

# EasiCoach™

RUGBY SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U7 Mini-Tag & U8 Mini-Tag



Part of the **EasiCoach Skills Curriculum** – helping grassroots coaches deliver quality rugby skills coaching to young players

Also available in the  
EasiCoach™ Rugby Skills Activities Series



ISBN: 978-1-910338-37-7

Activities following the EasiCoach Rugby Curriculum for the age groups U9 & U10, introducing tackling and rucking and different types of passes. By Andrew Griffiths and Dan Cottrell



ISBN: 978-1-910338-38-4

Activities following the EasiCoach Rugby Curriculum for the age groups U11 & U12, and U13-U16, introducing more advanced passing and tackling skills and lineout. By Andrew Griffiths and Dan Cottrell

# EasiCoach<sup>TM</sup>

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## U7 Mini-Tag & U8 Mini-Tag

By Andrew Griffiths and Dan Cottrell  
with thanks to Martin Skelton



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## U7 Mini-Tag activities

### ATTACKING

<b>Understand the need to run forward to score tries</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Run forward. Avoid the defender.	
<b>Score a Tag try</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Touch the ball down using both hands.	
<b>Run past defenders</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Use pretend moves and dodges to change direction.	
<b>Support the ball carrier</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Get behind the ball carrier. Call the name of the ball carrier.	
<b>Understand the need to pass once tagged</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Pass the ball when you are tagged.	

### DEFENDING

<b>Make a Tag tackle</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Get close to the ball carrier. Grab and remove the tag belt. Hold the tag above your head and shout "Tag!". Return the tag to the tagged player.	
<b>Defend against attackers</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Chase the ball carrier. Get close to the ball carrier.	
<b>Understand the offside law</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Defenders must go back behind the offside line when a player is tagged.	
<b>Stand in the correct position for a restart</b> .....	<b>32</b>
Form part of a line. Encourage others to form part of a line.	
<b>Work together as defenders</b> .....	<b>34</b>
Move together towards a target.	

### HANDLING

<b>Understand that the ball goes backwards</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Know what a forward pass is.	
<b>Pass 1 metre to another player</b> .....	<b>38</b>
Look where the pass should go. Push the ball towards the target player.	
<b>Catch the ball from another player</b> .....	<b>40</b>
Call for the ball. Keep your eyes on the ball. Put hands up to make a target.	
<b>Run with the ball in two hands</b> .....	<b>42</b>
Place both your hands in middle of the ball. Keep the ball off your chest.	
<b>Run to a ball and pick it up</b> .....	<b>44</b>
Put your foot by the ball. Put one hand in front and one hand behind the ball. Bend before you get to the ball.	

## U8 Mini-Tag activities

### ATTACKING

<b>Understand that you must run forward to score tries</b> .....	<b>48</b>
Run forward to score tries.	
<b>Score a Tag try</b> .....	<b>50</b>
Touch the ball down using both hands.	
<b>Run past defenders</b> .....	<b>52</b>
Use pretend moves and dodges to change direction.	
<b>Support the ball carrier</b> .....	<b>54</b>
Get behind the ball carrier. Call the name of the ball carrier.	
<b>Take the pass as you move forward</b> .....	<b>56</b>
Reach out to take the pass.	
<b>Understand that you need to pass once tagged</b> .....	<b>58</b>
Pass the ball once you are tagged.	

### DEFENDING

<b>Defend against attackers</b> .....	<b>60</b>
Decide whether to chase the ball carrier. Get close to the ball carrier.	
<b>Make a Tag tackle</b> .....	<b>62</b>
Get close to the ball carrier. Grab and remove the tag belt. Hold the tag above your head and shout "Tag!". Return the tag to the tagged player.	
<b>Understand the offside law</b> .....	<b>64</b>
The offside line is through the centre of the ball across the pitch. Defenders must go back behind the offside line when a player is tagged.	
<b>Stand in the correct position for a restart</b> .....	<b>66</b>
Form part of a line. Get others to form part of a line.	
<b>Work together as defenders</b> .....	<b>68</b>
Move together towards a target. Tell other defenders which way to move.	

### HANDLING

<b>Understand that the ball goes backwards</b> .....	<b>70</b>
Look where the ball should go. Push the ball towards the target player.	
<b>Pass 3 metres to another player</b> .....	<b>72</b>
Look where the pass should go. Push the ball towards the target player. Pass in front of a receiver moving forward. Pass to the receiver who is calling for the ball.	
<b>Catch the ball from another player moving</b> .....	<b>74</b>
Call for the ball. Keep your eyes on the ball. Put your hands up to make a target. Reach out to take the pass.	
<b>Run with the ball in two hands</b> .....	<b>76</b>
Place both your hands in middle of the ball. Keep ball off your chest.	
<b>Run to a ball and pick it up</b> .....	<b>78</b>
Bend before you get to the ball. Put your foot by the ball. Put one hand in front and one hand behind the ball.	

## Welcome to EasiCoach™ Rugby Activities – the parents’ survival guide to coaching rugby

### **Dear Beginner Coach, Volunteer Dad or Mum, or “Roped-In” Helper,**

If the world of rugby coaching seems a little daunting, don’t worry, you are not alone! Like many parents involved in coaching their children:

- You volunteered to help, or were volunteered!
- You don’t know much about rugby, or coaching
- You don’t want to let the side down
- You want to do the best you can but don’t have time to go on a course
- You’re worried about coaching “the wrong thing”.

EasiCoach provides ready-made, age appropriate, safe training activities, set out clearly on a single page, that even a child could understand. They are simple and easy to follow, and will make your life easier. EasiCoach covers ten age groups, available in three separate manuals:

- U7 & U8 Mini-Tag (31 activities)
- U9 & U10 (60 activities)
- U11-12 & U13-16 (60 activities)

How does this help you? EasiCoach coaching activities will help you to:

- Quickly understand what it is you’re trying to achieve
- See what you need to do from just a few words and pictures
- Grasp the key dos and don’ts at a glance
- Check you have all the equipment you need (never more than basics)
- Cater for more or fewer players at your session
- Speak to your players with confidence

But here’s what’s really great about the EasiCoach approach. Follow all the materials in each manual, and your players will be learning the right skills for the right age group every season. They will be having more fun, and be on a gradual development pathway that should make them better, more skilful, players and continue playing rugby for longer.

Yours in rugby,



Andrew Griffiths



Dan Cottrell

## Your EasiCoach Activity Sheets

Each of the activity sheets in this manual covers a simple rugby skill appropriate for U7 or U8 age groups.

These age groups have just started rugby, so they know little or nothing about the game or how to play – perhaps you don't either. This doesn't matter as the main objective is for the players to have fun!

Here's what you do to help them.

- Read the Beginners' Guide below.
- In your one hour session, we suggest you run one or (depending on time) two activities from this book, and then play a Mini-Tag game.
- Each activity comes with a setup sheet to show you (or your helpers) where to put the cones, balls and players in order to run the activity. (It's great if this can be done before the players arrive!)
- Details on how to run a Mini-Tag game are below.

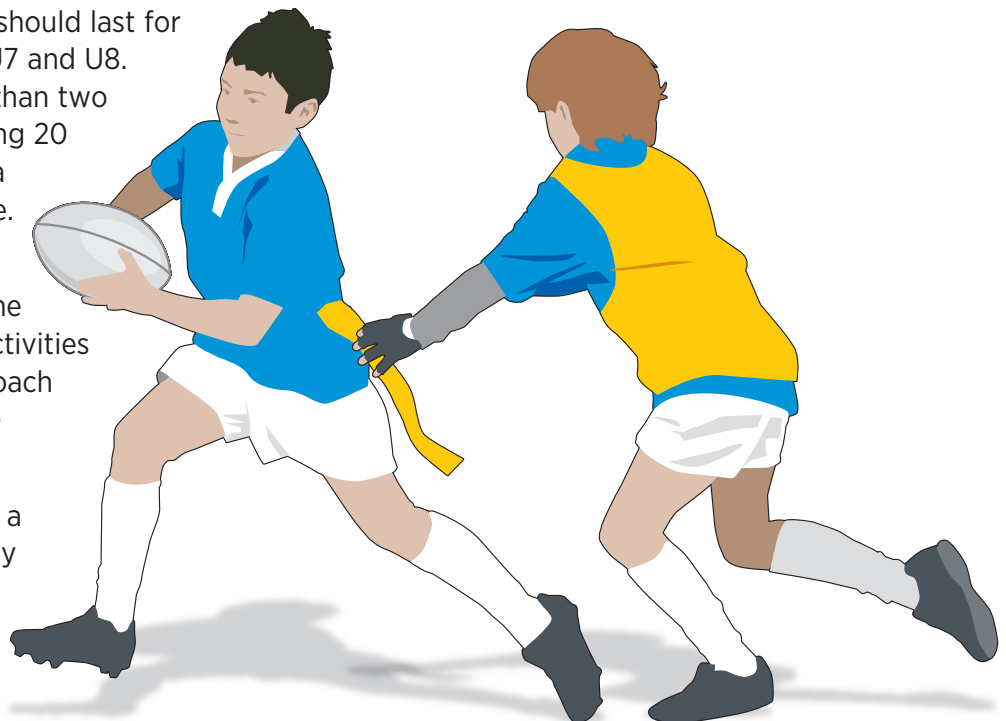
## The EasiCoach Beginners Guide to Mini-Tag

Here are the main things you need to know about coaching and organising U7 and U8 rugby. Don't worry, it's not as hard as you think. The good news is that coaching the game has just got simpler!

**Length of the session:** The coaching, training, games or matches combined should last for no more than 60 minutes at U7 and U8. You should plan for no more than two EasiCoach activities each taking 20 minutes in total, followed by a game, also 20 minutes. Simple.

