



HOW TO PASS LIKE THE PRO'S



/ GUIDE BY RUGBY BRICKS /

Whether you're a forward, back, prop or five-eight you're going to have to move the ball from your hands to somebody else's mitts. We're going to share with you the in's and out's of getting the ball to the player inside of you, outside of you and the one 40 metres away from you.

Let's dive in.

CATCHING 101



Most footy players have the strength to get the ball where it needs to go but what most players don't have are the hands to get it the ball there as accurately or as fast as possible. A great pass starts from how it lands in your hands which is why we're going to discuss the foundations of catching first and foremost.

/ CATCHING WITHOUT A SPIRAL

When you're receiving a pass that's not a spiral, the biggest thing that slows down the transfer of the ball to the next player is changing where you're holding the ball. To practice this start by having a partner beside you that you can pass the ball back and forth with, without having to shift your hands from when you've caught the ball to passing.

Your hands and finger-tips should look like this when receiving the ball.





I like to describe my hand placement as FAT on the ball. To promote bicep engagement pre pass, triceps extension post pass and core and trunk rotation during pass, the best way to achieve that is to be FAT on the ball with your hand placement. Finger tips spread but relaxed after a clean catch.

Ball sitting just above the hip joint, elbow in line with where you are wanting to pass the ball.

From here all you're aiming to do is move the ball back to the other player and maintain the same hand position from receiving the ball to passing it back to the opposite player.

This type of drill will teach you how to move the ball quickly while maintaining your hand position.

/ CATCHING WITH A SPIRAL

Catching a spiral pass differs from other types of passes because often you're trying to transfer the ball to another player using a spiral pass. The goal of catching a spiral is to give you the ability to again transfer the ball without moving the hands around. To do this you need to receive the ball with your inside hand lower than your outside hand.

The picture below is an example of how your inside hand is dropped just slightly to get the ball in the right place when receiving a pass from your left. The same applies when receiving the pass from the right.

The dropping of this hand allows you to receive the ball in the optimal position so that you can then transfer the ball across the body in the right position without having to adjust your hands.

To practice this set yourself up 5 metres apart from a partner, keep your body upright and turn your body 35 degrees towards the passer and knees slightly bent.



With your inside hand now dropped you're able to extend your arms so that when the ball comes towards the hands you're able to rotate and move the ball onwards.

Once you've caught the ball don't pass it onwards but pass it back to the player opposite you and repeat ten times on either side. Your goal with this is to focus on just catching and receiving the ball.

Remember by catching the ball clean we buy ourselves time to execute quick tips/pop passes and fast transfer spirals. Everyone looks good passing with space and time but put a rush defence in front of players and that brings out the true player and skill set.

Work on your catching first, to perfect your passing second.

As we've now covered know how to receive the ball with our hands we need to make sure our body is set up to put the ball where it needs to go and how to do it quickly.

/ 1. HIPS & CHEST SQUARE TO THE TRY LINE

For a long time it was coached that you should have your feet, hips, chest, hands and head all facing where the ball is coming from. The bottom line though is that this is slow. Players need to be square to their try-line reaching for the ball, catching it early and away from the body.



You don't see sprinters lining up on their blocks on a 45 degree angle and neither should you.

/ 2. HANDS

If you've made it this far without reading the catching 101 segment of this guide go back and start again. In short your hands need to be FAT on the ball, with your fingertips spread but relaxed as you catch the ball.



3. HIPS AND NO DIP

When you're holding the ball before your pass it needs to be sitting just above your hip joint just like the photo of Georgia above. Her inside elbow is pointing in the direction of where your pass is headed. The other part you need to avoid is making sure that the ball doesn't dip. The "Dip" is what you see when a player catches the ball at chest height and then subsequently drops the ball below the hip.



As you can see with Georgia in the picture above the ball is sitting above her hip before she engages her arms for the rest of the pass. "The Dip" is a bad habit often picked up by young players needing leg strength to throw long passes. I get it, I understand why, but at the professional level this way of passing is slow and inconsistent.

/ 4. ROTATION, POWER AND TRICEP

With the ball sitting in the right position it's now time to fire the ball where it needs to go with the right power to get it there. With your hand placed on your hips you're going to need to bring the ball across the body and fully extend your tricep towards the target of your pass.

At this stage of the pass you can move forward with rotation in the chest and an extension of the tricep which will allow your hand to roll over the ball so that your fingertips are pointed towards the target of your pass.

Take a look at Georgia's fingertips and where they're pointed to get a better idea of how the wrist rolls with help from the biceps through to the triceps at the end of the pass.



THREE MORE DRILLS AND RESOURCES TO IMPROVE YOUR PASSING

1. [AARON SMITH'S ONE KNEE DRILL](#)
2. [FRONT HIP - BACK HIP DRILL](#)
3. [GYM WORK - NO HIP DROP BOX DRILL](#)

These are the fundamentals of catching and passing but this is only the beginning of your training.

Get out on the pitch, practice and remember OUTWORK & OUTLEARN.

Cheers,

Pete