

PASS PROTECTION

Fundamentals
and
Techniques

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BASICS OF PASS PROTECTION

1. Always know where the QB set up point is. This knowledge is vital so that the blocker will position himself properly in relation to the QB and the rusher.
2. Be patient. Don't commit too soon. Let the rusher make the first commitment unless it's a pass play requiring an aggressive technique.
3. Get into the pass set quickly. Don't allow the rusher to make contact while you are still in the process of getting into the fundamental pass pro position.
4. Use of hands is vital. The player who establishes inside hand position on his opponent first will almost always win.
5. If you are covered by a down defender, always know if you have help and where that help is coming from.
6. Maintain a loose and relaxed posture prior to contact. Don't tie yourself up by being too rigid prior to contact. You won't be able to adjust to a move by the defender.
7. Stay off your toes. You will be susceptible to being pulled. Stay relatively flat-footed with the weight on the inside of both feet.
8. Don't lean on the defender after contact ("Don't lean on your hands" is the term we use). Use your legs to provide the power to stop a rusher rather than leaning on him.
9. When the hands and arms extend to jam the rusher, the head goes back.
10. The Guards and Center provide for the depth of the pocket on drop back passes and the Tackles provide for the width.
11. Cover in the direction the pass is thrown in case of an interception.
12. The inside foot is the POST foot and the outside foot is the SET foot.
13. Make contact with the rusher on or near the line of scrimmage.
14. When not covered by a rusher, put "head on a swivel" and find possible escaping rusher. Then, really **STICK HIM!**
15. Cover the defender with your feet (your feet opposite his). You won't see it but will feel it.
16. In most cases, be dominant with the inside hand.
17. Always have a target which is a small point on the defender's uniform on which the blocker focuses. The target is determined by the man's strongest or best move.

STANCE

The blockers on the right side of the line are in a right handed stance and the blockers on the left side of the line are in a left handed stance. The outside foot is staggered. The degree of stagger will be different with each individual, but as a general rule, the toe of the outside or staggered foot should be in the area of the instep to heel of the inside foot. The outside foot stagger accomplishes two things:

1. Helps when setting to an outside defender. The blocker can pick up the outside foot and move in the direction of the wide defender without taking a false step which he might have to do if he was in a stance with the inside foot back.
2. Allows the blocker to have a firm inside which helps in protecting against the inside rush by the pass rusher.

The inside foot is called the POST foot and the outside foot is called the SET foot.

As a general rule, the feet should be about shoulder width, again allowing for individual differences. Too narrow a stance takes away from stability while too wide a stance inhibits lateral movement.

Weight should be concentrated on the inside of both feet. Forcing the knees inside helps to place the weight on the inside. By having the weight inside, the blocker is able to move to the inside or outside more effectively. If the weight is on the outside foot, the lateral steps inside or outside will be big and slow.

The down hand should be slightly inside the staggered knee with the arm straight and the fingers extended. Reach as far as possible with the down hand but keep the weight in the hips. The other elbow should squeeze the knee of the inside leg to aid in keeping the weight on the inside of that foot.

The head is up but not straining. The eyes not only see the defender in front of the blocker but also other defenders in the area to get a feel for possible blitzes and twists.

BASICS OF PASS SET

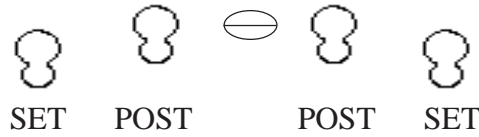
Getting quickly from the stance and into a pass blocking position is vital. If the set is slow, the defender has a great advantage as he will be into the blocker before the blocker is in a position to take on the rusher. Getting proper foot, body, and head position is the basis for great pass position. If the blocker can “win the first second” of the battle with body position, hands, etc., he will usually win that confrontation.

Although footwork will vary on different sets based on the alignment of the defender, there are key elements present in every pass set.

1. Head and upper body come up quickly.
2. The butt sinks and the knees remain bent.
3. Weight remains on the inside of the feet with about 60% of the weight on the inside or Post leg.
4. Maintain a stagger but not so much that the weight goes to the heel of the Post foot.
5. Stay off the toes. This causes leaning and makes it easy for the defender to pull the blocker.
6. Hands come up to shoulder to chest level. The lower the blocker sets, the higher he can carry his hands. The elbows are close to the body and bent so the arms are 8-10" from full extension. The hands should be relaxed with the thumbs 4-6" apart.
7. The upper body should be loose and relaxed with the shoulder slightly forward and the neck also relaxed. If the blocker sets in an upright, rigid position, the rigidness is also felt in the legs and the ability to move prior to contact is restricted. Be like a basketball player, relaxed and ready to move (the upright rigid position occurs after contact).
8. The nose should be aligned directly above the crotch. If this alignment isn't maintained throughout the block, it means the blocker is leaning to one side or another.
9. Throughout the set, the eyes are on a target, a spot on the defender's jersey. Where the target is depends on different factors such as the alignment of the defender or if the blocker has help from an uncovered teammate. The target is the spot where the blocker wants his nose aligned in relation to the defender.

