the wider session. All lessons will cover all of the relevant game elements including: athletic development or movement skill work, skills development, understanding of the Priority 10 touch concepts and knowledge of basic strategies and tactics used in Touch Rugby.

EQUIPMENT

Minimal resources are required to teach Touch Rugby and all schools should have much of this equipment already:

- Touch Rugby balls (size 4 rugby balls) or any ball suitable for Touch Rugby (e.g. footballs, netballs, basketballs, etc).
- Cones (round marker cones to mark out playing areas plus optional pointy “witches hat” cones or different coloured cones to denote the Try lines).
- Bibs (or other clothing or headwear) to identify different teams.
- Whistle/hooter for officiating games.
- Medical bag/first aid supplies in the event of an injury (or access to the first aid room/first aiders).

LESSON STRUCTURE

The lesson structure below is based on a lesson duration of 50 minutes to 1 hour. Teachers can adapt the number of skills development exercises utilised in each lesson based on allotted time for that lesson. See below for an example lesson outline:

- Activation Task (switch out of classroom mode) to start - 5 minutes
- Exercise from Rules & Exercise Booklet - 10 minutes
- Exercise from Rules & Exercise Booklet - 10 minutes
- Progressive Game - 20 minutes
 - Each week a new skill or rule is layered on until a full game of Touch Rugby is being played.
- Cool down (including debrief and question time) - 5 minutes

Allow for regular hydration breaks throughout the session.

PRIORITY 10 & GAME CONCEPTS

A critical part and focus for all lessons is the development of each student’s conceptual understanding of Touch Rugby. This Introductory Unit is therefore designed to prepare teachers and students alike for all of the **Priority 10 Concepts** that will follow at a later stage.

Introductory Unit	Lesson Focus	Priority 10	Exercise	Objectives
Lesson 1	Movement & Evasion Skills	n/a	Various	Students are introduced to Touch Rugby and the basic movement and evasive running skills.
Lesson 2	Invasion of Space	Dominant Contest	Roll Ball	Students are taught how to invade space and apply invasion tactics, as well as learning how to execute the roll ball and dominate the ruck.
Lesson 3	Defending as a Team	Defending Space	Close the Gap	Students are taught how to defend space by working as a team in a defensive shape.
Lesson 4	Passing	Passing for Advantage	Backwards Passing Technique	Students are taught how to pass the ball backwards whilst running forwards and how to pass to gain advantage over defenders.
Lesson 5	Defending as an Individual	Defensive Profile	Making a Touch & Getting Back Onside	Students are taught how to make a defensive touch with good body profile and positioning and then move quickly to an onside position.
Lesson 6	Attacking Space	Attack Lines	Where to Run?	Students are taught how to scan for space and run into spaces at different angles.
Lesson 7	Tactical Problem-Solving	All	Games of Touch Rugby	Follow on from previous lessons with an emphasis on game play and different attacking and defensive tactics.
Lesson 8	Revision / Review			

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: MOVEMENT & EVASION SKILLS

CONCEPT / BACKGROUND

This Introductory Unit begins with an overview of some of the fundamental movement and evasion skills required in Touch Rugby. Teachers are encouraged to inform students that Touch Rugby is a physical game which will improve cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength.

Movement and Evasion Skills covered in this lesson include the following:

- Speed & Agility
- Basic Catching & Passing
- Aerobic Endurance
- Scanning & Spatial Awareness

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Objectives:

- To introduce students to the physical conditioning required for games of Touch Rugby.
- To introduce moments where agility and balance are used in a game of Touch Rugby (i.e. to evade defensive touches).

Outcomes:

- Students are able to use footwork to maintain balance and change direction at speed to evade defenders.
- Students are able to change direction using both feet.

TEACHING POINTS

To improve students' agility and footwork:

- Students need to learn how to shift their body weight from one foot to the other.
- Students need to learn how to read the visual cues a defender gives when defending:
 - **Hips not square** - if they are turned to one side, learning that their body weight is leaning toward that side and so will be slow in turning and recovering, i.e. weak to defend the opposite side so that is the direction to run in.
 - **Eyes** - if their eyes are focused on your feet they are likely to be slow at reacting to changes in direction.
- To be able to change direction off each foot at speed.
- To be able to accelerate and decelerate quickly.

DEFINITIONS

Teachers are to ensure the following terms are referred to throughout lessons and each term is clearly explained:

- **Scoop:** referring to the action taken when an attacker picks up the ball from the ground at speed, i.e. 'scooping' up the ball.
- **Try Line:** referring to the line on which attackers must place the ball on or past to score a try. In Touch Rugby, 1 try is equal to 1 point.
- **Drawing Defenders:** referring to the action of fixing or attracting a defender towards the ball carrier. The ball carrier can draw defenders to them by moving with the ball and 'drawing' defenders away from where they were to create space and open up gaps in the defence.
- **Offside/Onside:** referring to the rule that once a touch has been made, all defenders need to retreat 7 metres backwards from the point where the touch was made (the "mark"). Whilst the defenders are retreating 7m, they are **offside**. When they have retreated 7m, they are **onside** and (once the dummy half's hands touch the ball), they are allowed to advance forward to make the next touch.

COMMON FAULTS

Some common faults when students are learning movement skills:

- Over reliance on one side or singular type of footwork (i.e. ability to side-step off left foot only).
- Only looking in the direction you are running in. It is essential to be able to trust your own footwork and keep your eyes focused on the defenders in order to be able to read the cue they are showing.
- Missing cues that defenders are showing and implement incorrect decision-making around footwork.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: MOVEMENT & EVASION SKILLS

EXERCISE 1

Half Scoop Attack

See Diagram 1 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' agility around a single point whilst holding the ball (encourage holding the ball with 2 hands to enable the ability to execute a pass at any time).

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up as shown in Diagram 1 - cones in a Y formation (all cones 5m apart).
- Queue of students start at Cone C.
- Students take turns to run forward and **scoop** the stationary ball (placed width-way, not length-way) at Cone A.
- After scooping up the ball, students should accelerate forwards and then step left or right before Cone B - then return to the queue.
- Students should alternate between stepping left and right.

Progressions:

- Teacher can say which cone to step towards (audible cue) "red cone" or point to which cone to step towards (visual cue) so students can practice reacting to these cues.
- Teacher can replace Cone B and simulate cues that students need to look out for:
 - Hips** - square or turned left/right
 - Body weight** - forwards or backwards
 - Acceleration** - quick to stop or fully committed and unbalanced

EXERCISE 2

Step & Swerve

See Diagram 2 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' agility around multiple points and encourage changes of direction at speed.

Set up & Execution:

- Set up two grids (5m x 5m in size) with cones in each corner.
- Students line up behind Cone A and Cone B.
- On the cue 'Go', students run forward and in and out of the first two cones then swerve around the back cones and then back to the start through the centre of both grids (as shown by the arrows in Diagram 2).

Progressions:

- Increase the distance and/or angles between the cones.
- Increase number of cones to swerve around.
- Substitute cones with poles (if available).
- Students can race each other to make the exercise more competitive:
 - One student starts on Cone A and one student starts on Cone B and the teacher shouts "Go". The winner is the first student to get back to the starting cone on their side.
 - In pairs with two students standing behind one another on Cone A or Cone B and the teacher giving a 3-5 second delay on each "Go" before the student behind starts to chase the student in front around the same set of cones. Students should practise being both the runner and the chaser.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should practice scooping the ball up with one hand from the floor by placing their hand under the ball (placed width-way), scooping it up and then quickly securing it safely in both hands. Having the ball in both hands also enables students to execute passes more easily and with greater accuracy.
- Students should practice evading the cone by stepping both sides.
- If progressed:** Students should practice reading cues given by their Teacher and adapt their footwork accordingly.

Assessment:

- When I scoop up the ball how many hands should I use? Why?**
 - Try to scoop up the ball with one hand.
 - To maintain running stride and continue forward momentum whilst also picking up the ball.
- When running towards a defender, what should I do?**
 - Try to evade a touch from the defender by using footwork and agility to change direction at pace (using a side-step or swerve) or by decelerating and accelerating again quickly and running into space.
 - Ensure that you are not too close to the defender when you decide to change direction so that they cannot touch you.
- If progressed: When running towards a defender what should I be looking for?**
 - Cues to look for that will help to evade a defender:
 - Hips
 - Body weight
 - Acceleration/deceleration

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should practice side-stepping and swerving around the cones whilst maintaining balance and control of their body.
- Students should practice accelerating and decelerating around each cone.
- Teachers should ensure students alternate starting on Cone A or Cone B to maximise the different directions they are running in.
- If progressed:** Students should practise running and changing direction at speed whilst being chased and practising this movement skill under pressure.

Assessment:

- Why is it important to practice changing direction at speed for Touch Rugby?**
 - To evade touches from defenders.
 - To mirror the movements of attackers in order to catch them.
- How can I maintain my balance and control when going around each cone?**
 - Decelerate as you approach each cone and then accelerate away from each cone to the next one.
- If progressed: Where should I look when I am being chased?**
 - Always look in the direction you are going and keep changing direction at speed to evade touches from the chaser. Do not look behind you at the chaser - you will lose balance and may collide with what is in front of you.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: MOVEMENT & EVASION SKILLS

EXERCISE 3

Slalom Defence Exercise

See Diagram 3 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' lateral and backwards movement with increased difficulty.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up cones in slalom formation (see Diagram 3). All cones should be at least 5m apart.
- Players start at Cone Z.
- Facing the same direction:
 - Run forwards and outside of Cone A;
 - Run diagonally across to Cone B;
 - Run backward diagonally to Cone C;
 - Run forward diagonally to Cone D; and
 - Finish with a run backwards to Cone E.

Progressions:

- Run in reverse starting from Cone E.
- Introduce a defender chasing an attacker. The attacker has a head start beginning at Cone A with the defender at Cone B. The attacker must carry ball in both hands whilst running.

EXERCISE 4

1 v 1 Attack and Defence

See Diagram 4 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to use their agility and footwork to evade defenders.