**Setup:** Arrive earlier than the players if you can, to set up the playing area for the chosen activities for the day. Set up two EasiCoach activities and be ready for the players to arrive.

**Tag belts:** Every player wears a tag belt during games but they don't always have to when taking part in EasiCoach activities, depending on the activity.





Tag belts have two removable tags (one of each side of the waist) fixed by Velcro-type fasteners. They can be torn off by a defending player, and this is the tag equivalent of a tackle. The defending player should hold up the tag and shout “tag”. The tagged player must stop and pass the ball. The tag must be returned immediately.

**Parents:** Keen though they are to make a difference, unless they are helping, parents are now recommended to stand at least 3m back from the edge of the pitch. If space allows, your pitch set up should incorporate a cone or rope barrier to show parents where to stand. Encouragement of players is welcomed and criticism frowned upon.

## Refereeing and Game Coaching

You might hope not to have to get involved in refereeing, or “game coaching” as it is becoming known, or you might be dead keen to try. These days the objective is a free-flowing game, so the person with the whistle is more of a helper than a referee. Each side having a coach is no longer advised (a lot less shouting!), freeing up helpers to run other games. This is needed because there are smaller numbers of players per game.

**Free pass:** This is used as a way of restarting a game. One player of the team that is awarded possession simply passes the ball to a team-mate to restart the game. To start the game for the first and second halves, or after a try, the free pass is from the centre of the field. When the ball goes

out of play, the free pass is from the place where the ball went out. After an infringement, the free pass is made from the place of the infringement. The free pass is used instead of a kick, scrum or lineout.

**Scoring a try:** Encourage the players to call out “try” when they score. A try is worth one point. If the ground or playing surface is particularly hard you may prefer for a try to be scored when a player simply runs over the opposition goal line with the ball.

**Knock-ons and knock forwards:** A knock-on occurs when a player drops the ball or fumbles it as he tries to catch it and the ball both goes forward towards the attackers’ goal line and drops to the ground. At this age group, play is allowed to continue, offering the chance for the other team to win the ball.

**Using the whistle:** Although the emphasis at this age is on using the whistle as little as possible, it’s still valuable to start and stop games, highlight dangerous play, stop for injuries or when serious infringements occur. And it’s helpful for getting attention, too! But you could just say “Stop!” as an alternative!

**Tags on the ground:** There should be no tags on the ground at any time. However, occasionally a ball carrier may accidentally flick off one of their own tags while running. In this case, stop the game and allow the player to replace the tag. Restart the game with a free pass to the team in possession from where the tag came off.

**Kicking and diving:** You’ll probably find that the ball ends up on the ground quite a lot. Do not allow the players to kick or dive on any loose ball, and stop the game to make the point. Instead get them to gather the ball up, staying on their feet, and play on.

**Contact:** Tag rugby is a non-contact sport, so players should be encouraged to avoid each other. The ball carrier must not run into defenders, and defenders must not run block the ball carrier. Players should not “bash” into each other, and if any if this happens stop the game to explain the rules.



## U7 Mini-Tag Guidelines

**Number of players:** 8 (4 v 4). With groups of up to 30, this requires at least three or maybe four pitches and games to be set up and run, with at least one helper per game, preferably two. Avoid having players standing around, waiting to play, if possible.

**Maximum pitch size:**

12m x 20m. Don't worry if you have not got this space – you can work with slightly smaller pitches if required with no problem. At least four 12m x 20m pitches can be fitted into one half of a standard rugby pitch. When the pitches are set up near goal posts, ensure that the posts have protective padding. If they are near corner or halfway marker flags, remove these before play starts.

**Knock-on not penalised:** Although knock-ons should not be encouraged, this new approach by the rugby authorities means players can drop the ball or throw it forward without the game stopping. Other players can simply pick up the ball and carry on, the emphasis being on a free-flowing game.

**No coaches on the pitch.** The authorities are rightly taking action to ensure that adults interfere as little as possible in the free flowing of the game at this level.

**Scoring:** Players must stay on their feet and place the ball to score.

**Ball size:** 3

**Length of game or match:** Play 10 minutes each way (20 minutes total), with a minimum two minute water break at half time.

## U8 Mini-Tag Guidelines

**Number of players:** 12 (6 v 6). This may reduce the number of games you and your assistants may have to run at the same time, but don't be hidebound by the numbers. If 5 v 5 works better for a group of 20, go ahead.

**Maximum pitch size:** 25m x 45m. Again don't worry if you have less space, you can still run a game.

**No coaches on the pitch:** same as for U7s, and for the rest of the age groups for that matter!

**Permitted to go to ground to score:** U8s are allowed to dive or come off their feet to score.

**Ball size:** 3

**Length of game or match:** Play 10 minutes each way, with a minimum two minute half time rest.





## A 1-2-3 of Coaching Young Children

### 1. Use the 30 Second Rule

The 30 second rule works because children learn best by doing, not listening, and 30 seconds is about as much as most of them can take. So, with that in mind, let them do as much as possible and listen as little as possible. After 30 seconds, many of your audience will have stopped listening anyway, and very little if any of what you go on to say will be heard, let alone understood. Don't waste your time!

Only having 30 seconds to talk can make life easier if you are privately anxious about speaking, or concerned about saying the wrong thing, as it reduces the chance of making a mistake. Being time limited forces you to think carefully beforehand about what you are going to say. The outcome should be reduced waffle and getting to the point more quickly. Children like this simplicity. It is also worth bearing in mind that in chillier climates, players will get cold very quickly if they are standing round listening to you for more than a short period.

Just 30 seconds really only gives you the chance to pick up one point from the activity the players have been doing – a good thing in itself. While you are observing them, think about what you want to say. This can be praise or encouragement, or it can be to offer a suggestion to a common problem that

is occurring. Use your 30 seconds to laser in on just one. That single message is far more likely to get through into their little heads if it is on its own.

One trick to increase attention levels is to get young players as attentive as possible before you start talking, simply by asking them to be quiet, or standing silently waiting for them to quiet down. The rule is not always practical, though. Sometimes, when you are introducing something new, you will have to talk to the players for longer. In these situations, make sure you involve the players either by asking questions, giving them a break from your voice – or by getting volunteers to demonstrate. But if you can do it in 30 seconds – congratulations!

## **2. When and how to correct mistakes**

If a young player is making a mistake, we feel duty bound to do something about it. However, we shouldn't always step in. Young people learn from their mistakes by themselves and from feedback from their peers. They don't want or need an adult telling them every time they don't get something right, or as good as it should be – they know!

You may notice as you start coaching young children that youngsters can be intimidated by corrections. The action of correcting can be counterproductive in itself, with some players not taking on board what they need to change.

There are some things that we must correct. Anything that can harm the player or someone else, such as kicking, punching, verbal abuse or any other sort of foul play. These are non-negotiable. Do not hesitate to blow the whistle to stop play and highlight the actions of the offender, so that everyone is aware of the issue and can learn.

Other areas we might correct are discretionary. Technical errors, such as poor hand positioning on the ball. More difficult might be decision-making errors such as wrong options. This is problematic because there are often a number of options.

Most people don't like criticism or corrections at all, let alone in front of others, and children are no different. If at all possible, take the player aside on a one-to-one basis to make a comment. If parents are nearby, you might feel it is appropriate to make the point in their presence. One or two words may be enough, but the key is to "talk" and not raise your voice.

## **3. Coach by gentle questioning**

Research shows that learning comes from self-discovery. This means players realise how to solve problems and react to situations by finding their own solutions. Coaches should try to reduce the amount of time they spend "telling" the players what to do. Instead, through questioning, they should look to empower their players.



To aid good learning the coach needs to communicate well verbally. The choice of words is often not as important as the way they are told. Remember:

- Don't use jargon or sarcasm.
- Promote positive comments.
- Back up criticism with a way forward.
- Keep sentences short.
- Don't make too many points.
- Summarise at the end – some players may not have understood the first time around.

### **Gentle questioning**

Asking questions is useful because it:

- Gains the attention of the players.
- Lets the coach learn what the players know.
- Involves the players in the learning process.
- Allows the players to express their opinions.
- Helps the coach check for understanding.

### **Asking the best questions**

- Use open questions – questions that cannot be answered with just “yes” or “no”. Start questions with words, like “what”, “how” or “where”.
- Don't use “why”, because it can be construed as negative.
- Wait for the answer, don't hurry the player.
- Listen, don't anticipate the answer. Try not to rephrase the answer once given.

### **When to “tell” and when to “question”**

Tell when:

- You have a short period of time to get your point across.
- Specific instructions are needed. For instance, health and safety issues or laws of the game.
- A larger group makes question and answer sessions unwieldy.

Question to:

- Check your players' understanding.
- Gain feedback.
- Improve your players' learning.



## 6 STEPS TO EASICOACH SUCCESS

1. Find the activity you need
2. Look at the pictures and read the text
3. Check what equipment you'll need when you get to the club
4. Take the book to training
5. Set up your activity
6. EasiCoach it!

The equipment you will need to run the activity, so that you know exactly what to take with you to the training ground

A plan showing you how to set out the activity on the training ground – where to place the cones and how far apart they should be

The title tells you the skill that the players will develop by doing this activity

The age group the activity has been written for along with the skills category that the activity belongs to and its place in that category

The name of the activity – you can tell this to your players: “Today we’re going to play...”