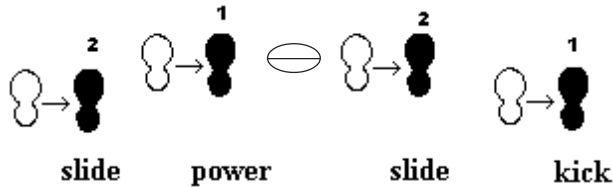
PASS SETS

For communication purposes, the outside foot will be called the SET foot and the inside foot will be called the POST foot.



Footwork

1. Kick step - Outside step with the SET foot. Keep weight concentrated on inside foot and leg. The ankle is wider than the knee and the knee is wider than the hip. This helps to maintain the weight on the inside leg. If the weight transfers to the outside leg, the ability to continue kick stepping is lost. The nose should stay aligned with the crotch.
2. Power Step - Flat, aggressive, inside step with the post foot. It is intended to take away inside rush lanes. Once again, don't let the head go past midline of the body.
3. Slide - Move by opposite foot after Kick or Power step.



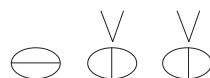
Pass sets are determined by the alignment of the defender in relation to the blocker and the QB. Shown below are alignments and how they are labeled.



Gap Technique



Guard - 1 tech
Tackle - 4 I tech



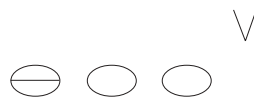
Guard - 2 tech
Tackle - 4 tech



Guard - Tight 3 tech
Tackle - Tight 5 tech



Guard - Loose 3 Tech
Tackle - Loose 5 Tech



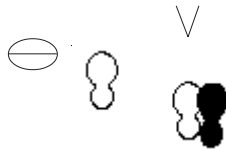
Tackle - Wide Rush

In one on one blocking, it is the objective of the blocker to set his body in a position where he always has the defender in a tight 3 (Guard) or 5 (Tackle) technique. That is, always set so that the nose of the blocker is aligned with the inside number of the defender which will insure a slight inside out position on the defender.

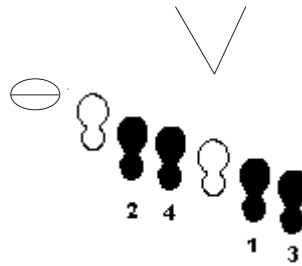
The following sections will only cover the footwork of the pass sets. The punch, etc. are covered in later section.

Footwork vs. Tight 3 Technique (Guard) or Tight 5 Technique (Tackle)

1. Set in place. Drive the post knee to the ground (prevents standing up).
2. Move the set foot to establish stagger and to cover the man.

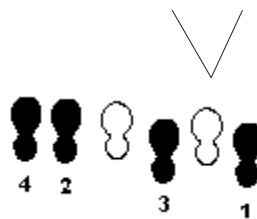


3. Time the punch.
4. If defender rushes outside, kick step and stretch the defender. Keep the heel of the set foot on the ground (prevents learning)



- 1st step - Kick
- 2nd step - Slide
- 3rd step - Kick
- 4th step - Slide

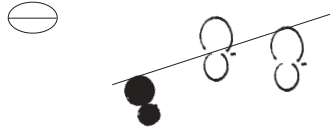
- a. Maintain 60% of weight on inside foot. The blocker can't continue to kick and widen the rusher if the weight is on the outside foot.
 - b. Keep the nose over the midline of the body.
 - c. Maintain full lockout.
5. If defender rushes inside, POWER step after initial set and flatten rusher to the inside.



- 1st step - Kick
- 2nd step - Power
- 3rd step - Slide
- 4th step - Power

- a. Deny inside penetration

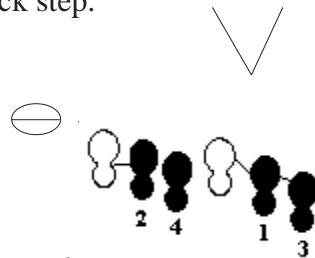
- b. Don't "bail out" and create a soft inside shoulder (think in terms of tripping the defender with the inside foot.)