Set Up & Execution:

- Grid is usually 10m in length and 15m in width.
- For more than 6-8 players, set up a second grid.
- Players queue behind Cone A and Cone B.
- Attackers and defenders run in opposite directions and around their cones.
- The game is 1 v 1 where attackers are attempting to score a try on or over the try line without being touched by a defender.
- Change roles on return to the queue.

Progressions:

- Make it easy or harder for defenders by adjusting the width of the grid (start with wider and progress to narrower to increase the challenge).
- Teacher can begin to hint at the cues that attackers should be looking for: 'look at the angle of the defender's hips' or 'look at the defender's body position'.
- Progress to 2 attackers vs 1 defender and allow them to pass:
 - If bringing 2 v 1 into the game, you can begin introducing further game concepts such as:
 - Drawing defenders - fixing, engaging or attracting defenders to the ball by running directly at them with conviction and fixing them in place to be able to pass to a support runner.
 - Running support lines - holding space by being wide and deep enough to catch the ball and beat the defender being fixed and gain more territory. This is an example of passing for advantage.
 - Executing "dummy passes" - deceiving defenders by giving false cues (pretending to pass and not letting go of the ball).

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to showcase agility in all directions, including sideways, backwards, diagonally forwards and diagonally backwards.
- Students should be able to showcase agility whilst holding the ball in both hands ready to execute a pass.
- If progressing:** Students should be able to showcase this skill at speed and when under pressure.

Assessment:

- When I am running at the defence, where should I be looking?**
 - Straight forwards, eyes always on the defenders (having already pre-scanned for where the space is before you caught the ball).
- How should I be holding the ball whilst running evasively?**
 - With two hands round the middle of the ball.
 - At chest height to execute quick passing more easily.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to see and attack space where there are no defenders using scanning and spatial awareness.
- Students should be able to use their agility and footwork to evade oncoming defenders.
- Students should be able to recognise and adapt to cues that defenders are giving and adjust accordingly.
- If progressed:** Students with the ball (ball carriers) should begin to evaluate whether passing to an attacker in space can create an advantage or not depending on the positioning of the defender.
- If progressed:** Students without the ball (support runners) must stay in space to make evading the oncoming defender possible.
- If progressed:** Students should be aware that in order to receive the ball, they must be behind the line of the ball so that a backwards pass can be effected (forward passes are not permitted in Touch Rugby same as with other forms of rugby).

Assessment:

- Where is the best place to run into to evade a defender?**
 - into the spaces either side of the defender.
- How can I evade an oncoming defender?**
 - By using your footwork (side-step or swerve) and agility (change direction at speed plus accelerate and decelerate).
- What cues should I look for in a defender who is about to make a touch?**
 - Speed and balance of defender (where is their momentum?).
 - Body position before the touch (in front or to the side of you?).
 - Hips square or hips turned left or right.
- If progressed: How can I draw the defender towards me?**
 - Move with the ball in space and attract the defender towards you by running directly towards them with conviction.
- If progressed: How can I support the attacker with the ball?**
 - Move into space (which is unmarked by defenders) and stay behind line of the ball so the ball carrier can pass to you.
- If progressed: How should we attack space?**
 - Run into space with the ball using footwork and agility or pass to an attacker who is in space and unmarked.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: MOVEMENT & EVASION SKILLS

EXERCISE 5

Rover

See Diagram 5 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to attack space and use agility to evade defenders.
- To develop students' aerobic fitness, communication and spatial awareness.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up a grid: 30m x 30m
- Split your students into two teams: attackers and defenders - usually around 6-10 attackers but only 6 defenders at one time.
- The aim of the attackers is to run from one side of the grid to the other without being touched.
- Defenders can only operate in one half of the grid, with the other half being a safe zone for attackers.
- Once touched, an attacker must return to the safe zone before rejoining the attack.
- Scores are calculated by the number of attackers who get across the try line in the time limit.

EXERCISE 6

1 v 1 Attack and Defence (Scoop Race)

See Diagram 6 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to use their agility and footwork to get around defenders.
- To get students to read cues and change their evasion behaviour based on the cues the retreating defenders are showing.
- To get students to force defenders to make decisions and show their body profile and their team's defensive shape and react positively to their change of profile and shape by reading cues.
- To introduce the concept of "offside defenders".

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up a grid: 10m long x 7m wide as shown in Diagram 6.
- Students queue up behind each other at the top and bottom of the grid. One line of students will attack and the other will defend.
- The defender (D) begins with the ball in the middle of the grid and runs towards the attacker (A).
- D places the ball on the ground one metre in front of A.
- A can now start by **scooping** up the ball and attempting to score a try on the "try line" at the other end of the grid.
- D needs to get back to the 7m (explain the **offside rule**) before they can make a valid touch on A.
- Change roles after a period of time.

Progressions:

- Introduce the concept of running directly at defenders to draw them one way (turn their hips in one direction so their balance and position is compromised) and then step or swerve away from them in the other direction.
- Introduce 2 attackers versus 1 defender, where the attacker has to draw the defender to create space for the other supporting runner to accelerate into space and receive a pass before the ball carrier is

touched.

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ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to use their peripheral vision to identify where the defenders are and where the space is.
- Students should be able to use their agility and footwork to evade touches from defenders or execute a rollball to the side of a defender.
- Students must be able to scan the defensive shape and communicate to their team mates where defenders are and what options exist to run evasively, pass for advantage or take the touch and win the rollball.

Assessment:

- How can I score a try?**
 - To place the ball on or over the try line (and before the dead ball line) before being touched by an onside defender.
- How can I evade a defender?**
 - By using evasive running and agility to step and swerve around defenders or use dummy passes as false cues.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to scan and attack space where there are no defenders.
- Students should be able to use their agility and footwork to evade defenders using techniques like side stepping and swerving.
- Students should be able to recognise and adapt to defensive cues (e.g. hips turned one way or the other) and adjust their evasive running accordingly.
- Students should recognise when a defender is offside or onside and the implications of this. **Space can be behind offside defenders!**
- If progressed:** Students should recognise the cues defenders give when retreating (e.g. turned hips, balance, speed, line of retreat).

Assessment:

- When is a defender offside?**
 - When they have made a touch and haven't retreated 7m.
- When does a defender not retreat 7m?**
 - When a touch is made between the 7m line and the try line, defenders only ever have to get back to their try line (with both feet touching the line before advancing when the ball is played, e.g. when the half has their hands on the ball).
 - When the game starts/re-starts or a penalty is given. Defenders need to retreat 10m on these occasions.
- What can't defenders do when they are offside?**
 - Make a valid touch.
- What happens if a defender tries to make a touch from an offside position?**
 - The referee will call "offside, play through" and play advantage. If the defender obstructs or disrupts play (and no advantage is forthcoming) then a penalty will be given against the offside defender.
- How can attackers take advantage of defenders being offside?**
 - Attack the space behind them and try to beat them in a foot race.
 - Take the defender on, and when they show a cue (e.g. hips turned in, out or square), change your direction of running.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: MOVEMENT & EVASION SKILLS

PROGRESSIVE GAME 1: SUPER 6S (RUNNING RUGBY NETBALL)

Objective:

- To introduce students to the game of Touch Rugby through the use of **simplified games** which can be progressed during each lesson.
- These **progressive games** should take place at the end of every lesson and a new skill or rule should be added to further develop students' technical skills and tactical game understanding. By Lesson 5, students should have progressed to playing Schools Festival Touch Rugby (see page 2 of the Rules & Exercise Booklet for details of this version of Touch Rugby and a QR code which links to a video and voice over commentary of the game being played to give both teachers and students a frame of reference for what the game should look like). In this version, any infringement by the attacking team just counts as a touch (to enable students to replay any errors). However, as technical skills and game understanding increases, infringements can become turnovers/changes of possession, as they are under the formal rules: www.EnglandTouch.org.uk/play/how-to-play/the-rules/.

Set Up & Execution for SUPER 6s:

- Set up a pitch which is quarter of the size of a standard rugby pitch (approximately 30m width x 50m length). The pitch size can be amended according to the number of students and ages (e.g. smaller pitches for Year 7 versus bigger pitches for Year 11).
- Set up a scoring zone (grid of 4 cones in a 3m by 3m square) at both ends of the pitch.
- Each game should have 2 teams of 6 players (each team can have additional players in the sub box - located on the sideline halfway up the pitch - and students must wait until a player is off the pitch before subbing on). Bibs should be used to distinguish teams.
- Games can be any length depending on the time available. If a class of approximately 30 students is split into 4 teams playing on 2 pitches then you could play 2 x 6 minute halves with a 2 minute half-time break or 12 minute straight through and then swap the teams around so they are playing against different people each week. Encourage students to play in different teams each week to promote social cohesion.

Rules of SUPER 6s:

- The **aim of the game is to score a try** by running evasively or passing the ball into the scoring zone and scoring a try (only the attacking team are allowed inside their scoring zone - **and 2 passes must be completed before the scoring zone is deemed open**). **1 try equals 1 point**.
- The attacking team starts the game (or re-starts the game following a score) on the half-way line by placing the ball on the ground, releasing it with their hands, tapping it with their foot and picking it up ("**the tap off**"). The attacker may decide to run or pass.
- The defending team must wait 10m back from the half way line until the attacking team has tapped off the ball to start/restart the game.
- Attackers are encouraged to run evasively to avoid defensive touches or pass the rugby ball (in any direction) to an attacker in space.
- Defenders can stop an attacker from running or scoring a try by making a touch on the attacking ball carrier and call "**touch**" when a touch has been made so that the teacher/referee can count each touch (a valid touch is any touch on the ball carrier - ideally aiming for the ball carrier's shoulder - valid touches include touches on clothing/the bib, hair or the ball itself).
- Once the ball carrier has been touched, they must stop running, tap the ball on the ground and then pass it to a team mate (this counts as one touch). If the ball carrier's momentum takes them far past the location where the touch occurred ("**the mark**"), the ball carrier must return to the mark before tapping the ball on the ground. *This teaches students to anticipate and prepare for when a touch is likely to occur.*
- Once a team uses all **6 touches**, a change of possession occurs and the ball is turned over to the other team. The game continues from the location of the last touch.
- Changeovers in possession** also occur when an attacker drops the ball or runs outside of the playing area (or the ball goes outside of the playing area) or a defender intercepts the ball - with the first touch after any interception being counted as zero and the touch count will start at 1 from the next touch after.
- If the ball is knocked down by a defender, this does not result in a turn over of possession. The attacking team retain possession of the ball and the touch count restarts at 1.



SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 2

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ROLL BALL

CONCEPT / BACKGROUND

“**Dominant Contest**” is the concept that during every roll ball, there is a contest occurring. The responsibility of an attacker is to contribute to the team’s go-forward momentum. This is achieved by running on to the ball at pace and from depth and, upon the touch being made, ensuring the roll ball happens quickly, is error free and contributes to the team’s good attacking momentum. To achieve this, the attacker should try and initiate the touch themselves by running evasively and getting to the side of the defender when executing the roll ball in order to prevent the defender from disrupting the roll ball in any way, and thereby dominating this contest.

Conversely, the defender should try and slow down the attacker’s momentum and not make it easy for them to execute a quick and clean roll ball. The defender should try and use their footwork and agility to get in front of the attacker and make the touch in this position in order to dominate the contest and slow down or achieve a stop on the attacking team’s momentum.

In summary, this **Priority 10 (“P10”)** concept reinforces the idea that both attackers and defenders understand that there is a contest at play during every roll ball and that they need to win this element of the game as often as possible (“**win the ruck, win the game**”).

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Objectives:

- the most critical skill requiring execution by an attacker when going forward with momentum is the **Roll ball**. This lesson’s objective is to introduce players to the technical skills required to execute the roll ball, as well as develop an understanding of the P10 concept of **dominant contest**.

Outcomes:

- Roll ball execution should be strong and effective and importantly, the ball carrier should not be pushed off, disrupted or in any way distracted by a defender’s actions. This is referred to as a “**dominant roll ball**”.

KEY TEACHING POINTS

To execute a dominant roll ball, the attacker should:

- Run from depth at pace with commitment and energy.
- Focus their eyes on approaching defender.
- Transfer the ball from two hands when running (so that passes can be made quickly) into one hand so that the other hand can initial the touch on the defender whilst the other hand executes a dominant roll ball. *Students should be able to execute a roll ball with both their left and right hands.*
- Decelerate slightly to control momentum and maintain balance.
- Apply ‘footwork’ and use agility to get to the side of the defender to execute the roll ball.
- Lower their body position going into the touch by bending at the hips and engaging their core to maintain strength and balance.
- Make the touch on the side of the defender’s body, ideally on their hip or thighs in a low body position.
- Place the ball on the ground (static) with control between their feet and step over the ball to complete the skill.

DEFINITIONS

Use the following terms throughout and explain what is meant by each:

- **Dominant roll ball:** means dominating the roll ball and winning the ruck. For an attacker to dominate the roll ball, they must have executed the roll ball by initiating the touch on the defender (ideally to the side and in a low body position) and maintained the attacking team’s momentum without being impeded in any way by the defender. For a defender to dominate the roll ball, they must get in front of the attacker and disrupt the roll ball by holding up the attacker and stopping them from executing the roll ball thereby slowing down or stopping the attacking team’s momentum.
- **Beating your opponent to the bend:** means, when effecting a roll ball, to be first to bend into a low but strong body position when the roll ball occurs in order to win the ruck. Beating opponents to the bend is essential to dominating the roll ball contest and winning the ruck.
- **Initiating the touch:** means the attacker transferring the ball into one hand, extending out the hand without the ball and making a touch on the defender at the same time as executing the roll ball.
- **Strike dump:** refers to a roll ball executed at pace, usually for phase play (e.g. a scoop) or during line attack.
- **Dominant touch:** means a touch made a defender that prevents an attacker from executing a quick or clean roll ball and maintaining attacking momentum.

COMMON FAULTS

Common faults students make when executing a roll ball:

- **Loss of control** - resulting in the ball being dropped, fumbled, kicked or rolled forwards. *The ball cannot move forwards in a roll ball but it can roll up to 1 metre backwards. However, it is strongly encouraged to teach students to place the ball static on the ground to encourage quick play and to prevent knock-ons (loss of control in the roll ball).*
- **Not stepping over the ball** - ensure that the ball is placed between student’s feet and their hips go over the ball when they step over it.
- **Hips not square** - hips need to be square to the defensive try line.
- **Going over the mark** - students need to practice initiating the roll ball when it is imminent and not waiting for defenders to make the touch and then going over the mark and losing momentum.

SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 2

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ROLL BALL

EXERCISE 1

Basic Roll Ball Exercise

See Diagram 7 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To execute a basic roll ball by hinging at the hips, placing the ball on the floor between both feet and stepping over it.
- To be able to execute the roll ball using both hands.

Set Up & Execution:

- The grid you are using should accommodate the number of students participating. For more than 6 students, set up queues with students lined up behind each other.
- The grid should be 10 metres long and as wide as needed for the students taking part in the lesson.
- Demonstrate the roll ball action, i.e. hold the ball in one hand, place it on the ground between both feet and step over it.
- On the cue 'Go', the attackers (each with a ball) should run forwards towards the cones and just before reaching them, they should kick out/step to the side and then execute a roll ball next to the cone.
- The attackers should then run to the other end of the grid, turn around and run back scooping up the ball up and passing it to the next student lined up in the queue.

Progressions:

- To test that students can roll the ball with both hands (and react to verbal cues), teachers should call which side of the cone to roll the ball on.
- To get repetitions in, pair up students. The first student runs forward 5m and rolls the ball, then the second player scoops up the ball up and runs another 5m to roll the ball. Rinse and repeat down the grid.
- To create defensive pressure, nominate an attacker and defender and in pairs they have to face each other and on "go" they should both try and win the ruck by dominating the roll ball.

EXERCISE 2

Y Exercise

See Diagram 8 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To improve students' ability to get to the side of the defender.
- To improve students' ability to execute a roll ball using both hands.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up the grid like the Diagram 8 with the cones in a Y formation (all cones should be 5m apart).
- Students queue up behind Cone C and, one at a time, scoop the ball up from Cone A and, using footwork and agility, step to either the left or right of Cone B - executing a roll ball next to it.

Progressions:

- Teacher or a student can replace Cone A and instead give verbal or visual (point or show using their profile - hips, position, balance) cues as to which side to execute a roll ball.
- Teacher or a student can move laterally between the cones to make stepping to the side harder for the students.
- Teacher can replace Cone B with defenders who will make a touch on the attacker - the skill to prioritise here is initiating the touch.
- Progress from passive to more active defenders.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to place the ball on the ground and step over the ball whilst maintaining forward momentum.
- students must show good technique when rolling the ball (e.g. hinging at the hips, hips being square to the ruck, etc).
- Students must be able to roll the ball using both their left and right hands.
- Initiating the touch is important as it allows attackers to roll the ball at the point on the pitch where the touch has been made ("**the mark**")
- If the roll ball is executed away from where the touch was made this results in a change of possession and a penalty. The referee call for this is occurring is "**over the mark**".
- When rolling the ball, hips need to be square (i.e. facing the try line the attack is running towards). If the hips are facing away or towards the sideline when rolling the ball, this will result in a change of possession and a penalty. The referee call for his infringement is called '**hips not square**'.

Assessment:

- **Why is it important to initiate the touch?**
 - To control when and where we roll the ball.
 - To ensure we are rolling the ball on the mark.
 - To avoid going over the mark and having to come back to the mark to roll the ball and losing the attacking team's momentum.
- **How do we want to place the ball when rolling it?**
 - Static and not bobbling around - this helps the half to more easily pick up and pass the ball and not knock it on.
 - Horizontally or parallel to the try line. This also helps the half to more easily pass the ball in either direction straight off the ground.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to roll the ball using both their left and right hands.
- Kicking or stepping to the side before you roll the ball ensures your body is to the side of the defender making the touch.
- Kicking or stepping to the side makes it more difficult for defenders to get a strong dominant touch on you (hold you up) and slow down the roll ball.
- Students need to read the cues of the defender to understand which side is better to execute the roll ball on. Cues include direction of the defender's hips, speed/angle of their approach and their balance going into the touch.

Assessment:

- **Why is it important to initiate the touch as an attacker?**
 - To control the location of the roll ball.
 - To ensure that the ball is rolled on the mark.
- **Why is it important to kick/step to the side when rolling the ball?**
 - To unbalance the defender and prevent them from making a strong dominant touch in front of you.
 - To protect the ball by outstretching your hand and maintaining distance between yourself and a defender who may be attempting to disrupt the roll ball.
 - To be able to bend / not be held up by the defender (**beat them to the bend**).

SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 2

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ROLL BALL

EXERCISE 3

Midfield Roll Ball Drill

See Diagram 8.1 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To execute a dominant roll ball whilst under pressure.
- To highlight correct technique (i.e. stepping/kicking to the side, extending the arm closest to the side of the defender to initiate the touch with, getting low and beating the defender to the bend and prioritising getting the ball down and maintaining momentum (over making extra yards by trying to step, getting caught and having to be back to the mark - stopping the attacking team's momentum).

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as per Diagram 8.1 in the Booklet.
- Using a 10m x 10m grid, with attackers line up behind Cone A and defenders line up behind Cones B and C. The teacher should stand half way between both lines of players with a bag of balls.
- On a cue given by the teacher, both an attacker and a defender should run out from their cones. The lines of defenders choose between them who will come out and make a touch.
- The attacker needs to catch the ball, and step/kick to the correct side and execute a technically clean roll ball. The skills being developed are the ability to catch the ball running and quickly transfer the ball to the correct hand whilst also stepping/kicking to the correct side of the defender and executing a clean roll ball.

Progressions:

- To test students can roll the ball whilst under pressure, send out both defenders at the same time.
- Here the skill is called 'bend and fend', whilst under pressure it is more important to get the ball rolled quickly and cleanly rather than to try to get more yards through footwork. Therefore players should bend early and extend their arm forward in front of them to initiate the touch and get the ball down quickly in front of the defender.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Can students transfer the ball quickly from one hand to the other?
- Can students use the correct footwork to step/kick to the side of oncoming defenders?
- Can students protect the ball from an oncoming defender by putting a more physical touch on the attacker (standing them up)?
- **If progressed:** Can students **bend and fend** - roll the ball before the defenders can put a lot of pressure on them by bending early and executing the roll ball whilst fending defenders off the ball using their hand (note: this can occur in front of defenders, as well as to the side of defenders).