“What you say” gives you some key phrases to tell your players as they do the activity, to help them understand what they should be doing and how they should be doing it

Each activity is explained simply and clearly, step by step

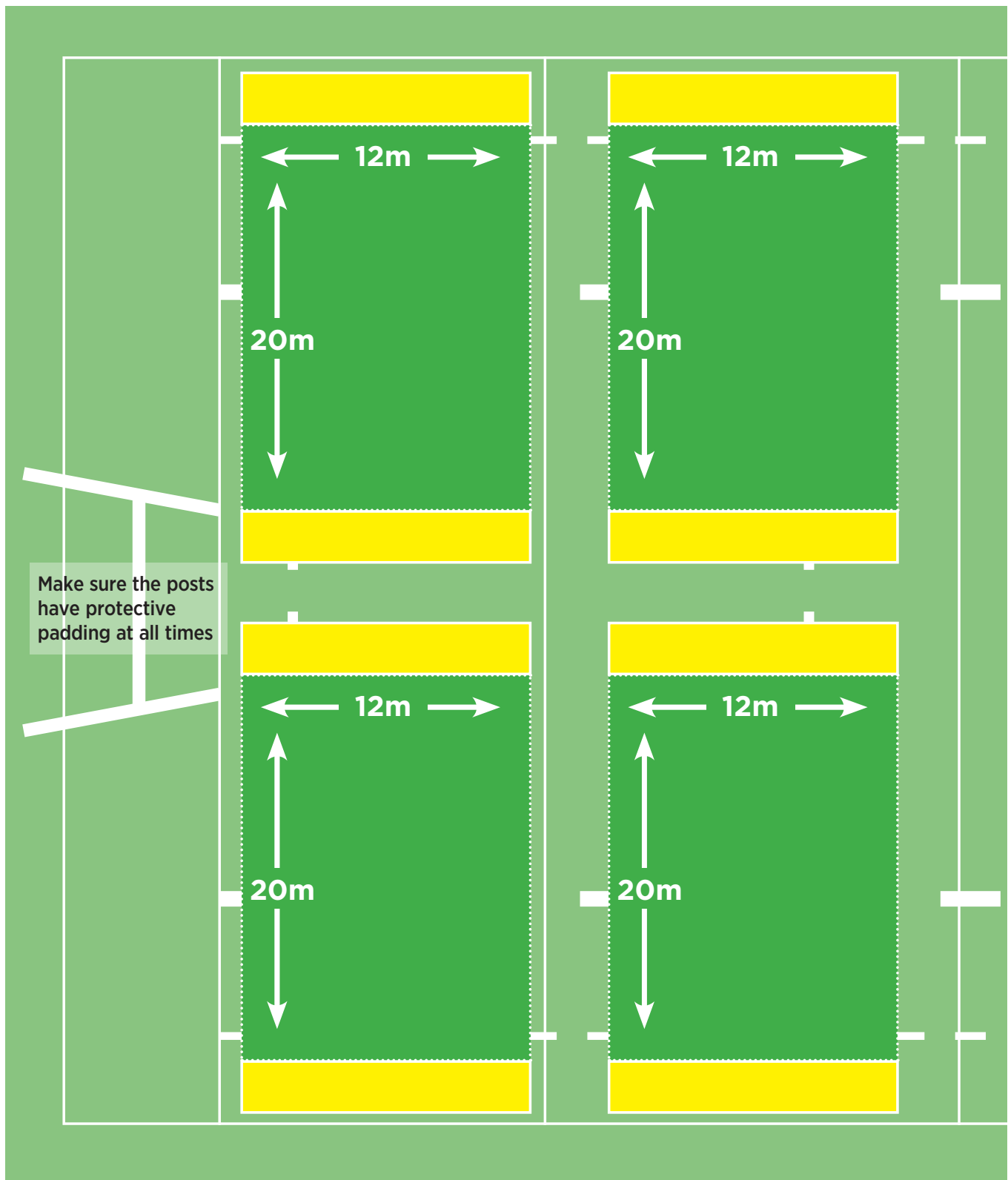
The diagrams show you what the activity should look like on the pitch. There might be one, two or three diagrams – whatever makes it easiest for you to understand

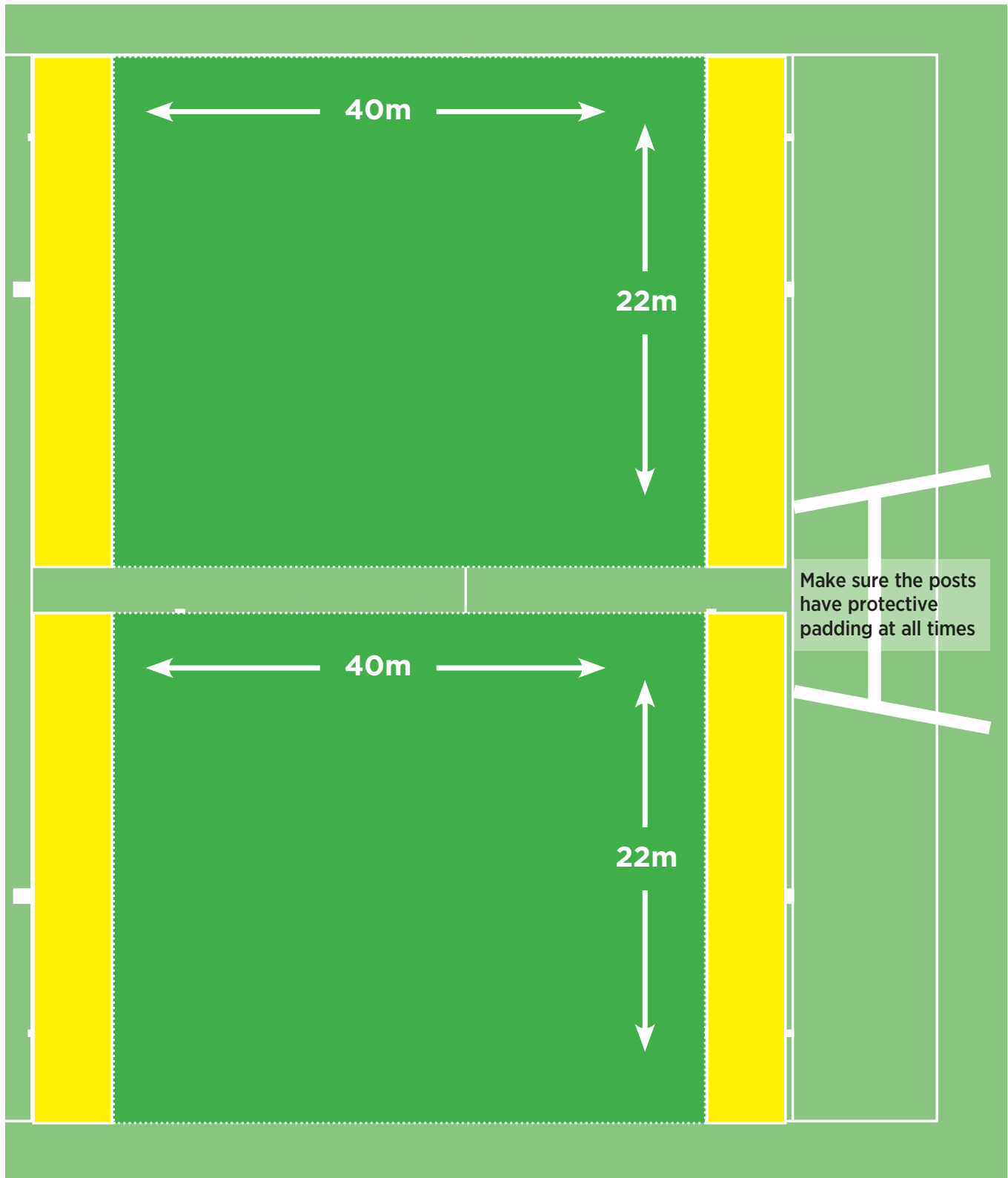
“How many players do I need” tells you how you can adapt the activity if you have more players than are shown



Detailed illustrations show how the skills should be performed

The Key helps you understand the diagram – which way the players are running and where the ball is going





NAME OF PLAYER:	Beginning	Developing	Mastering
DATE:			
<b>HANDLING</b>			
1 Understand that the ball goes backwards			
2 Pass 1 metre to another player			
3 Catch the ball from another player			
4 Run with the ball in two hands			
5 Run to a ball and pick it up			
<b>ATTACKING</b>			
1 Understand the need to run forward to score tries			
2 Score a Tag try			
3 Run past defenders			
4 Support the ball carrier			
5 Understand the need to pass once tagged			
<b>DEFENDING</b>			
1 Make a Tag tackle			
2 Defend against attacker			
3 Understand the offside law			
4 Stand in the correct position for a restart			
5 Work together as defenders			
<p>Notes: This assessment checklist is intended as a guide to progress only. Assess your child's progress against the three criteria above for 6 and 7 year olds. For example, is your child mastering the concept of running with the ball in two hands (for a 6 year old)? Some skills will be mastered (for a 6 year old) in a short space of time. Only the most able will master all the skills by the time they move to U8, but this doesn't matter. Some take longer to develop than others. Make copies of this page and regularly reassess your child's progress as a way of providing praise.</p>			

NAME OF PLAYER:	Beginning	Developing	Mastering
DATE:			
<b>HANDLING</b>			
1 Understand that the ball goes backwards			
2 Pass 3 metres to another player			
3 Catch the ball from another player moving			
4 Run with the ball in two hands			
5 Run to a ball and pick it up			
<b>ATTACKING</b>			
1 Understand that you must run forward to score tries			
2 Score a Tag try			
3 Run past defenders			
4 Support the ball carrier			
5 Take the pass as you move forward			
6 Understand that you need to pass once tagged			
<b>DEFENDING</b>			
1 Defend against attackers			
2 Make a Tag tackle			
3 Understand the offside law			
4 Stand in the correct position for a restart			
5 Work together as defenders			
<p>Notes: This assessment checklist is intended as a guide to progress only. Assess your child's progress against the three criteria above for 7 and 8 year olds. For example, is your child mastering the concept of running with the ball in two hands (for a 7 year old)? Some skills will be mastered (for a 7 year old) in a short space of time. Only the most able will master all the skills by the time they move to U9, but this doesn't matter. Some take longer to develop than others. Make copies of this page and regularly reassess your child's progress as a way of providing praise.</p>			