- c. Blocker may be required to turn this into a drive block to deny inside penetration.

Footwork vs. Loose 3 Technique (Guard) or Loose 5 Technique (Tackle)

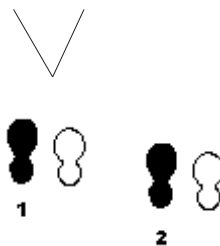
- 1. Kick step gaining width and depth to deny rusher path to QB. The wider the defender, the wider and deeper the kick step.



- 2. Establish nose to inside number or aerender.
- 3. If the defender is really loose, it might take more than 1 kick step to establish position.
- 4. If the defender rushes outside, continue to KICK step and stretch defender.
- 5. If the defender rushes inside from outside alignment, POWER step after initial set and flatten him to the inside. DON'T BAIL OUT.

Footwork vs. 1 Technique (Guard) or 4 I Technique (Tackle)

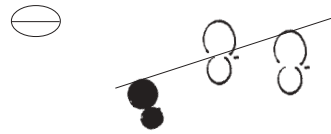
- 1. Power step to the inside, denying penetration. Jam the ball of the post foot into the ground, and slide the set foot.



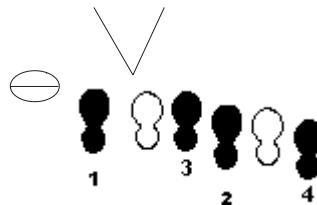
1st step - Power
2nd step - Slide

- 2. Don't take too big a power step. The defender may make an outside move from an inside alignment.

3. Continue power stepping and sliding to flatten the rusher.
4. DON'T BAIL OUT. A bail out creates a soft shoulder.

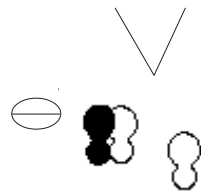


5. To deny penetration, the blocker may have to revert to drive block type technique once the defender has committed to the inside move.
6. If defender rushes outside from inside alignment, kick step and stretch him after initial set.



Footwork vs. 2 Technique (Guard) or 4 Technique (Tackle)

1. Power step inside to take away inside when there is no help from the inside.



2. Get nose to inside number alignment.
3. Don't overset to the inside because the rusher can easily rush outside from a head up alignment.
4. If the defender goes inside or outside, execute the techniques previously outlined.

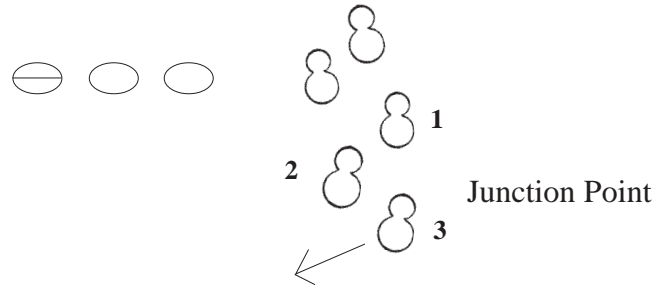
FOOTWORK AND TECHNIQUE VERSUS WIDE RUSH END

The most difficult skill to master in pass protection is the Tackle's block on the wide aligned rusher. Below are techniques and tips for blocking the wide rusher.

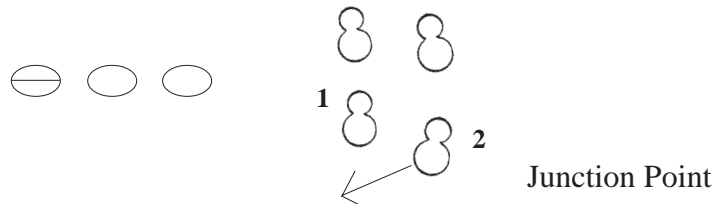
1. Narrow the stance with the toe pointing outward slightly. The narrower stance allows the blocker to cover more ground on the kick step. Increase the stagger of the stance.
2. Determine the junction point. The junction point is the point at which the defender will turn toward the QB (and the Tackle). Knowledge of the junction point is important because the blocker's shoulders should be parallel with the shoulder's of the rusher when he turns toward the QB to prevent the outside should from being grabbed.

Tips to determine the junction point.

- a. If the rusher's outside foot is back, he will usually make his move to the QB on the 3rd step. Be ready to get shoulders parallel to rusher's shoulders when he begins his 3rd step.



- b. If the rusher's inside foot is back, he will usually make his move to the QB on the 2nd step. Be ready to get shoulders parallel to rusher's shoulders when he begins his 2nd step.