Assessment:

- **Why is it important to 'bend and fend'?**
 - It is more important to execute the roll ball quickly and maintain momentum than it is to try and get to the side of defenders and make extra ground. A quick roll ball is higher in the cascade of priorities than gaining an extra couple of yards per touch. Momentum is key!
 - By bending and fending in the roll ball you ensure the half can pick it up quickly and create momentum.
- **Why is it important to get your body between the defender and the ball?**
 - To protect the ball and ensure defenders do not disrupt the roll ball.
 - To prevent defenders trying to knock the ball out of your hand.



SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 2

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ROLL BALL

PROGRESSIVE GAME 2: SUPER 6S (RUNNING RUGBY NETBALL)

Objective:

- To teach students how to **invade space and apply invasion tactics** effectively.
- To develop technical skills used in **side-stepping** and **swerving** to evade touches from defenders.
- To develop technical skills used in the roll ball to get the ball down quickly (bend early, get to the side of a defender, place the ball down static with control between the feet and step over it).
- To teach students that the closest player to the roll ball picks it up as half and passes to continue play.
- To teach students to support the ball carrier and for the ball carrier not to run off without support.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up as per Lesson 1.

Rules:

- Rules as per Lesson 1 with the following rule changes and game progressions.

Rule Changes:

- Once an attacker has been touched, they must stop **“on the mark”** (or return to the mark if they have gone over it) and perform a roll ball instead of tapping the ball on the ground.
- The roll ball should be executed as practised in the lesson (i.e. hips square to the try line they are attacking, placing the ball static on the ground between their feet and stepping over it).
- Once the roll ball has occurred, the closest teammate should pick the ball up as half and pass it.
- **The half cannot run with the ball and touches on the half do not count** - instead defenders must wait for the ball to be passed by the half before making their next touch. *The half should scan for space and pass the ball as quickly as they can without delaying play. If the half is taking too long to make a pass, the teacher/referee can initiate a countdown by which time the pass must be made, e.g. “pass the ball in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1” and if the half has not passed by then you can give possession to the other team.*



SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 3

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS A TEAM

CONCEPT / BACKGROUND

The most basic defensive concept to develop with students who are new to Touch Rugby is the idea that all defensive actions are about preventing attackers from invading territory, attacking space and gaining attacking momentum.

From an early period in the evolution of Touch Rugby, there was a misguided emphasis on marking up in defence primarily due to the limited numbers on the field. Teachers often reinforced this idea with the language they used by continually asking “who have you got”? “mark up on your player”, “stay on your player”, etc.

In reality, marking up in defence is flawed. What is more critical is not who we are marking as defenders, but where is the ball now and which space (between defenders) is each defender responsible for? Herein lies the second priority concept of **Defending Space**. It is critical that students understand that **we defend spaces not faces!**

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Objectives:

- To introduce students to the concept of defending space (gaps/holes between defenders) by blocking access to spaces for attackers.

Outcomes:

- Students will learn to defend as a team to identify threats to space and cover threats ensuring no defenders are isolated.
- Students will learn that by moving as a defensive unit and defending space together, they are reducing the options that attackers have to score tries.

KEY TEACHING POINTS

To defend space, defenders must:

- identify which side of the field they are defending (left or right), as this determines their short side (the primary space they are responsible for defending if they make a touch - space with the least defenders outside of them) and their open side (the space they are responsible for defending if a defender infield makes a touch - with more defenders inside of them).
- identify where the attacker with the ball is and which direction they - or the ball - are moving in.

Key principles of defending space:

- The defender opposite the ball carrier should position themselves slightly outside the shoulder of the ball carrier - effectively blocking space to the defender's short side.
- At the point in time that the touch occurs, the touching defender should protect their short side and remain on the outside shoulder of the ball carrier as they retreat to the line.
- The other defenders should now move to cover the spaces and maintain their connection with the other defenders (i.e. when a touching defender retreats at a diagonal angle to protect their short side, they open up space on the inside so the other defenders must stay connected to close that space).
- Students need to identify the 'defensive shape' that has been created by defending space in this way.

DEFINITIONS

Use the following terms throughout and explain what is meant by each:

- Defending space:** refers to defending the space you are responsible for (between defenders) rather than defending a specific attacker.
- Short side:** refers to the side with the least defenders outside of you. A link's short side has one defender (a winger) whereas the open side has 4 other defenders (middle - middle - link - winger).
- Mark up:** refers to marking up the opponent opposite you numerically.
- Defensive shape:** refers to the positioning and alignment of defenders (vertical separation and horizontal connection).
- Space:** refers to the gaps between defenders (note - usually every defender has responsibility for one space only and that this space can change from short side pre-touch to open side post touch depending on where the ball moves to next).
- Exit:** refers to the retreat line a defender takes after making a touch (i.e. straight back, at an outward angle to protect their short side or an inward angle to protect their open side, etc).
- Threat:** refers to the perceived scoring threat being posed by the ball carrier, support runners or the movement of the ball.
- Onside:** refers to the rule that once a touch has been made, all defenders have to retreat backwards 7m from the point on the pitch where the touch has been made (“the mark”). Until a defender makes it back 7m, they will be referred to as “off-side” by the teacher/referee/student and they cannot re-engage with the game and make any more touches until they are back onside. If they interfere with play or obstruct whilst off-side, a penalty will be given against them.

COMMON FAULTS

Some common faults players make when defending:

- Defenders not scanning or turning their back on play when retreating to get back onside and do not have awareness of where the ball is.
- Defenders standing opposite their opponent regardless of where the ball is situated. Defenders should stay connected and know which space next to them is their short side and which is their open side - and they should only cover one space at any point in time.
- Large spaces between defenders in the defensive line due to defenders losing their connection as a result of the attacking plays.
- Defenders do not respond, or are slow to respond, to ball movement.
- Defenders are not effectively communicating if they can cover their space.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS A TEAM

EXERCISE 1

Close the Gap

See Diagram 9 and 9.1 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- Students should develop an understanding that there is too much space to cover (as an individual defender) and that defenders need to work together to cover all of the spaces.
- To avoid any defender becoming isolated and having to defend more than one space at any point in time.
- This lesson requires students to problem-solve and create better strategies to defend space (i.e. the gaps between defenders).
- Students should develop an understanding that, in Touch Rugby, the best defensive strategy is to defend spaces as a group and not to defend individuals one on one. **Defend spaces, not faces!**

Set Up & Execution:

- See Diagram 9 to set up the exercise. Use one end of the try line (i.e. 50m long x 15m wide - the width can be changed depending on the number of students participating).
- Defenders start on the try line and cannot advance more than 1m from the this line. Attackers (each with a ball) start 15m away.
- The aim of the exercise is for attackers to evade the defenders and run through the gaps between them and get over the try line without being touched (a score - 1 point - results when both of the attacker's feet cross the try line).
- If attackers are touched, they must start again 15m away. Attackers who have scored a point should stay in the end-goal area after scoring (the space between the try line and the dead ball line).
- Each team is given a 60 seconds to score as many points as possible. The team who scores the most points wins.

Progressions:

- Designate scoring zones between cones. If attackers enter between cones, the try is worth 5 pts. Defenders learn to cover the central area as a priority (see Diagram 9.1).
- Introduce the ball in attack. Now defenders need to stop the team scoring a try by running through the cones whilst carrying the ball. This should allow players to identify where the threat is

EXERCISE 2

Basic Defensive Exercise

See Diagram 10 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To focus on the technical skill of making a touch and touch exit.
- To close down space quickly but decelerate when nearing the attacker (slow momentum) so that defenders have the ability to change direction quickly and respond to the attacker's movements.
- To approach an attacker with feet slightly apart vertically (and always on your toes).
- To communicate with the other defenders which space you are responsible for pre and post touch so that everyone is working as a unit to defend spaces.
- To approach an attacker with feet slightly apart vertically - on your toes - and make the touch in front of the defender - aiming for their shoulders and use their forward momentum to push off them (always with bent elbows) to assist you getting back onside .
- To retreat backwards at speed post-touch whilst keeping watch of the attacker's actions.
- To wait in an onside position for half to play the ball before advancing.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Can students identify that defending together is better than defending on their own?
- Can students identify what and where the attacking threat is?
- Can students identify that there is too much space on a pitch to defend and that there is a need to come up with strategies to overcome this.
- Are students aware what space they are responsible for?
- **If progressed:** Can players identify that protecting the central area is more important than defending the space between the winger and the side line?
- **If progressed:** Can players identify that the ball is the main threat and defending the space closest to the ball is more important than defending space without it (i.e. not to mark up on opponents).

Assessment:

- **How can defenders work together to be successful?**
 - Maintain the connection between your fellow defenders, keeping the gaps between defenders small so that no attackers can run or score in between us.
 - Communicate where the attacking threat is to my teammates.
- **What space am I responsible for?**
 - The space between me and the next defender closest to the threat (i.e. if the ball is on the left edge of the pitch then the space I am responsible for is between myself and the next defender on the left).
- **What space is the most important to defend?**
 - The spaces in between the defenders. Defenders need to move together as a defensive line and stay connected to defend the spaces in between then. In this instance, only the space between the wingers and the side lines is exposed, which gives the defensive line time to move quickly with the ball to cover that space if the threat moves there.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- How can defenders approach their opposition in a balanced way?
- How can defenders make a touch with both hands and also with each hand on their own? *If a defender is making a touch with their left hand, it is important that they are also leading with their left foot. Defenders' hips should be turned towards the space they are protecting in case they need to chase out quickly.*
- How can defenders slow down whilst approaching attackers and ensure they are making the touch in front of their attacker rather than on the side or behind?
- How can defenders show competency in the objectives of this drill, (i.e. making a technically good defensive touch with good profile and positioning, using effective communication and exiting from the touch whilst keeping the ball in their sight line?