# EasiCoach™

RUGBY SKILLS ACTIVITIES

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## U7 Mini-Tag ACTIVITIES

# Understand the need to run forward to score tries

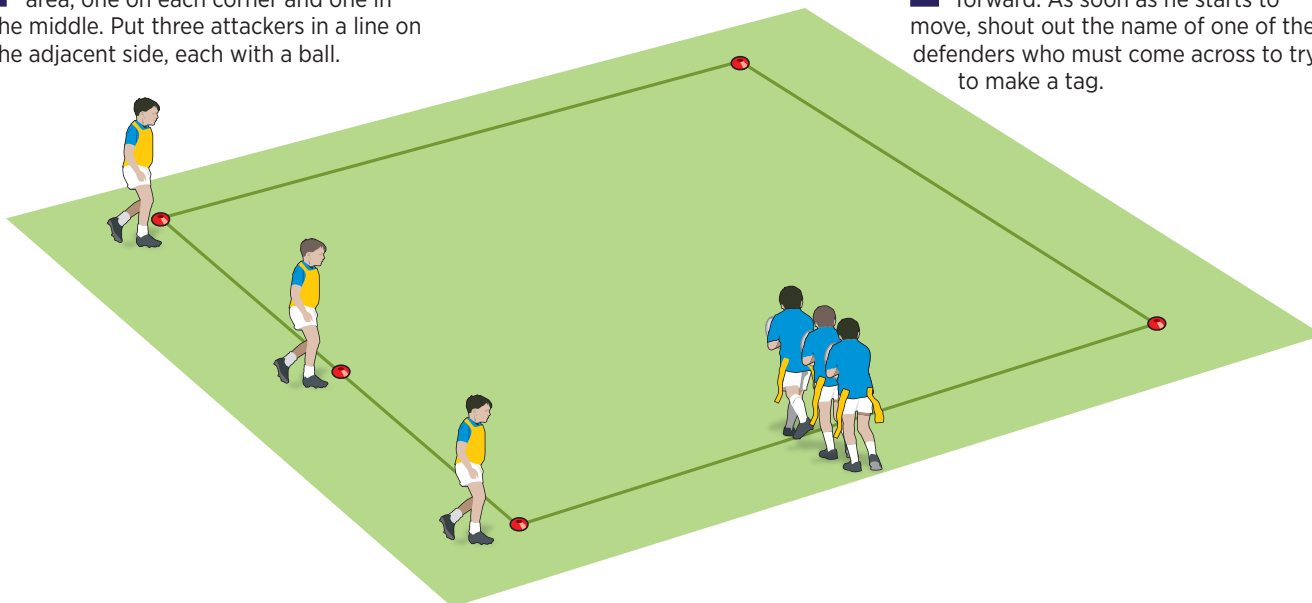
ACTIVITY: WHERE'S THE TRY LINE?



“Run forward” • “Avoid the defender”

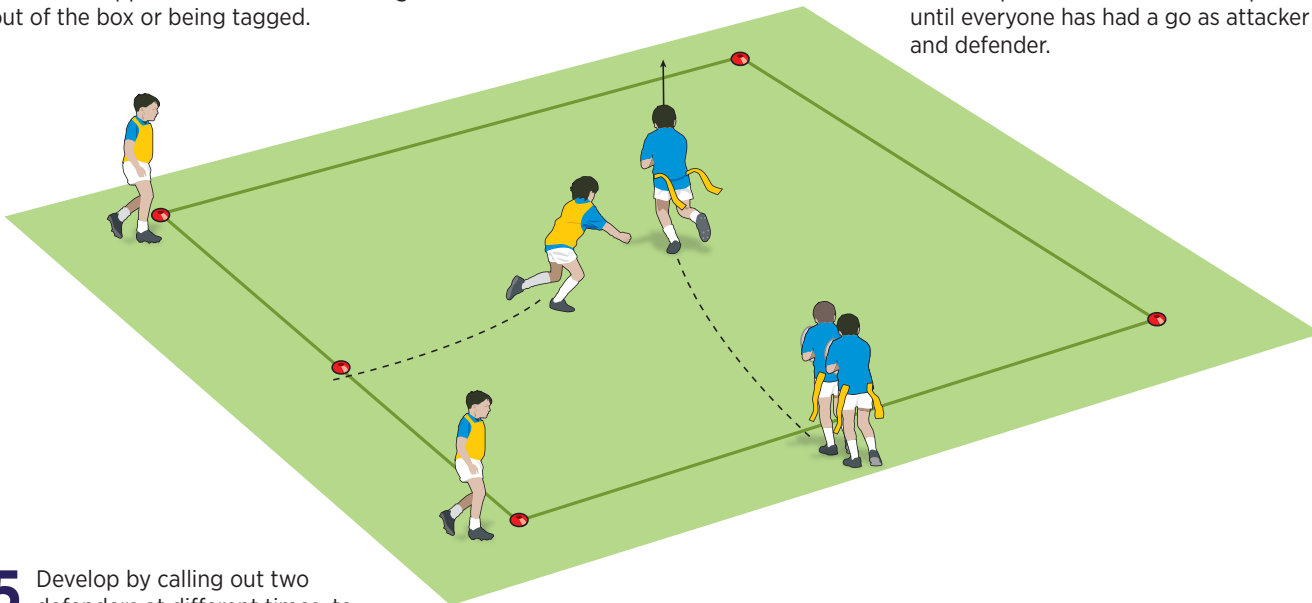
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Put three defenders on one side of the area, one on each corner and one in the middle. Put three attackers in a line on the adjacent side, each with a ball.



**2** When you say “go”, an attacker runs forward. As soon as he starts to move, shout out the name of one of the defenders who must come across to try to make a tag.

**3** The attacker aims to score a tag try at the opposite side without running out of the box or being tagged.



**4** After taking his turn, the ball carrier swaps with the defender. Repeat until everyone has had a go as attacker and defender.

**5** Develop by calling out two defenders at different times, to challenge the ball carrier.

## How many players do I need?

This activity requires six players at a time, but you can have attackers and defenders lined up ready to take their turn.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Understand the need to run forward to score tries

ACTIVITY: WHERE'S THE TRY LINE?