NOTE: If the rusher's backbone is pointed in rather than upfield, the above does not apply. Now block him like a normal rusher.

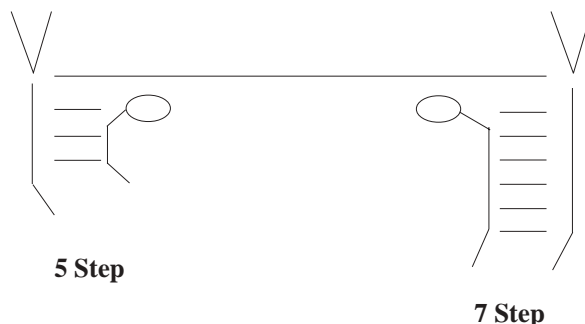
3. The target is the inside shoulder. If the blocker looks at a point on the defender wider than the inside shoulder, he may set too wide and expose himself to an inside rush. The defender is only as far upfield as his inside shoulder.

- When blocking a wide rusher, emphasize most of the weight on the balls of the inside foot while in the stance. This allows for a better kick step to cover more ground. A common fault on blocking the wide rusher is not covering enough ground on the first step, then trying to make up for it by leaning out with the upper body. The blocker again becomes exposed to the inside rush.
- Kick step with width and depth to the rusher. The wider the defender, the deeper the kick step.

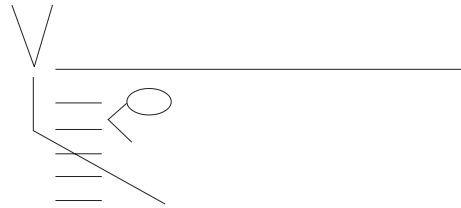


Kick, slide until reaching the junction point.

- Be in control at the junction; that is, the nose should be over the midline, the weight on the inside of the feet with more weight on the inside leg, and have equal ability to move back inside or continue kicking outside. This position must be maintained throughout the approach and at contact.
- Punch the defender when you can “reach out and touch him.” If only the shoulder is exposed at the time of the punch, then punch the shoulder with both hands, attempting to pry his upper body into a position where his shoulders become parallel to the side line. If the rusher has exposed his chest to the blocker as will often be the case, then punch the chest with both hands. Maintain a slight inside-out position on the rusher throughout the block.
- The blocker “works the line” for 3 yards on a 5 step drop and 5 yards on a 7 step drop. This means that the blockers outside foot much remain on a vertical line for these specified distances before allowing the defender to close toward the QB. By keeping the defender working upfield for these distances, the blocker will be able to push him past the QB once he starts to close on the QB



If the defender is not forced vertically for certain distances, they will have a path to the QB.



5 Step

9. When the blocker gets the rusher “past the point of no return”, he then pushes the rusher upfield. Maintain inside leverage.

CONTACT

Contact with the rusher is made with a punch of the hands into the chest area of the defender. Listed below are techniques relating to the punch or contact phase of pass protection.

1. Timing of the punch is vital. Ideally, the elbows will lock out at the same moment as contact is made with the rusher. If the punch is too early, there is a tendency to lean into the defender plus there is no “pop” to stop the charge of the defender. If the punch is late, the arms never get locked out which allows the defender to get his hands on the defender. The blocker always wants to maintain separation between his body and the body of the blocker.
2. The primary thrust is delivered with the heels of the hand. The thumbs are up, the fingers extended loosely and the elbows in. If the elbows face out, the arms can be easily collapsed by a bull rusher.
3. The punch starts at the shoulders and extends through the elbow, wrist, and hands. Don't lean forward during the punch. Maintain the bent knee position for power in stopping the rusher.
4. The head and arms work together. When the arms extend, the head comes back with the chin tucked.
5. On contact the base widens while maintaining a stagger. Continue to maintain the bent knee position. The upper body is now more upright and rigid than before contact.
6. The blocker would prefer to punch at a slight upward angle. This can only be achieved if the knees are bent which lowers the body allowing for the upward punch.
7. The player, either blocker or rusher, who first establishes effective hand placement, will usually win.
8. Inside hand placement usually wins.

AFTER CONTACT

After the blocker sets and punches, he now has to maintain contact with the rusher, allowing as little closure to the QB as possible. Listed below are techniques and tips to accomplish this.