Assessment:

- How can defenders make a dominant touch?
 - Position yourself in front of the attacker using agility and footwork, making a touch on their shoulders and pushing off to assist with momentum for getting back into an onside position.
- How far does the defensive line have to retreat from the mark once a touch has been made?
 - 7 metres

SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 3

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS A TEAM

EXERCISE 2 - CONTINUED

Set Up and Execution:

- Set up Diagram 10 in the Booklet - a grid 25m wide x 7m long (the width can be adjusted for the amount of students present).
- The teacher instructs the defenders to advance forward from the try line (as a referee would instruct) and for the defender in front of the ball carrier to advance to make a touch, as soon as the touch is “imminent” (the defender is approximately 1m away from the ball carrier and is about to make a touch).
- As the defenders advance towards the attackers (who are passive and standing still to begin with), the defenders can practice both the angle they approach at and the hand they make the touch with.
- Once the touch has been made, the defenders must exit backwards outside - ensuring they maintain eye contact with the ball carrier.

Progressions:

- Defenders can become more active and move towards defenders (meeting around half way in the grid). Once the touch has been made, both can return to their starting positions and swap roles.



ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- **Skills involved in making a defensive touch:**
 - Are students balanced when making the touch?
 - Are students using the correct hand and foot forward when making a touch?
 - Is the body weight initially backwards to help their exit?
 - Is the body profile correct to protect their short side?
- **Skills involved in making an effective exit following a touch:**
 - Have students positioned themselves outside the attacker’s outside shoulder (post-touch) to ensure they are protecting that space (also known as “winning the outside shoulder”)?
 - Are students watching the ball/attacker during the entire exit?
 - Are students able to retreat 7m and then bounce off the line?
 - Was the short side protected when retreating backwards?

Assessment:

- **Why should you not be flat footed when exiting a touch?**
 - Having flat feet instead of a good profile makes it harder to change directions when retreating.
- **When am I allowed to make a touch?**
 - Once you have retreated 7m from the mark and the half has played the ball (touched the ball).
- **If I have made the touch, why should my body be positioned on the outside shoulder of my attacker?**
 - To protect your short side.



EXERCISE 3

1 v 1 ‘Race to on-side’

See Diagram 11 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To implement the skill of making a touch and **exiting at speed**.
- To introduce the **offside rule** (i.e. once a touch has been made, defenders need to retreat 7m backwards towards their try line from the mark. Until they are back outside, defenders cannot advance forwards to make the next touch).

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up Diagram 11 in the Booklet - a 10m x 10m grid (set up multiple grids if needed depending on student numbers).
- A defender approaches a stationary attacker at the top of the grid and make a touch.
- This touch initiates a race to an on-side position between the attacker and defender.
- The attacker then attempts to score a try before the defender retreats back to the try line to get outside and makes a touch on them.

Progressions:

- Explore different tactics which could be employed for an attacker or a defender with regard to the 7m offside rule.
- **Attack:**
 - Taking the defender one way to then step back the other way.
 - Adding in footwork to see if the defender can compete.
- **Defence:**
 - Pushing off the attacker to get horizontal separation.
 - Keeping eyes on attacker not the try line.
 - Keeping hips square but moving the attacker to one side.
- Introduce a short side by placing a scoring zone on the try line that is worth 5 points. Attackers can either score a point or 5 points. defenders need to keep them away from the short side.

SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 3

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS A TEAM

PROGRESSIVE GAME 3: SUPER 6S (RUNNING RUGBY NETBALL)

Objective:

- To introduce scoring on the **try line**.
- To teach students how to make a touch and **retreat to an inside position**.
- To teach students the rule that if the half is touched in possession of the ball then a change of possession occurs. This will be referred to as **"half caught"** by the teacher/referee.
- To introduce scanning and decision-making for the half - whether to run (and potentially take advantage of offside defenders) or pass.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up and execution as per Lesson 2 with the following change.
- **Set Up Change:** remove the grid of cones at the end of each pitch and replace with 2 x try lines running along the end of each pitch (across the width of the pitch). Option to add a further line of cones 5m behind each try line to denote the end of the pitch (dead ball line).

Rules:

- Rules as per Lesson 2 with the following rule changes and game progressions.

Rule Changes:

- Once a touch has been made, all defenders must retreat approximately 2m away (in any direction) from the mark (the location on the pitch where the touch occurred). Until they have retreated, they are **offside** and any touches they make will not count until they are back inside.
- The half now has the **choice** whether to pass the ball or run with the ball, however, **if the half decides to run and is touched in possession of the ball then a changeover of possession will occur**. *The half may wish to consider what the touch count is to decide whether to take the risk of running with the ball or not. Touches on the half do not count if they half does not decide to run with the ball and they can execute a pass.*



PRIORITY 10 SKILL: PASSING FOR ADVANTAGE

CONCEPT / BACKGROUND

This concept focuses on the ability to recognise the advantages to be gained from ball movement. There are numerous instances in a game - some tactical or planned - where extra passes can create options for the attacking team (e.g. executing one more pass to a support player if that player is in a better position to make more distance towards the try line or compromise the shape of a defender and create an advantage).

This concept also recognises that passes should not be 'forced' - especially at particular times during a game. By providing students with practice at recognising the cues presented to them, there are extensive advantages to be gained from moving/shifting the ball quickly rather than trying to run evasively with it. **The ball can move faster than players!**

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Objectives:

- To introduce students to different types of passes used in Touch Rugby and the correct technical passing techniques.

Outcomes:

- Students should be able to scan, read defensive cues and choose the right pass to create an advantage.

KEY TEACHING POINTS

Teaching points necessary for students to pass correctly and to create an advantage:

Proximity cues:

- Attackers should be taught to scan defenders and to notice when they are too compressed or not compressed enough (when defenders have lost their connection to one another and uneven gaps have opened up between them) and to pass the ball early in order to exploit the space that is being presented by these different defensive line shapes.

Extra Pass:

- Attackers should be taught, via training drills, to scan (eyes up and looking across the defensive line) and to pass to an attacker in space if there is advantage.
- It is important for teachers to improve students' vision by creating game specific scenarios to challenge/develop the ability to read cues (e.g. a defender's body profile)
- Students should be taught the correct passing technique and this should be reinforced through isolated skills practice and in games (e.g. hold the ball out in front chest high, use the dummy pass to test if defenders are fixed, communication with support players, etc).

Quick Shift Passing:

- Teach technique for passing and catching on the run (i.e. hands out (arms outstretched) reaching towards target, catch off the chest, pass with hands finishing extended towards target).
- Practice quick shift or at least two or three passes from half. Explain reasons or the game situations for a quick shift (e.g. getting to sub box quickly, to deal with fast line speed, etc).

DEFINITIONS

Ensure you use the following terms throughout and explain clearly what is meant by each:

- Scan:** refers to the process whereby an attacker scans to identify space and/or looks at the profile of defenders and shape of the defence and identifies various cues presented.
- Shift:** refers to quick passing or shifting off the ball down the attacking line. This can be done to quickly move the ball to space or when passing under defensive pressure.
- Release:** Refers to the cue or call from supporting attackers to the ball carrier to pass the ball. Re-enforces early and clear communication.

COMMON FAULTS

Some common faults players make when attempting to pass for advantage:

- Poor technical pass or catch technique.
- Attackers not trained to look for the correct defensive cues.
- Attackers running too far with the ball rather than passing earlier.
- Attackers pre-determining their action (passing off) without any knowledge of where the defenders are positioned. e.g. passing to support players who are already covered by a defender.
- Attackers not scanning early - even before the roll ball takes place.
- Attackers forcing passes as a result of the defenders applying pressure with defensive line speed.
- Supporting attackers not providing audible cues to the ball carrier, e.g. "pass left/right" or "long/short/deep pass".



PRIORITY 10 SKILL: PASSING FOR ADVANTAGE

EXERCISE 1

Partner Ball Grip Exercise

See Diagram 12 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To introduce students to the correct way to hold and pass the ball.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as in the booklet - 25m wide x 5m long - change the width of the exercise to accommodate the number of students.
- One ball between two students facing each other.
- The ball carrier throws the ball into the air above them and catches it.
- Whilst securing the ball they are to rearrange their grip so as to have thumbs on top, fingers underneath, palms spread, etc, before passing to the ball to their partner.

Progressions:

- Remove the initial ball toss and simply vary the types of passing between partners (e.g. low, high, spinning, etc).
- Vary the distance between partners to increase difficulty.
- Introduce a time element, balls must be caught and passed in a X seconds.

EXERCISE 2

Static Line Passing Exercise

See Diagram 13 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to pass backwards down the line of attacking players.

Set up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as in the booklet - 20m wide x 20m long - change the width of the exercise to accommodate the number of students.
- Students pass down the line ensuring that the ball goes backwards toward the receiver (A to B to C, etc).
- Teacher to ensure that each pass is executed with correct technique.
- Students should use key cue words to reinforce their actions.
- When the ball reaches the end of the line, students should turn around (facing the opposite direction) and repeat the passing sequence back down the line.
- First practice should be relatively slow to ensure correct execution, but speed can be increased and even races between lines of students can be done for fun and variety.

Progressions:

- Increase the distance between the students to test their passing skills.
- Ensure students are executing left to right passes and right to left passes.
- If you have enough students, set up a second grid and get them to race the ball up and down the line.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- It is important to focus on how to catch the ball so that it is in the correct grip to pass quickly if needed. If players catch incorrectly, they waste time adjusting their grip before passing.
- A correct grip includes:
 - Both hands around the middle of the ball.
 - Fingers splayed to increase contact surface area between hand and ball.
 - The ball should be caught in the hands, not by using the chest to buffer the ball.
 - The ball should be brought back to a neutral position in front of the ball carrier's chest with elbows bent. This way they are able to pass in both directions.

Assessment

- What is the impact of catching the ball with correct grip and off your chest?
 - It increases the speed in which we can release the ball to our teammates.
- Why is it important to catch and release quickly?
 - To be able to move the threat (the ball) into space before the defence can adjust.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- When passing the ball, are players using correct technique?**
 - Passing through the ball not swinging front high to low.
 - Ending with hands extended towards the target.
 - Using their feet in the correct position to generate greater more power.