## You will need



1 ball for each attacker



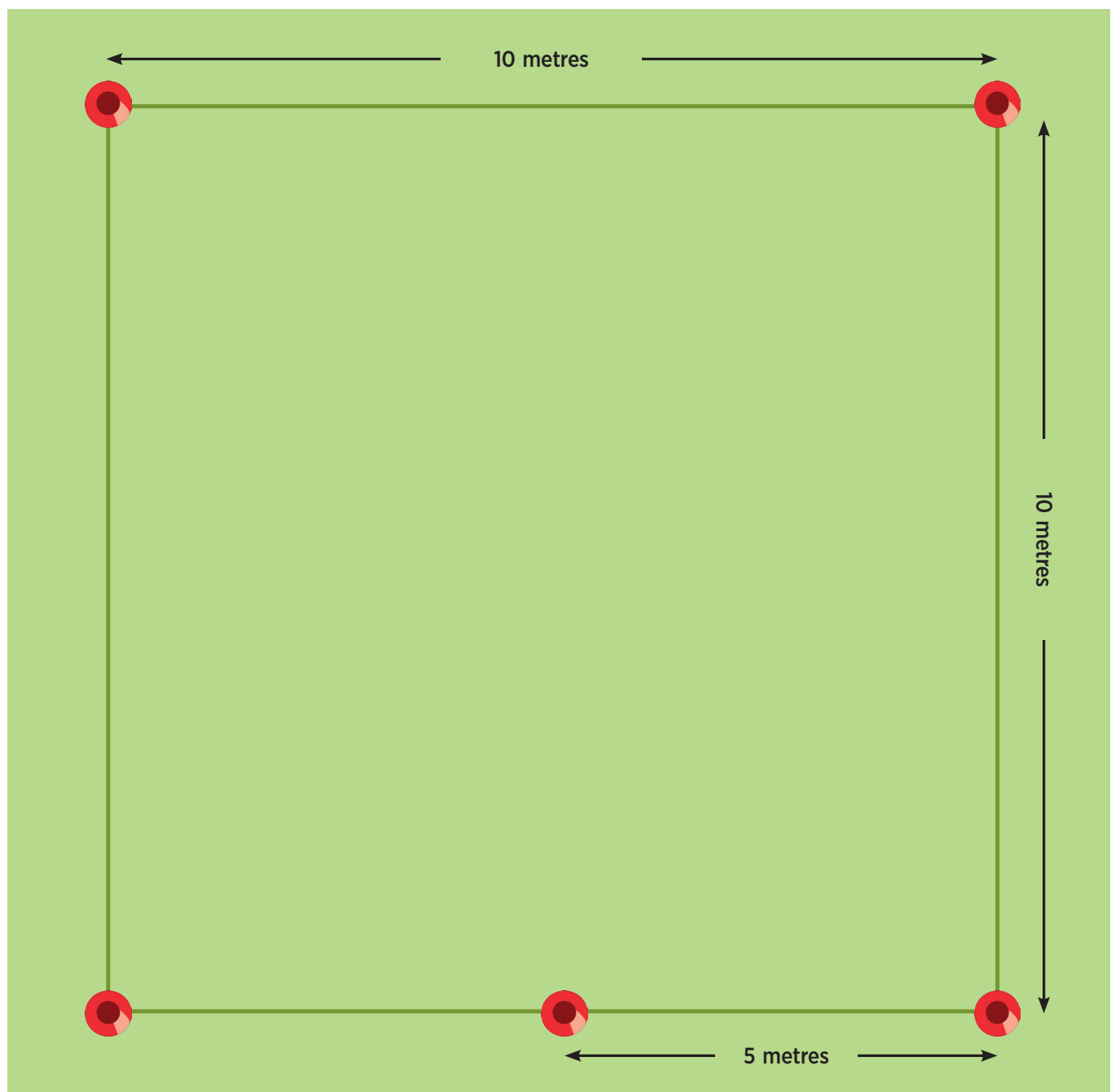
5 cones



1 bib for each defender



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Score a Tag try

ACTIVITY: TRY SCORING RELAY

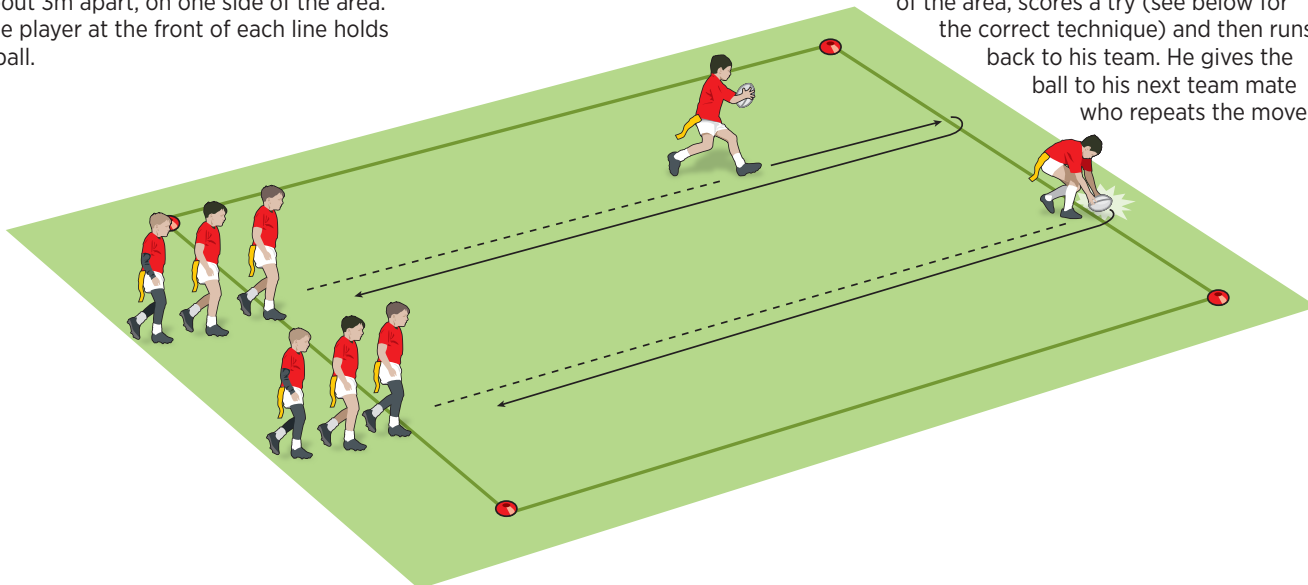


“Touch the ball down using both hands”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Divide your players into teams of four. Put the teams into lines, each line about 3m apart, on one side of the area. The player at the front of each line holds a ball.

**2** When you say “go”, the first player in each team runs to the other side of the area, scores a try (see below for the correct technique) and then runs back to his team. He gives the ball to his next team mate who repeats the move.



**3** Each player goes twice. When the last player returns the second time, he gives the ball to the front player and everyone sits down.

**4** Develop by making the player score the try in the middle of the area, run to the end before turning to pick up the ball and give it to his team mate.



## ✓ Scoring a try

*When scoring a try, a player must bend at the knees and hips and touch the ball down using both hands. If the ball doesn't move after it is put down, it shows the player is in control.*



### LAWS OF RUGBY

In Tag Rugby, a player...

1. Must not dive to score.
2. Can score with one step after being tagged.

### How many players do I need?

You can run this game with as many teams of four as you like – just remember to space the teams about 3m apart.

### Key

Ground covered

Direction of run



# Score a Tag try

ACTIVITY: TRY SCORING RELAY

## You will need



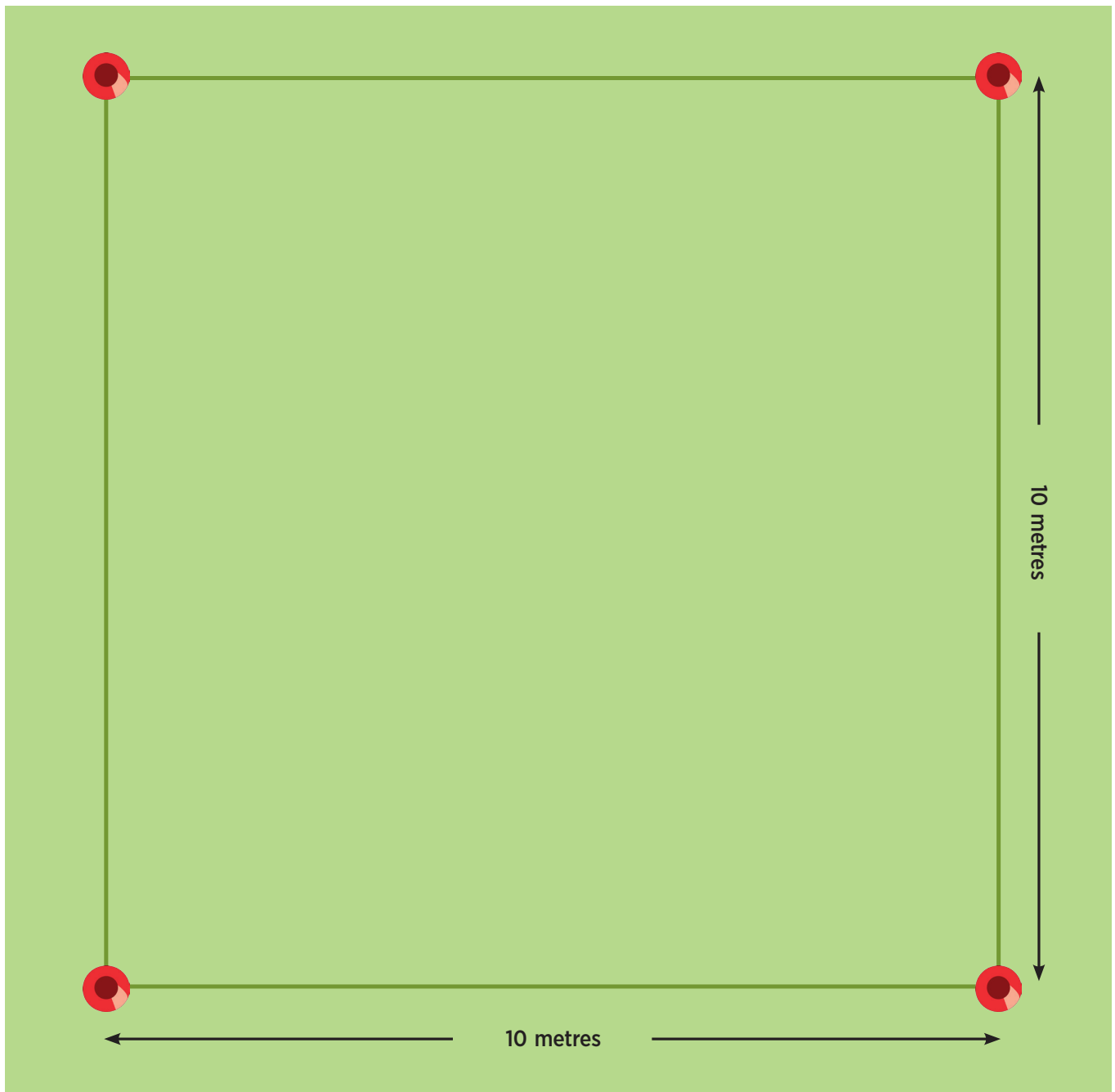
1 ball for every four players



1 tag belt for each player



4 cones



# Run past defenders

ACTIVITY: SLALOM

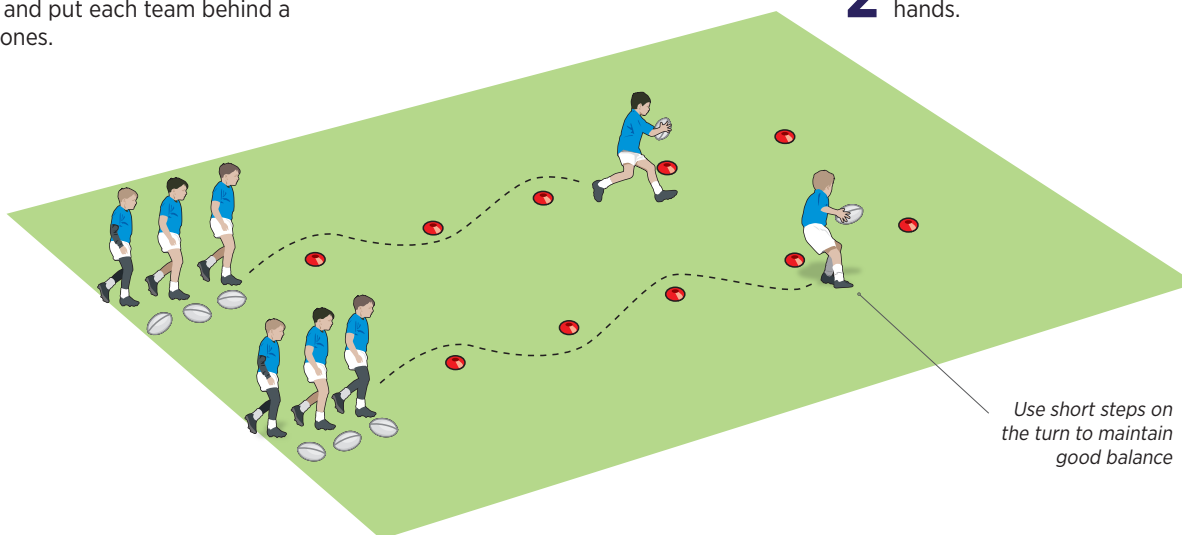


“Use pretend moves and dodges to change direction”