1. Don't try to get separation. Once contact is made, lock on (the exception is a tackle blocking a wide, upfield rusher) and maintain a full lockout position, with the elbows in, thumbs up, and open hand into the chest of the rusher.
2. Don't "lean on the hands". Use the power generated through bent knees and the stagger to stop the forward progress of the rusher.
3. Keep the head out of the block with the upper body upright and rigid.
4. The base should widen after contact to aid in lateral stability.
5. The weight should still be on the inside of the feet with about 60% of the weight on the inside leg.
6. The heel of the outside or stagger foot should be on the ground to prevent tipping forward or getting pulled by the rusher.
7. If the defender tries to rush through the outside shoulder, widen him.
 - a. Maintain nose to inside number alignment.
 - b. Hard pressure with inside hand to prevent defender from coming back inside.
 - c. Maintain bent knee position with outside foot stagger.
 - d. Don't "lean on hands".
 - e. Keep the weight concentrated on the inside leg so that the outside foot can continue to kick up and widen the rusher. If the weight shifts to the outside foot, the ability to continue to kick out is eliminated.
8. If the defender tries to rush inside, power step to the inside, flattening the rusher to the inside. Try to trip the defender with the post foot. You won't actually trip him but by emphasizing this, the post foot won't bail out (drop back) which creates a soft inside shoulder and allows a rush lane inside to the QB.

9. If the defender tries to power or bull rush through the defender, brace up as if you were being “pushed” off a cliff.”
 - a. Keep the head out. Don’t lean on hands (The rusher may be setting you up for a pull or jerk move).
 - b. Stop the defender with leg power generated by bent knees.
 - c. Maintain the stagger. If the defender has leverage and is “walking” the blocker back to the QB because the blocker has lost his stagger, the blocker should “hop” back with the feet to regain the stagger. The blocker may lose a little ground by doing this but he will regain his base. This is much better than continuing to be walked back by the rusher because of a lost stagger.
 - d. If inside hand placement has been lost, re-establish inside hand position by bringing hands under the defenders arms, then aggressively up into his chest.

PASS RUSH MOVES AND COUNTERS

The ability to counter a pass rush move is important. Below are some common moves and their counters.

1. Swim - The rusher will grab a shoulder and pull, then attempt to bring his opposite arm over the blocker while bringing his off leg past the leg of the blocker to the side of the pull.

Counter

- a. First of all, make punch so effective that the defender misses the grab.
 - b. If he gets the grab, the blocker presses hard with the hand to the side of the grab. **DON'T ALLOW THAT HAND TO LOSE CONTACT WITH THE DEFENDER.** Press with more force than the defender is pulling with.
 - c. As the opposite arm swims over the blocker, the blocker places the hand to that side into the armpit of the swim arm and pushes hard.
 - d. Keep the foot and body moving in the direction of the swim move so the lane to the QB is shut off.
2. Rip - The rusher will rip his upper arm into the opposite arm pit area of the blocker, at the same time, bringing the opposite leg past the leg of the blocker.

Counter

- a. Clamp and trap the rip arm in the armpit.
 - b. The blocker drops the center of gravity (with the rip arm trapped) to prevent the rusher from completing the rip.
 - c. With the off hand, the blocker pushes on the hip of the rusher to widen him.
 - d. Keep the feet and body moving in the direction of the rip to shut off the rush lane to the QB.
3. Club - A move perfected by Howie Long of the Raiders, the rusher makes a quick move to one side of the blocker, trying to get him to lean in that direction. The rusher then comes back to the other side, at the same time hitting the opposite upper arm of the blocker with a hard horizontal, straight armed clubbing action with his arm. The intent is to push the blocker in the direction of the lean caused by the quick initial move, thereby opening up a rush lane to the QB.

Counter

- a. The key to countering this move is proper weight distribution and body mechanics.
 - b. Keep the weight concentrated on the inside or post leg.
 - c. Keep the nose over the crotch. Don't lean in the direction of the initial move. If the blocker leans, he will bail out and create a soft shoulder when he reacts to the change of direction by the rusher. The rusher wants the blocker to lean in the direction of his initial move.
 - d. Be patient. Time the punch. Punching too early will cause a forward lean which is detrimental.
 - e. After the punch, be strong with the arm being clubbed. If it gets knocked away, get it quickly back into the frame of the defender and apply pressure.
 - f. Keep the body and feet moving to stay in front of the defender and shut off rush lanes to the QB.
4. Hand Slap - A hand slapper wants to knock the hands down and prevent the blocker from getting his hands on the defender. It can also distract the blocker from executing his other techniques.