Assessment:

- What is faster, an attacker running with the ball or passing the ball?**
 - The ball is faster than an attacker running evasively.
- What is the best way to attack space - by running into it or passing the ball to someone who is already in it?**
 - Passing the ball to an attacker who is already in space and running onto the ball at an angle based on the shape of the defence and the gaps between defenders.



PRIORITY 10 SKILL: PASSING FOR ADVANTAGE

EXERCISE 3

Acting Half Pass Exercise

See Diagram 14 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To introduce students to the skill of “half” passing.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as in the booklet - 10m x 10m - 8 students per grid - set up more exercises to accommodate the number of students.
- On each corner of the grid place 2 students. Student 1 will be half - passing from the floor, and student 2 will be catching and performing the roll ball.
- In a clockwise rotation, get Student 2 to execute the roll ball through their legs for Student 1 to pass it to the next corner. There, the student catching the ball will roll it for their partner who will pass the ball from the ground to the next corner in the sequence.
- Change directions and the roles of the players after X minutes.
- Note: the student performing the roll ball player must always face out of the square and all passes should be backwards.

Progressions:

- If there is a second grid, race the ball around to force players to complete these technical half passing skills at pace.
- Introduce a second ball in the grid - get the balls to race each other to see if they can catch the other ball up.

EXERCISE 4

Line Passing Exercise - Running

See Diagram 15 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop a students’ ability to pass backwards down the line whilst running forward.

Set up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as in the booklet - 20m wide x 20m long - change the width of the exercise to accommodate the number of students.
- Students run forward and pass down the line ensuring that the ball goes backwards toward the receiver (A to B to C, etc) and that each pass is executed correctly.
- Use cue words to reinforce students’ actions.
- When the ball reaches the end of the line, the student on the end then passes the ball onto the next waiting line of students.
- Continue repeating the drill and reinforcing hands up to catch (give a target), correct grip of the ball, catching the ball off the chest and using only enough force to make for an easier catch.

Progressions:

- Increase the distance between the students to test their skills.
- Ensure students are executing left to right passes and right to left passes.
- Getting the students to realign after each pass (i.e. run backwards so they are now positioned behind the ball carrier and can now receive a pass back). Once this has been established, get the students to pass the ball back down the line where it came from finishing with the first student to have passed the ball.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Can the half get to the ball quickly?
 - The quicker, the better - less ball down time!**
- Can the half pass the ball from the floor rather than wasting time picking the ball up before passing?

Assessment:

- What are the specific rules in Touch Rugby relating to the half?
 - The half can run with the ball - but can’t score - and if there is a change in possession if they get touched holding the ball.



ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Can students maintain good passing technique whilst introducing running with the ball?
 - Common errors are stopping to make a pass, swinging arms to generate power, legs kicking in the air rather than generating power through the ground.
- Introduce good behaviours in students when catching the ball:
 - Start deep (at least 2m) to be able to run onto the ball at pace.
 - Use effective communication when you want the ball to be passed to you.
 - Catching the ball whilst running rather than when static.
- Introduce good behaviours once the ball has passed:
 - Realign so that supporting attackers are behind the ball and are a viable option for a return pass.
 - If they stay in front of the ball carrier, they are effectively out of the game.

Assessment:

- Why is it important to realign after you’ve passed the ball?
 - In Touch Rugby, the ball is often passed in both directions very quickly and if supporting attackers do not realign then they are not a viable passing option, as forward passes result in lost touches (Schools Touch Rugby Festival Rules) or a loss of possession (standard Touch Rugby rules).

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: PASSING FOR ADVANTAGE

EXERCISE 5

Catch & Pass 'Weave' Exercise

See Diagram 16 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to pass the ball under the added pressure of distractions.
- To teach students to look at defensive cues and also to look in the direction they are running in.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as in the booklet - 20m wide x 20m long - change the width of the exercise to accommodate the number of students.
- Students should line up in queues behind each line and at both ends.
- The first line of students run out and pass the ball backwards all the way down the line to the end of the grid.
- Once the ball gets to the end of the grid, the line of students turns around and does the same exercise back - except now with the added pressure of the next line having set off towards them.
- The challenge now is to weave in and out of the lines while executing the catch and pass skill without being distracted.

Progressions:

- Get the line of attackers to pass the ball twice through before getting to the end of the grid.
- Set up more lines of students to create more people to weave around.

EXERCISE 6

Sliding Defence

See Diagram 17 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to pass for an attacking advantage at speed and to respond to defensive cues.

Set up & Execution:

- Use the try line (50m wide) and start approx 20m out from this line.
- The numbers of attackers v defenders can vary - start with 4 v 3.
- This exercise requires attackers to shift the ball quickly to try and beat the sliding defenders (no cut out balls).
- Place defenders at starting points as shown in the diagram.
- Attackers are always given a head start so as to simulate a compressed defensive line with defenders positioned on the inside of their opponent.

Progressions:

- Set up for left to right or right to left passing so students are practising both sides equally.
- Can introduce the attackers running in-lines (running into the space on a defender's open-side rather than short-side).
- Increase the difficulty by changing the starting positions of defenders or delaying the arrival of the defenders.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should now be able to pass and catch almost instinctively, and to trust where their teammates are on the pitch.
- Can students now scan, read defensive cues (or in this case, the movement patterns of a second line of attackers) and react positively to this movement without it affecting their ability to competently pass and catch the ball?
- Can students continue to execute their pass and catch skills under more time pressure and increased distractions.

Assessment:

- Why is it important to scan the movement of defenders and the shape of the defensive line when passing and catching the ball?**
 - To be able to see where the space is and move the ball to that space.



ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to see where the space is and move the ball into this space at speed.
- Students should be able to communicate to each other when they want the ball to be passed to them and use specific language (e.g. "pass short left" or "pass long right").
- Students should learn to run into separate gaps in the defence (never the same gap) to fix defenders and create more viable options for the ball to be passed to and increase scoring opportunities.

Assessment:

- Why is it important to straighten up my attacking running line after I have run at an angle initially?**
 - If I run into my supporting attacker's channel then I am reducing the space they have to attack and the passing options available. If I have more attackers in a smaller space, defenders have a smaller space to defend and this therefore reduces the attacking threat.
- What is the best way to attack space?**
 - By passing the ball into space; the ball is faster than any attacker running with ball in hand so I should pass the ball into the space where my teammate is (or perform a "dummy" pass to threaten one space and then score in the space in front of me - if my defender is deceived by the dummy pass).

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: PASSING FOR ADVANTAGE**PROGRESSIVE GAME 4: SUPER 6S INTO SCHOOLS TOUCH RUGBY FESTIVAL RULES****Objective:**

- To introduce the concept of **running forward and passing backwards** (i.e. passing backwards away from the try line which is being attacked).
- To develop students' technical "Touch Rugby style" passing skills both from half and whilst running.
- To teach students to get behind the ball carrier to support play (*also known as re-aligning behind the ball - ideally at least 2m deep and wide from the ball carrier*).
- To teach students to react quickly to changes in possession and get behind the ball carrier to provide a passing option to them.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up and execution as per Lesson 3.

Rules:

- Rules as per Lesson 3 with the following rule changes and game progressions.

Rule Changes:

- The **first pass in any new set of possession must be backwards** (whether at the start/re-start of a game or following a change in possession during the game due to an infringement by the attacking team or the touch count being used up).
- All **subsequent passes can be in any direction** (following a touch by a defender and a roll ball occurring or in open play), including forwards towards the try line that is being attacked.
- **Two passes are no longer needed** to open up scoring on the try line.



PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

CONCEPT / BACKGROUND

This Priority 10 Concept further develops the idea that there are basic defensive actions which every defender must learn in order to make an effective defensive touch, exit to an inside position quickly and efficiently and then be ready to advance again to make touches until the touch count has been exhausted by the attacking team.

This concept examines the varying tactics which can be applied when making a defensive touch. In order to defend spaces effectively, the body profile of a defender is critical. The main tactic used by defenders is to position their body in front of or to the side of the attacker, depending on the type of touch that needs to be made in different game scenarios (midfield defence which is usually a more dominant touch and line defence which can be less dominant with more focus on pre and post touch positioning, etc) and to exit as quickly and efficiently inside post touch.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Objectives:

- The most critical skill requiring execution by a defender is **making a defensive touch**. This lesson's objective is to introduce players to the skills involved in making a defensive touch and technically good pre and post touch body profile and positioning of individual defenders.

Outcomes:

- The key outcome for the defender is **to slow or achieve a stop on attacking momentum** and to have the **correct body profile and positioning to defend the space** they are responsible for and which is being threatened by the attacking team.

KEY TEACHING POINTS

To make a dominant defensive touch, the defender must:

- identify which side of the pitch they are defending as this determines their short side and the initial space they are responsible for.
- close the space quickly between themselves and the attacker but slow down and remain balanced (and agile to change direction and mirror an attacker's movements) when about to make a touch.
- approach the attacker with their inside leg (closest to the open-side) forward of the outside leg (closest to the short-side), which also assists with the hips being turned out also towards the short-side so that a defender can move quickly towards defending the primary space they are responsible for.
- prepares to make a touch by raising the correct hand which is the inside hand (closest to open-side). Using the correct hand also ensures shoulders (as with hips) are turned out and facing towards the short side. *It is helpful to point at defenders with this hand whilst advancing to make the touch so that the correct hand is used.*
- Push off the attacker (using minimal force) and exit towards the short-side in an efficient running manner (not using small steps and running backwards or back-peddling), always keeping eyes on the attackers to scan defensive cues to inform "post-touch actions".

DEFINITIONS

Use the following terms throughout and clearly explain the meaning:

- **Defensive profile or body profile:** refers to the positioning of the defender's body (as they make the touch) in such a way as to maintain balance in the touch, whilst maintaining a sound base for applying power to enhance subsequent changes of direction. Defenders should exit from the touch to protect space as well as allow for any appropriate re-alignment in the defensive line.
- **Short side:** The side of the pitch with the least amount of defenders at the point of the touch, e.g. left middle only has left link and left wing outside of them (2 defenders) but right middle, right link and right wing inside of them (3 defenders). So the short-side would be on the left and the open-side would be on the right.
- **Pulling corner:** refers to the defender's exit line following making a touch whereby the defender retreats diagonally towards their short side (to protect and block the more vulnerable space).
- **Space:** refers to the spaces/gaps between defenders in the defensive line or the space between a defender and the side line. Each defender should only be responsible for one space at each point in time pre and post touch (this can change quickly though).