WHAT YOU SAY

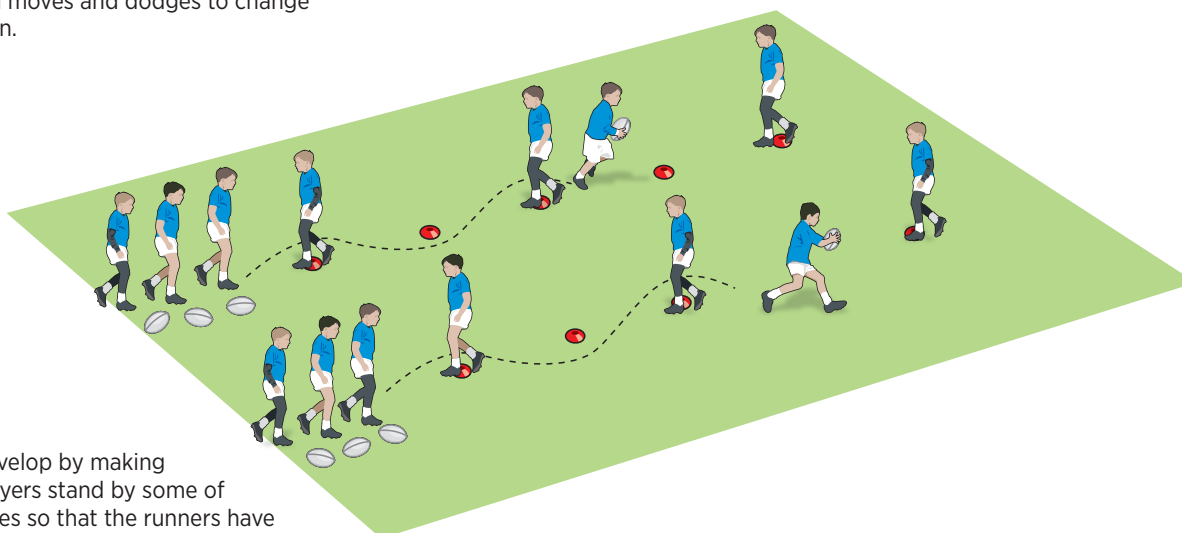
**1** Divide your players into teams of four and put each team behind a line of cones.

**2** Each player should hold a ball in two hands.



**3** When you say “go”, the front players race to the other end of the lines making sure they swerve in and out of the cones as they go. They should use pretend moves and dodges to change direction.

**4** Repeat for the next players in each team and so on.



**5** Develop by making players stand by some of the cones so that the runners have to use pretend moves and dodges to avoid them. Rotate players so that they take turns on the cones.

## How many players do I need?

You can run this game with as many teams of four as you like – just remember to space the teams at least 3m apart.

## Key

Ground covered



# Run past defenders

ACTIVITY: SLALOM

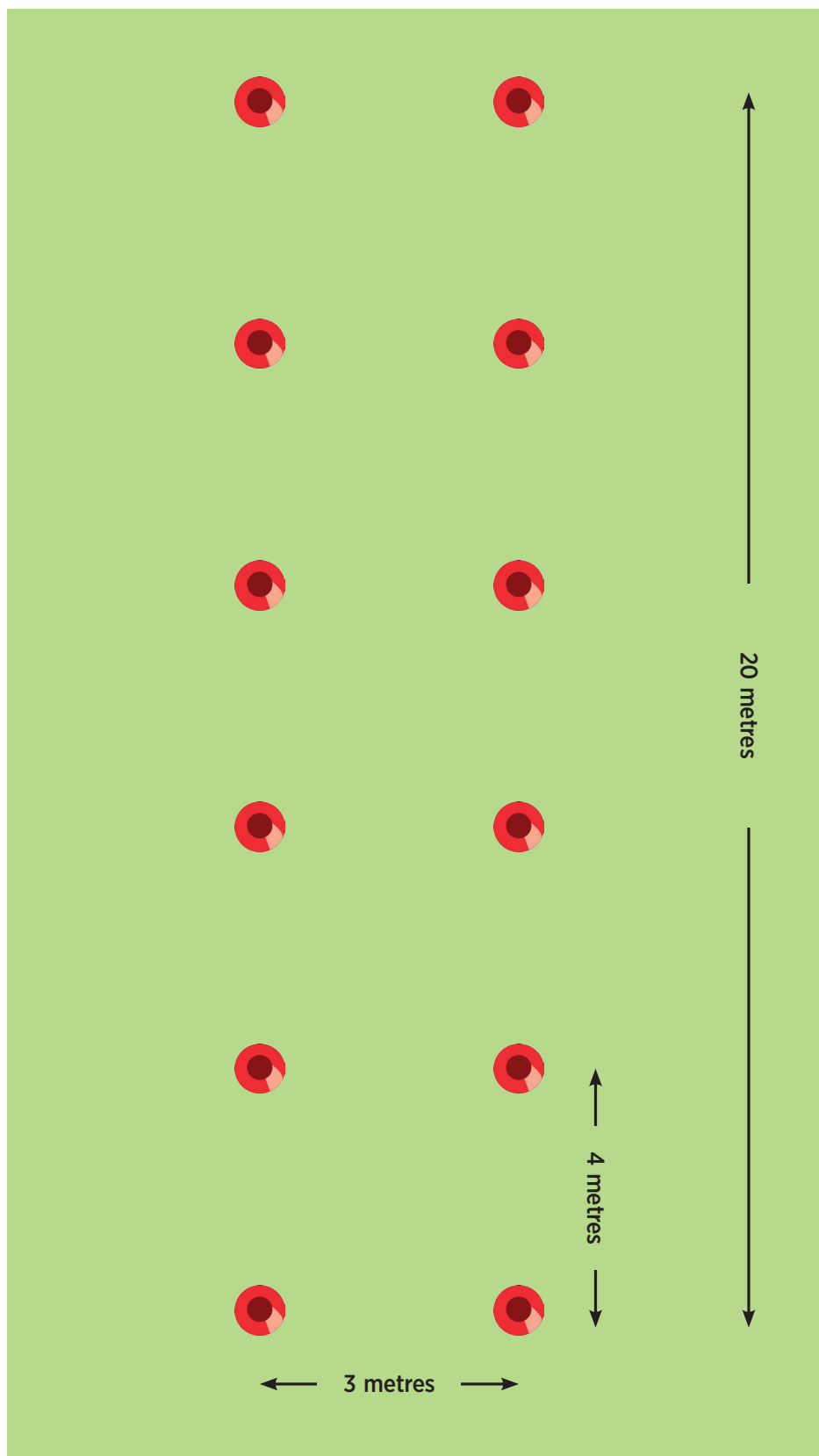
## You will need



1 ball for every four players



6 cones for every four players



# Support the ball carrier

ACTIVITY: STOP AND PASS

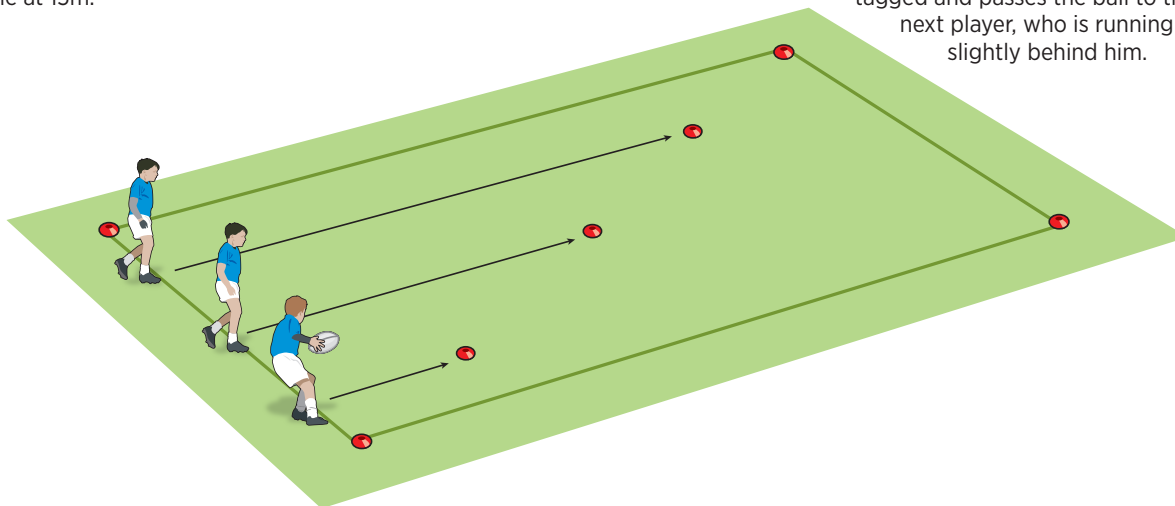


“Get behind the ball carrier” • “Call the name of the ball carrier”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Put three players on the start line standing about 3m apart. Place a cone in front of each player – one at 5m, one at 10m and one at 15m.