Counter

- a. The first things to remember is that, if the defender is slapping, he's not grabbing. In other words, while he's involved in trying to knock the blocker's hands away, he's not grabbing the blocker or getting his hands on the blocker in a meaningful way. So the key is for the blocker to not be distracted by the slap but to immediately after the slap, bring the hands back into position before the defender can do the same with his hands. The ability to do this is aided by the hands and arms being relaxed during the set and prior to contact.
- b. Once the hand position has been re-established, continue to go through with the basic pass protection techniques.
- c. A very effective technique is the "fake jam". A hand slapper relies on making contact with the blocker, then getting into his pass rush move before the blocker can get his hands back in position. A "fake jam" is merely showing the hands to the rusher, then pulling them back. If the blocker slaps and misses, his timing is disrupted and he has to start over on his rush. The blocker "fake jams", then punches into the body of the rusher after he has tried to slap and missed.

BLOCKING TWISTS

As a general rule, zone block all twists. There are two components to a twist, the PENETRATOR and the LOOPER.



Pre-snap looks can help in determining twist possibilities.

Examples: A loose 3 technique and a tight 5 technique indicates a twist possibility.



A wide rusher and a tight 3 technique would be less likely to twist.



1. Blocker who has PENETRATOR.
 - a. Jam the penetrator at the LOS and flatten him. (You might have to put chest into penetrator to flatten him.) If he gets upfield too much, you and the blocker who has the LOOPER could be on different levels resulting in the LOOP blocker getting “picked”.
 - b. Force the defender flat in the direction of the LOOPER and then shove him into your adjacent blocker. When shoving the defender, do it with a turn of the upper body but attempt to keep the hips and feet from turning to the sidelines. The blocker is in better position to pick up the LOOPER if he’s parallel to the LOS rather than the sideline.
 - c. Don’t come off the PENETRATOR until you feel your adjacent blocker. How ever, you can anticipate a LOOPER is coming by realizing that the man you are blocking (PENETRATOR) is doing “something different” from a normal rush technique.
 - Trying to grab you more than trying to rush.
 - Attaching more toward blocker who has LOOPER than toward you and the QB.

2. Blocker who has LOOPER.

- a. When LOOPER starts his loop, drop foot to the side of the loop so as to get some depth to prevent being picked, then “attack” in the direction of the loop toward the penetrator.
- b. Drive block the PENETRATOR. By drive blocking the PENETRATOR, you can “push the pile” into the path of the LOOPER if the PENETRATOR has grabbed his blocker in an attempt to keep him from coming off on the LOOPER.
- c. The blocker can recognize a LOOP before it happens (allows him to prepare to attack the PENETRATOR just a little quicker) by realizing “something is different” about the rush.
 - Not really rushing toward passer with his normal intensity.
 - Not trying as hard to get his hands on your.
 - Looking in the direction of the loop.

The key point in zone blocking the twist is not allowing penetration by the PENETRATOR. If he gets upfield, the blocker will be on different levels. If that happens, man block the twist. The man who has the LOOPER will chase and cut him.

NOTE: A Tackle who has the PENETRATOR doesn't have to come off on the Looper as quickly as a Guard who has the PENETRATOR because of the relative position to the QB.

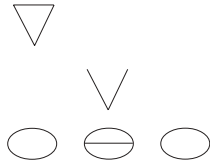


The Guard blocking the LOOPER has to meet the LOOPER on the LOS and get “all of him” but the Tackle can let the LOOPER cross his face, then ride him by the QB.

CONCEPTS OF COMBINATION BLOCKS

In addition to one on one pass sets and blocks described earlier, there are situations where blockers work in combination. Some of these will be discussed below.

A. Guard and Center blocking NG and outside LB in a base protection.



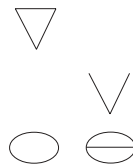
1. LG power steps to a position next to and slightly deeper than the Center



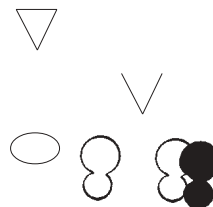
Eyeball the LB. If he doesn't come and NG rushes to your side of the center, take 1/2 of the defender, maintaining your stagger.

If the NG works to the other side of the Center and the backer doesn't come, get depth and look for an escaping rusher. Really stick him.

If the NG rushes your side and the LB dogs to the opposite gap, force the switch and take over the NG



2. Center takes a short kick step away from his help (LG) establishing a stagger and taking away the rush lane away from help.



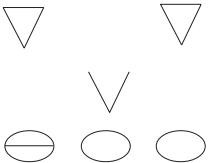
Jam with the inside hand and keep the outside hand relatively free. See the LB with peripheral vision.

If the NG works toward you, take him. Don't expect help.