COMMON FAULTS

Some common faults when exiting after making a touch:

- Defenders do not know which side is their short side.
- Defenders make the touch with the incorrect hand (e.g. left hand crossing over the right to make a touch, which twists their body profile and compromises their ability to protect their short-side).
- The touch not being made on outside shoulder of an attacker.
- Defenders exit straight backwards with their shoulders, hips and toes all square and pointing forwards.
- Defenders fails to protect their short side by altering their profile too early (e.g. start off exiting correctly but square up before they are inside).
- Defenders pulling too great an angle when exiting and over-exposing the open-side and their ability to chase out to cover inside space if attackers switch the point of attack.
- Defenders fails to keep their eyes on play post-touch and are not in the right position to defend the next phase of attacking play (e.g. a defender continues on an exit line angle to protect their short when the ball has moved in the opposite direction).
- Defenders fails to communicate effectively.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

EXERCISE 1

Profile Exercise

See Diagram 18 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' skills set around **making a touch and exiting**.
- To be able to execute this skill and moving left and right.
- To ensure students understand that **correct body profile** is especially important when defending their own try line.

Set Up & Execution:

- Exercise set up like the diagram - 7m x 20m; the width of the exercise can be adjusted for the amount of students.
- Attackers line up opposite defenders.
- The teacher instructs the defenders to advance forwards (as would a referee) and make a touch.
- The teacher will nominate the correct hand defenders are to use.
- As the defenders approach the attackers (who are passive to begin with and simply standing still), they need to adjust their defensive/body profile to make the required touch.
- If the teacher calls "left", the defender raises their left hand and adjusts their body position accordingly to make the touch with the left hand and exit to their short-side.
- Reinforce the following points as the exercise is progressed (e.g. when using the left hand):
 - Raise the left hand.
 - Close the space initially but decelerate when in close proximity of the attacker slowly (do not sprint all the way up the them).
 - Turn body outward (facing slightly to the right).
 - Ensure the left foot is ahead of the right foot.
 - Lean forward and make the touch pushing off with minimal force.
 - Exit backwards on a diagonal angle to the right side but keeping eye on attacking play the entire time.

* Emphasise rules here - defenders must get back 7m onside and must not interfere with attacking play until they are back onside.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students need to develop their spatial awareness and peripheral vision to know how far 7m is when they are exiting back towards the try line but keeping their eyes on attacking play.
- Students should be clear on which side of the pitch is their short-side and which side is their open-side.
- Students should be taught that when making the touch with a single hand, they will naturally end up with their hips facing a certain side-line. Furthermore, students need to understand the importance of having their hips turned to face their short-side initially post-touch so that they are in a good position to defend that space.

Assessment:

- If the short side is on my left, what hand do I want to use?
 - The right hand.
- Where should I be looking post-touch and whilst exiting?
 - At where the ball is moving to (keep your eyes on attacking play).



ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- There are different types of touches which can be employed by defenders in the midfield of the pitch or near the try-line depending on the game scenario at play (e.g. "dominant touches" in the midfield with the outcome of trying to win the ruck and "flick touches" used to make minimal contact with ball carrier and exit as quickly as possible to get onside).
- Dominant roll ball technique:
 - Position yourself in front of the ball carrier.
 - Lower your body position (beat the attacker to the bend).
 - Make a strong (but safe and valid) touch with on the shoulder.
 - Prevent the attacker from getting the ball down quickly and cleanly (disrupt the roll ball).
 - Use the attacker's momentum to push yourself back onside.
- In Lesson 2, we explored why it is advantageous for attackers to kick to the side when making a roll ball. The converse is true for defenders who want to make these touches in front of the attacker.

Assessment:

- What constitutes a hard touch?
 - When the touch is made with arms fully extended and unnecessary force has been applied to push the attacker.

SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 5

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: DEFENDING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

EXERCISE 2 - CONTINUED

Set up & Execution:

- Set up the exercise as shown in Diagram 19 in the booklet - a 10m wide x 5m long grid (depending on numbers set up multiple grids).
- Attackers and defenders face off either side of a line of cones with the attacker only being able to move laterally.
- The defender attempts to move laterally mirroring the attackers movements.
- If the defender can move forward and make a touch with two hands on the shoulders, they receive 1 point.

Progressions:

- Progress to defenders gently pushing off attackers and exiting back on an inside position afterwards.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Assessment (continued)

- Why is dominating the roll ball in defence advantageous?
 - It slows down the attacker's ability to execute a clean and quick roll ball, thereby slowing or stopping the attacking team's momentum; and
 - it gives defenders time to get onside and maintain good defensive shape and connections.



PRIORITY 10 SKILL: PASSING FOR ADVANTAGE

TOUCH RUGBY GAME 5: SCHOOLS TOUCH RUGBY FESTIVAL RULES

Objective:

- To develop the concept of **passing backwards for advantage** to defenders in space.
- To develop students' technical "touch rugby style" passing skills both from half and whilst running (lateral passing).
- To teach students to re-align back behind the mark after each touch.
- To teach students to scan for space and make decisions whether to run evasively, effect a dynamic roll ball or pass for advantage to a defender in space who can progress the ball further up the pitch.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up and execution as per Lesson 4 with the following change.
- **Set up change:** the pitch should be expanded so that it is now the size of half a standard rugby/football pitch (50m wide and 70m length). Touch Rugby would be played from sideline to sideline on one half of a standard pitch. See set up on page 2 of the Rules and Exercise Booklet.

Rules:

- Rules as per Lesson 4 with the following rule changes and game progressions.

Rule Changes:

- **All passes must now go backwards** and attackers must continue to re-align behind the mark after every touch to be in a position to receive a valid pass from the half.
- In Touch Rugby School Festival Rules, any infringements from the attacking team should count as a touch so if any passes are thrown forwards then the attacking team loses a touch and the game restarts with a roll ball. In normal Touch Rugby rules, a forward pass is a penalty and a change of possession occurs. This rule can be brought in as the pass/catch competency of the students increases.
- The attacking team will likely start to realise that it is difficult for all passes to go backwards with defenders in the way, however, it is recommended to ask the students what problems the "all passes must go backwards" rule change has created and give them an opportunity to problem solve this themselves. Hopefully, they will deduce that the defenders being "offside" is the problem and then this rule can be brought into the game (as set out in the next bullet point).
- Once a defender makes a touch, **all defenders must retreat 7m back towards their own try line.**
- The only times a defender does not have to retreat this distance is if a touch is made closer to their try line than 7m out (only have to retreat back to the try line - 2 feet on the line) or if a penalty is awarded to the attacking team (must retreat 10m).
- This progression now **requires a teacher to control the offside line** and this is achieved from being positioned behind the defensive line and calling defenders onside and offside as appropriate (and keeping the touch count). If a defender is offside, the teacher/referee should call "offside - play through" to enable the attacker to take advantage of the offside defender and break through the defensive line. If a defender interferes with play from an offside position and there is no advantage then the teacher/referee may award a penalty against the defending team (who must retreat 10m from the new mark set by the teacher/referee) and the attacking team are also awarded 6 more touches.
- Refereeing games of Touch Rugby is a moderate to vigorous physical activity in itself so **teachers might want to encourage students to practice refereeing games too** from Year 7 onwards - working first on calling out the touch count and calling defenders back onside - with the teacher helping with calls like forward passes or "over the mark" (performing the roll ball far past the mark). In getting involved in refereeing the game, students will start to pick up the rules better but also develop stronger communication skills as a result of officiating games and learn that there are many roles that can be filled during PE lessons, as referees and coaches, as well as players.

SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 6

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ATTACKING SPACE

CONCEPT / BACKGROUND

This lesson is designed to give students who are new to Touch Rugby a deeper understanding of the most effective means of running with the ball or running in support of the ball carrier. Here is a recap on the basic actions we are looking for when students are attacking space:

- Hold the ball with both hands so that passing can be executed quickly (the ball should not be tucked under one arm).
- Scan for space (gaps between defenders or either side of the defensive line) do not run directly at defenders.
- Use speed (acceleration/deceleration), agility (change direction at speed) and footwork (sidestep/swerve) to evade touches from defenders.
- Attack spaces as both the ball carrier and as support runners.
- Supporting attackers should communicate early to the ball carrier to pass to gain advantage.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Objectives:

- To introduce students to the concept of attacking space and the different methods used in Touch Rugby to achieve this.

Outcomes:

- Students should be able to scan, read defensive cues and choose the correct running lines with and without the ball.

KEY TEACHING POINTS

Teaching points necessary for students to attack space correctly and to create an advantage:

Direct Line:

- The attacker **runs straight into the space** in front of them and draws the defender closes to them.
- The attacker may **scoop the ball as half** and run forward (initially) as close as possible to the inside shoulder of the defender who made the last touch.
- The attacker's line should be as direct as possible to exploit the offside defender whose touch would not be valid.
- After running a direct line to exploit an offside defender, the attacker may then change their angle to additionally draw any onside defenders (referred to as a "**saver**"). If the saver is drawn then the ball carrier should pass into space. If the saver is not drawn then the ball carrier should break the defensive line (and if they are half - look for a "**live**" attacker to pass to who can score).

In Line:

- The attacker starts outside their opponent and runs an "**in line**" to attack the space their defenders leaves on their inside - open-side (with balance working against them).

Out Line:

- The attacker starts inside their opponent and runs an "**out line**" to attack the space their defender leaves on their outside - short-side

Bounce or A Line:

- The attacker starts attacking one space (fakes in-line) and then bounces out to attack a different space (runs out-line).