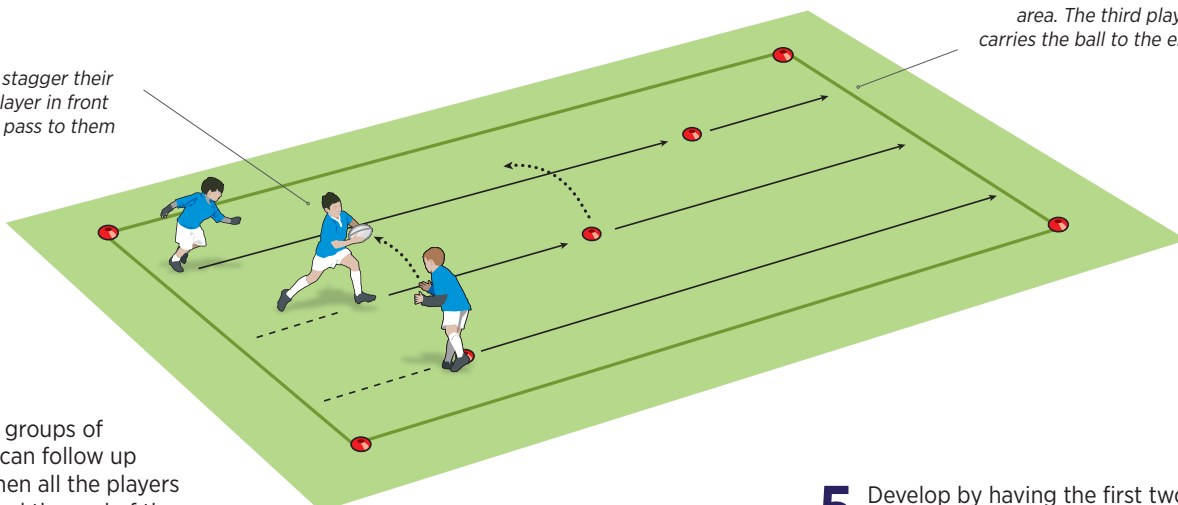
**2** Have the first player run out with a ball. When he reaches the cone in front of him, he stops as if he's been tagged and passes the ball to the next player, who is running slightly behind him.



**3** The next player runs forward to the cone in front of him and repeats with the last player who runs to the cone in front of him and then on to the end of the area.

*After they've passed the ball, the first two players run on to the end of the area. The third player carries the ball to the end*

*Players must stagger their runs so the player in front can stop and pass to them*



**4** Other groups of three can follow up behind. When all the players have reached the end of the area, they can turn and repeat the activity running back the other way.

**5** Develop by having the first two players run around to take a pass from the last player (after they have completed their own passes).

## How many players do I need?

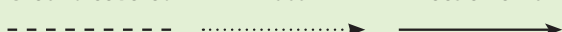
Three players take part each time. With up to 12 players, have them wait their turn in groups of three. If you have more players, set up two games.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Support the ball carrier

ACTIVITY: STOP AND PASS

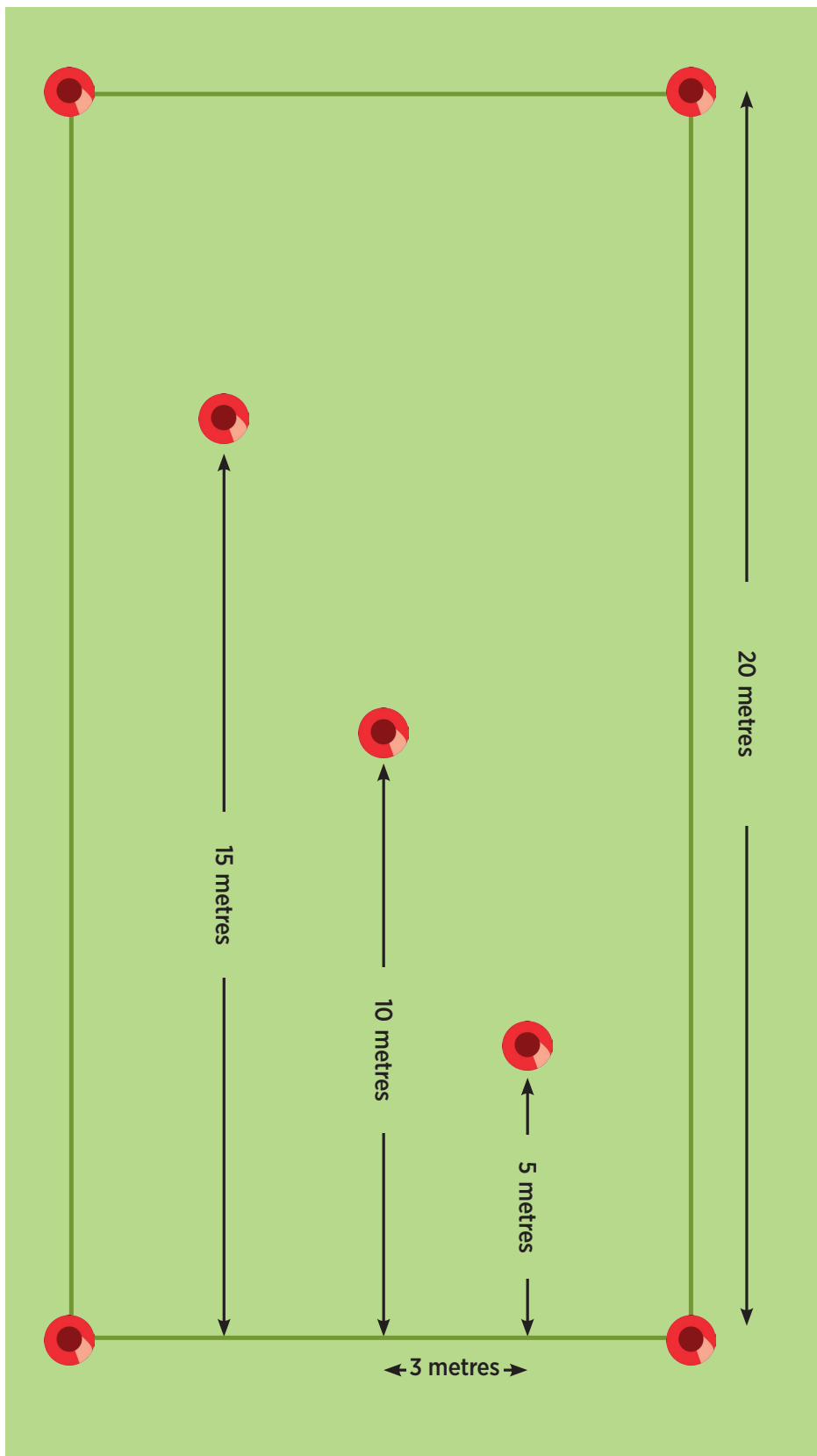
## You will need



1 ball



7 cones



# Understand the need to pass once tagged

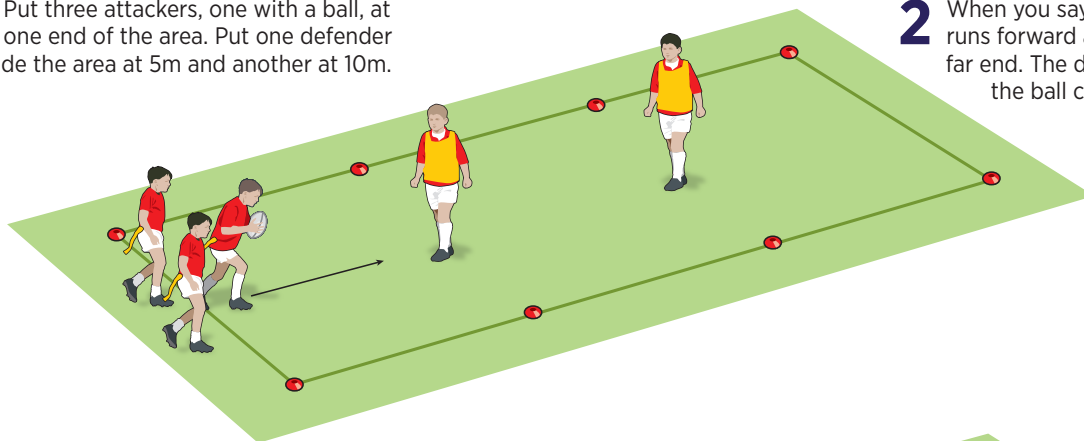
ACTIVITY: TAG CORRIDORS



“Pass the ball when you are tagged”

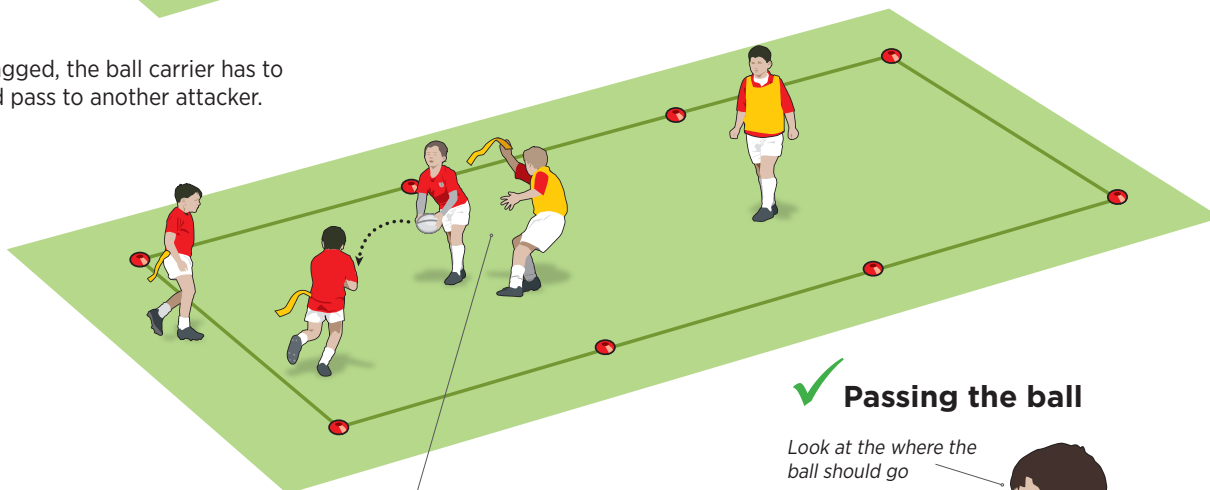
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Put three attackers, one with a ball, at one end of the area. Put one defender inside the area at 5m and another at 10m.