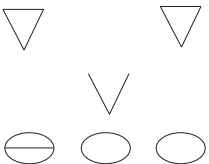
If the NG works toward your helper and the LB doesn't dog the frontside gap, squeeze your 1/2 of the NG and double with Guard.

If the NG works toward your helper and the LB comes frontside gap, take the LB. Maintain stagger throughout block.

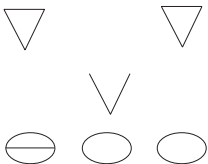
B. Center and Guard blocking both A Gaps in slide protection.



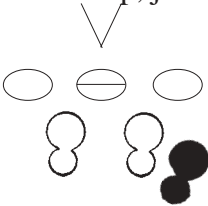
1. LG power steps aggressively to NG with a slight turn of hips and shoulders and really “bangs” the NG if he hangs.



Try to shove him in the direction of the protection. Be ready to completely take him over if LB comes. If LB doesn't come, you should have some help from Center if his gap isn't threatened. Think complete takeover. If NG works away and LB comes into your gap, stick him.

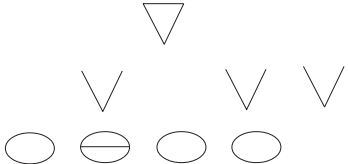


2. Center takes a deeper, wider kick step, jamming the NG with his backside hand and eyeballing LB.



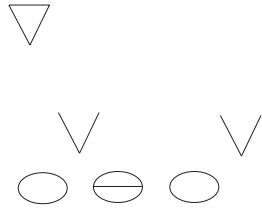
If NG works backside, squeeze with Guard but continue to look for playside gap rusher. If LB comes, stick him. If LB doesn't come, look for down linemen escaping from Guard or Tackle. You may have to lose some ground.

Example:



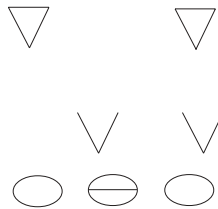
so as to be on the same level as those blockers.

- C. Center and Guard blocking NG and inside LB (base protection) with the other Guard covered.

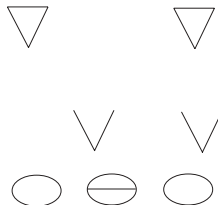


1. LG techniques are same as previously described in base protection. Just be aware that the Center will be a little deeper.
2. Center has a potential Nose/Tackle or Tackle/Nose twists. The most dangerous is the Tackle/Nose (Tackle penetrating and Nose looping) twist.

The Center will jam with the inside hand as before, then get a little depth so he won't get "picked" if the Defensive Tackle penetrates inside and the NG loops. If the Center sets flat when the Guard is covered, he won't be able to take over the penetrator.

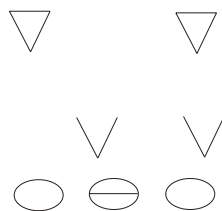


- D. Center and Guard blocking both A Gaps (slide protection) with the other Guard covered.

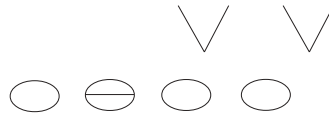


1. LG same as previously described in slide protection.
2. Center kick steps deeper and wider, jamming the NG with the backside hand and eyeballing the most dangerous threat (DT if the LB is at normal depth).

The center can't stay with the NG because of the immediate A Gap treat from the DT. Stay on the same level as the covered Guard and be ready to take over if DT escapes inside.



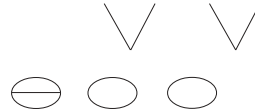
E. Guard and Tackle blocking DT and DE (base block)



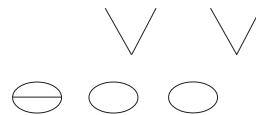
The techniques of the Guard and Tackle have already been described. One thing the Guard must be aware of is a twist possibly to determine exactly what his set can be. As discussed in the section on twists, the DT and DE alignment can give a clue as to the twist possible.

Example: The DT is in a loose 3 position and the DE is in a tight 5. The Guard should be aware of a possible T/E (Tackle penetrating, End looping inside) twist.

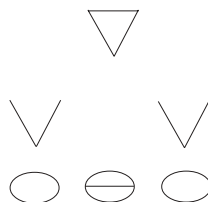
If the TE twist is a possibility, the Guard should set as wide as possible (still maintaining inside leverage) in order to flatten the defender so he doesn't get upfield and "pick" the tackle when he tries to switch with the Guard.



If the DE is aligned wider, the threat of a T/E is less and now the Guard can be more inside conscious on his set, allowing more upfield penetration by the DT. This allows the Guard to better protect against the inside move.