DEFINITIONS

Use the following terms throughout and clearly explain the meaning:

- **Direct Line:** refers to a running line that attacks the space behind the mark or defender making the touch. Direct lines are usually straight forward or at a slight angle.
- **In Line:** refers to a running line whereby the attacker begins their run from a wide position (space/gap outside their defender) and changes direction and runs at the space/gap inside their defender.
- **Out Line:** refers to the running line whereby the attacker begins from a close in-field position (inside or level with their opponent) and then runs outside their defender (exploiting space outside defenders who are positioned too far in-field).
- **Bounce or 'A' line:** refers to a running line whereby the attacker (who begins on the outside of a defender), changes their inward running line to an out-line (bouncing out) . This enables attackers to get outside their opponent and catch them unbalanced.
- **Working off the ball:** refers to the lines of running and changes of direction made by supporting attackers, who are moving into space and offering passing options to the ball carrier.

COMMON FAULTS

Some common faults players make when running attacking lines:

- Attackers always running sideways across the pitch without drawing any defenders.
- Attackers not scanning or reading defensive cues correctly and picking the wrong running line.
- Attackers not running fully through the defensive line or try (stopping to anticipate touches as opposed to taking advantage of offside defenders).
- Attackers running too close to onside defenders.
- Attackers being too wide of the play.
- Attackers not catching the ball due to focussing on the defender or space in front of them.

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ATTACKING SPACE

EXERCISE 1

In & Out Attacking Lines

See Diagram 20 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to attack space using attacking running lines on both the inside and on the outside of their defender.
- To develop students' ability to work 'off the ball' as a supporting attacker.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up a 15x15m grid (set up multiple grids for large groups).
- On one lines of the grids, set up 4 pairs of cones as shown in diagram, approx 2m apart. Use paired cones of the same colour.
- Students line up in two queues opposite the cones on their markers.
- On the Teacher's cue, attackers run from their marker to Cone A/B and then change direction to run through the designated space as indicated by the teacher (i.e. "green" or "blue", etc).
- Debrief the group and explain that attackers run into "space" rather than at or near to a defender.

EXERCISE 2

In & Out Attacking Lines - Part 2

See Diagram 21 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to attack space - both on the inside and outside of their defender whilst ball playing.
- To develop students' ability to work 'off the ball' - and move / compromise the profile and position of defenders whilst doing so.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up a 30x15m grid (set up multiple grids for large groups).
- Half way through the grid, set up 4 pairs of cones as shown in the diagram, 2m apart. Use paired cones of the same colour.
- Students line up in four queues opposite each other, as shown in the diagram.
- Introducing a ball, 2 attackers run out and pass the ball between them before the line of cones. The receiver must then run an "in" or "out" line to pass through the cones.
- The two attackers then pass the ball off to the next line of students who run out and repeats this exercise.
- Ensure students change which side they are passing from to develop both a left and right pass off different running lines.

Progressions:

- Teacher calls out which colour cones the receiver must run through.
- Remove the middle markers to test if attackers drift early or if they have discipline and start in front of their defender.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should now be able to react positively to the audible or visual cues from the Teacher and change their running line.
- Students should understand the difference between running attacking in-lines and out-lines.

Assessment:

- What does an attacking in-line look like?
 - A running line where you start outside of your defender and change direction and run into the space on their inside shoulder.
- What is an "inside shoulder"?
 - This is usually on the open-side of the defender.
- What does an attacking out-line look like?
 - A running line with you start inside or in front of your defender and run into the space on their outside shoulder.
- What is an "outside shoulder"?
 - This is usually the short-side of the defender.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should be able to run in and out-lines at speed whilst holding a ball.
- Students should be able to communicate which type of running line they are using so that the ball carrier can adjust their pass according to the anticipated running line.
- If progressed:** Can students execute an accurate pass under the pressure of receiving an audible cue from a supporting attacker?
- If progressed:** Do students understand that by running straight at them, they are making it easier for defenders to make touches on them.

Assessment:

- What type of pass should I give for an in-line?
 - A light and easy catch, such as a 'flat' or 'pop' pass (otherwise it might be too difficult to catch).
- Why might I run straight initially before kicking into an in-line or an out-line?
 - To draw a defender and make them less able to adjust and defend space.



PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ATTACKING SPACE

EXERCISE 3

Blocked

See Diagram 22 in the Rules & Exercise Booklet

Objective:

- To develop students' ability to catch the ball and scan for space.
- To develop students' ability to read defensive cues to inform their decision-making on how to best attack space.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up a 15x15m grid (set up multiple grids for larger groups).
- Set up 5 x cones on one of the lines in the grid - 2m apart.
- Two lines of students queue up behind Cones A and B. Students on Cone A will each have a ball each whilst students on Cone B will start without a ball.
- Two defenders should stand behind the line of cones.
- On the command "go" from the Teacher, students on Cone A should pass the ball to the students running out from Cone B.
- On the same command, defenders should place themselves in 2 spaces between the cones (thereby blocking two of the channels).
- Attackers must catch the ball, scan which channels are free, and adjust their running lines to run through the free space.
- The teacher should adjust the timing and distances of markers to ensure there is a continued challenge.
- Ensure students practice both left and right hand passes and that all passes go backwards.

Progressions:

- Introduce A lines or Bounce lines (run and attacking in-line and then change direction to bounce out).
- Defenders have the option to adjust which space to block (after they have chosen an initial space) forcing attackers to react to the late movement and adjust their running lines accordingly.

ASSESSMENT / TEACHING POINTS

Teaching Points:

- Students should now be able to react positively to defensive cues and adjust their running lines accordingly.
- Students should understand the difference between in-lines and out-lines.
- Students should be able to communicate which line they are running to the ball carrier and supporting attackers around them (so that they do not run into the same space).
- **If progressed:** Students should be able to identify when using a bounce line would be advantageous.

Assessment

- What is an A line or Bounce line?
 - An attacking line which is initially an in-line (to elicit as response from their opponent) and then bounce out to get on the outside of the defender (whose position they have compromised with the initial in-line) with the intention on getting on the outside of this defender and attacking space on their short-side.



SCHOOL RESOURCES CARD

SECONDARY SCHOOLS KEY STAGE 3 & 4: LESSON 6

PRIORITY 10 SKILL: ATTACKING SPACE

TOUCH RUGBY GAME 6: SCHOOLS TOUCH RUGBY FESTIVAL RULES

Objective:

- To teach students that they need to scan early for space (before they receive a pass) in order to position themselves effectively in attack.
- To teach students what defensive clues to scan for in order to adapt their attacking running lines (individual defender body profiles pre and post touch and the shape of the defensive line).
- To teach students that early communication is required in order for the ball carrier to be able to react to these audible cues and pass the ball to support runners at the appropriate time.

Set Up & Execution:

- Set up and execution as per Lesson 5 (full Touch Rugby pitch as set out on page 2 of the Rules and Exercise Booklet).

Rules:

- Rules as per Lesson 5 with the teacher/referee focussing on the following elements of the game.

Rule Clarification:

- Once any defender steps into the space between the 7m line and the try line, **all defenders must then continue to advance forwards - away from the try line - when the ball is in play** (half has put their hands on the ball) and they must continue advancing until the touch is **“imminent”** (the defender closest to the ball carrier is approximately 1m away and about to make a touch). This is known as the **“standoff”** rule and is designed to prevent defenders from camping on the try line.
- This rule also provides attacking teams with the opportunity to attack space both horizontally (the space in between defenders) and vertically (the space behind defenders) - and to select their attacking plays and running lines accordingly - making the game more exciting from an attacking perspective.
- This rule is only triggered once any defender enters the space between the 7m line and the try line.



TOUCH RUGBY PROGRESSIVE GAMES: STEP BY STEP

TOUCH RUGBY GAMES 7 & 6: SCHOOLS TOUCH RUGBY FESTIVAL RULES

Objective:

Lessons 7 & 8 are for playing **modified games and full games of Touch Rugby**. This is an opportunity to focus on any areas of the game where technical skills or tactical game understanding need to be developed in a game scenario. Teachers can choose which level to start a **progressive game** at and then progress or regress the game specific to the need of the students they are teaching.

Additionally, these final lessons are an opportunity for students to **explore** the different attacking and defensive tactics which can be employed in Touch Rugby and to **creatively problem-solve** different tactical areas of the game and work together to **find solutions**, thereby also developing students' interpersonal skills. Examples of different tactical problems posed in Touch Rugby are set out below:

Attack:

- What are the different ways we can advance up the pitch towards the opposition's try line? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches?
- How can we substitute players on and off the pitch - with only 6 players permitted per team at any time - without losing attacking momentum?
- How can we create space between defenders to run through without being touched?
- How can we take advantage of the off-side rule?

Defence:

- How can we ensure that the least number of defenders are off-side at the point in time that the touch is made?
- How can we prevent individual defenders from being isolated and susceptible to being passed around?
- How can defenders work together put more pressure on the attacking team's decision-making and passing?
- Do we have to defend in the same way in all areas of the pitch or are there any areas we can employ a higher risk defensive strategy?

MODIFICATIONS teachers can use for all games if needed:

- Encourage students who are holding onto the ball for too long to pass the ball within a given countdown. If play becomes too congested then the teacher can promote more movement by throwing in a different ball and telling students to play from the location of the new ball.
- Promote short passes and more movement to support play by insisting on no passes over head height (of the tallest person in the group).
- Dropped balls can be a changeover of possession or not depending on the pass/coach competency of the group of students or the teacher can say that X number of dropped balls by any team will result in a change in possession.

Increase INCLUSIVITY and ENGAGEMENT for all by enabling individual students to be actively involved:

- run for 5m without any touches on a nominated student counting in the touch count.
- continue running after the first touch on the nominated student and only when a second touch occurs, they have to perform the roll ball.
- play for both teams when they are in possession of the ball (nominated magic player stays in attack). Vice versa option for defence.
- freeze one defender until the next touch occurs.
- ability to replay an error once in every set.
- win back possession of the ball by making a touch.

Priority Touch Resources:

A reminder to follow this link to find information on all of the Priority Touch Resources available at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced Level: www.prioritytouch.com.au/aff/6/ (note: **England Touch members receive a 10% discount on subscriptions to the Priority Touch website and schools membership to England Touch is free**). You will find further information on attacking rucking patterns (direct and sub-set), line attack plays (platforms) and midfield and line defence policies, as well as many other technical and tactical elements of the game, in these resources.