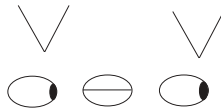
F. Center and both Guards blocking against Defensive Tackles and Middle LB (base protection)



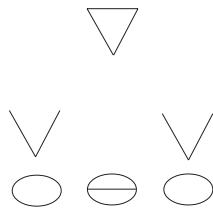
1. The Center sets straight back and equidistant from both DT's, eyeballing the LB. He always stays slightly deeper than the deepest Guard as the play develops. Be prepared to attack defender if he escapes from one of the Guards. Really sting him! If neither escapes, attack one of them, then bounce back looking again to help. Don't block air.

- The Guards know they have inside help so they can take a midline to outside number set on the defender. They have help from the center if the DT rushes inside and they are now in better position to flatten the DT in case of a T/E twist.

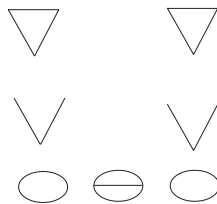
Note: If the defenders align in a 3 technique and a 1 technique, the center sets so he is equidistant from the two defenders. Setting to help on the 1 technique prevents the center from helping on the 3 technique who comes inside, which is a difficult block for the Guard.



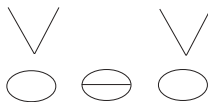
Note: On a T/T twist, the Center attacks in the direction of the loop. The Guard who has the looper checks the LB, then “searches” to help on the twist.



G. Center and Guard blocking a Guard Stack

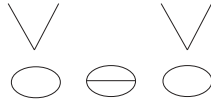


- The frontside Guard will take an outside number set because he has inside help from the Center.
- The backside Guard takes a basic inside number set because he has no help.
- The center kick steps with width and depth to a point just inside the Guard but deeper and with very little should turn.



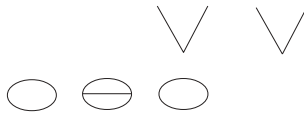
The Center's position just inside the Guard puts him in position to block the inside half of the DT if he rushes inside and to take him completely if the LB rushes through the B Gap and the Guard has to block him.

The depth of the set allows the Center to be in a position to pick up the penetrating tackle on the backside if there is a T/T twist. If the Center sets without depth, he would probably get "picked."



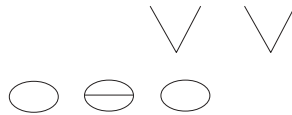
The key to picking up this twist is the flattening of the DT by the backside Guard and the depth of the Center's set.

H. Guard and Tackle fanning to wide rushers.



1. The Guards set is the same as for any wide technique except it can be a little flatter if he senses an inside rush from a 4 I technique. If the defender over the tackle rushes wide, look for a loop by the outside defender.

2. The tackle's set is different than if he were uncovered and blocking a wide rusher because of the threat of this twist.



If the tackle sets too wide, he is susceptible to being picked by the defender over him who can attack the Tackle's inside shoulder. Then proceed to the QB while the outside defender loops. The Tackle ends up "blocking air".



The Tackle's set should be almost straight back, eyeballing the outside rusher but feeling for the inside rusher with his inside hand. If the twist occurs, the Tackle is in better position to take over the penetrator while the Guard picks up the looper. If the twist doesn't occur, continue setting to the outside defender using the normal techniques. The width of the pocket won't be as good but the treat of a defender coming clean in the face of the QB is eliminated.

SPRINT OUT PROTECTION

Sprint out passing games vary. Some are semi-sprints where the QB sets up, others are full sprints where the QB attacks the corner. Some have a TE or back blocking backside, some don't. Because of the variety of sprint out passes, only the very basics of protection will be covered here.

A. Playside Covered Linemen

1. Target is the outside number of the defender.
2. Outside foot can become the post foot.
3. Outside hand dominant
4. Work to maintain outside leverage on the defender. The degree of outside leverage will depend on the QB's throwing spot.

B. Playside Uncovered Lineman

1. Set with width and depth to inside hip of playside covered lineman. This protects his inside, allowing him to set aggressively to the defender's outside number.
2. Eyeball the LB.
3. If the playside covered lineman doesn't need help and the backer doesn't come, hinge backside and look for leakage.

C. Backside Covered Lineman

1. Target is inside number.
2. Inside foot is the post foot.
3. Inside hand dominant.
4. Work for inside leverage. How much inside leverage depends on the QB's throwing spot.

D. Backside Uncovered Lineman

1. Sink with width and depth to hip of adjacent covered lineman.
2. Eyeball Linebacker
3. Hinge backside for leakage.