**2** When you say “go”, the ball carrier runs forward aiming to score at the far end. The defenders aim to tag the ball carrier.

**3** When tagged, the ball carrier has to stop and pass to another attacker.



**4** When the attackers reach the far end, they turn and repeat, with a different attacker starting with the ball.

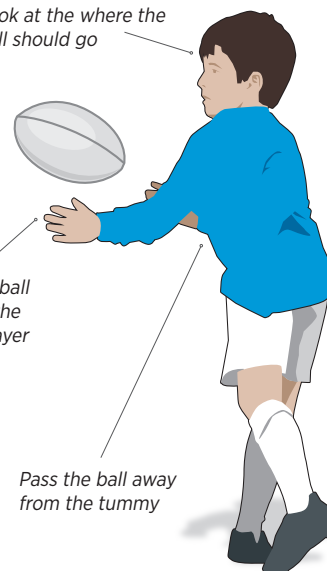
*The defenders have to give back the tags to the attackers*

## ✓ Passing the ball

Look at where the ball should go

Push the ball towards the target player

Pass the ball away from the tummy



### LAWS OF RUGBY

In Tag Rugby, a player...

Must pass within three strides or three seconds of being tagged.

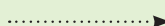
### How many players do I need?

This activity requires five players at a time, but you can have attackers and defenders lined up ready to take their turn.

### Key

Pass

Direction of run



# Understand the need to pass once tagged

ACTIVITY: TAG CORRIDORS

## You will need



1 ball



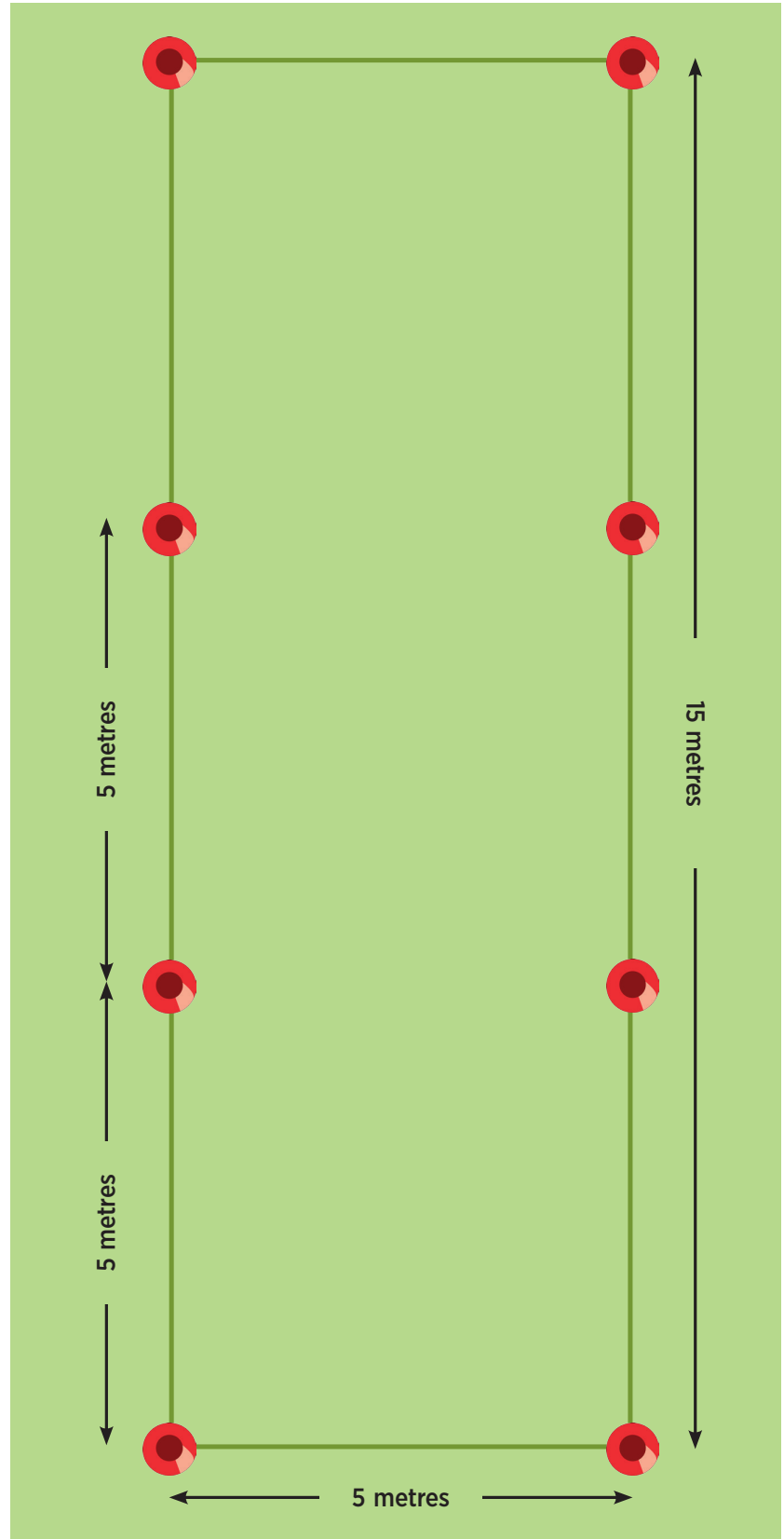
8 cones



1 bib for each defender



1 tag belt for each attacker



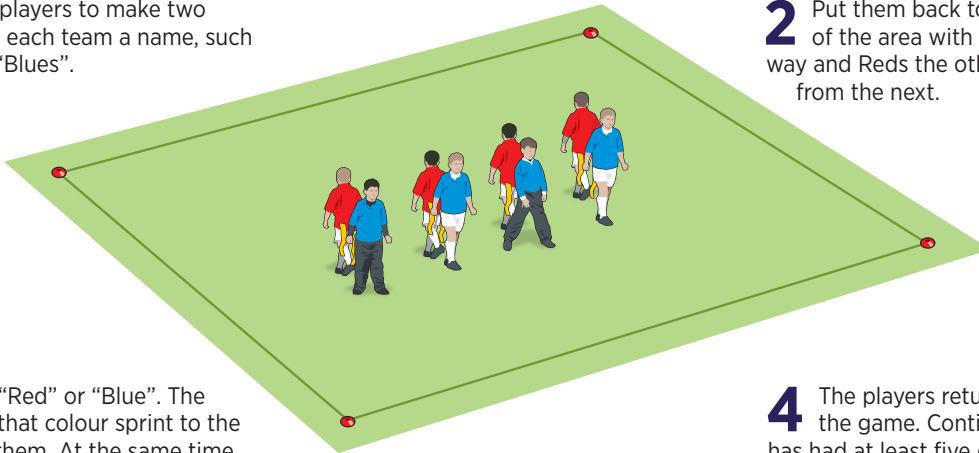
# Make a Tag tackle

ACTIVITY: TAG SNATCH



“Get close to the ball carrier” • “Grab and remove the tag belt” • Hold the tag above your head and shout “Tag!” • “Return the tag to the tagged player”

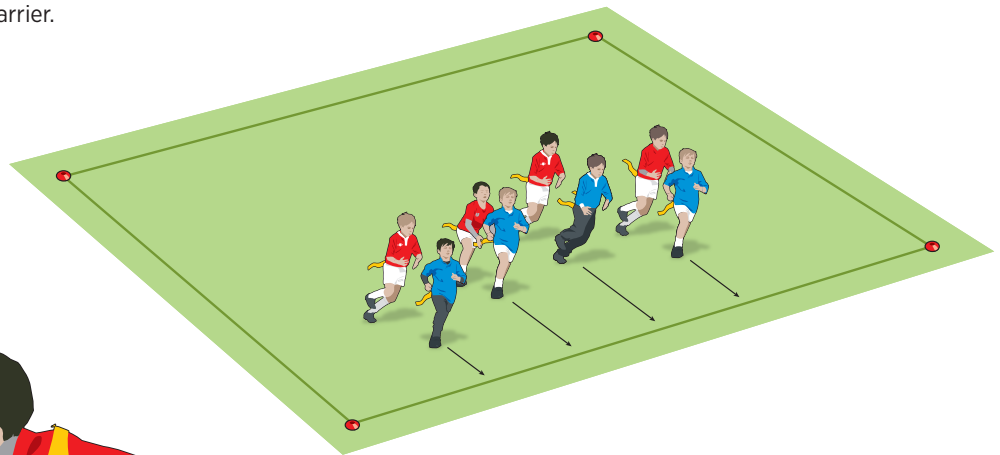
**1** Pair up the players to make two teams. Give each team a name, such as “Reds” and “Blues”.



**2** Put them back to back in the middle of the area with the Blues facing one way and Reds the other, each pair 2m from the next.

**3** Shout out “Red” or “Blue”. The players of that colour sprint to the line in front of them. At the same time, the other players turn and try to tag the runners before they reach the line. Tell the players to get close to the ball carrier.

**4** The players return tags and repeat the game. Continue until everyone has had at least five goes at sprinting.



## Making a Tag tackle

To make a tag, the defender must get close to the attacker, reach out and cleanly rip the tag from the attacker’s tag belt.

### How many players do I need?

You can run this activity with as many pairs as you like, as long as you have enough space for them all to line up.

### Key

Direction of run



# Make a Tag tackle

ACTIVITY: TAG SNATCH

## You will need



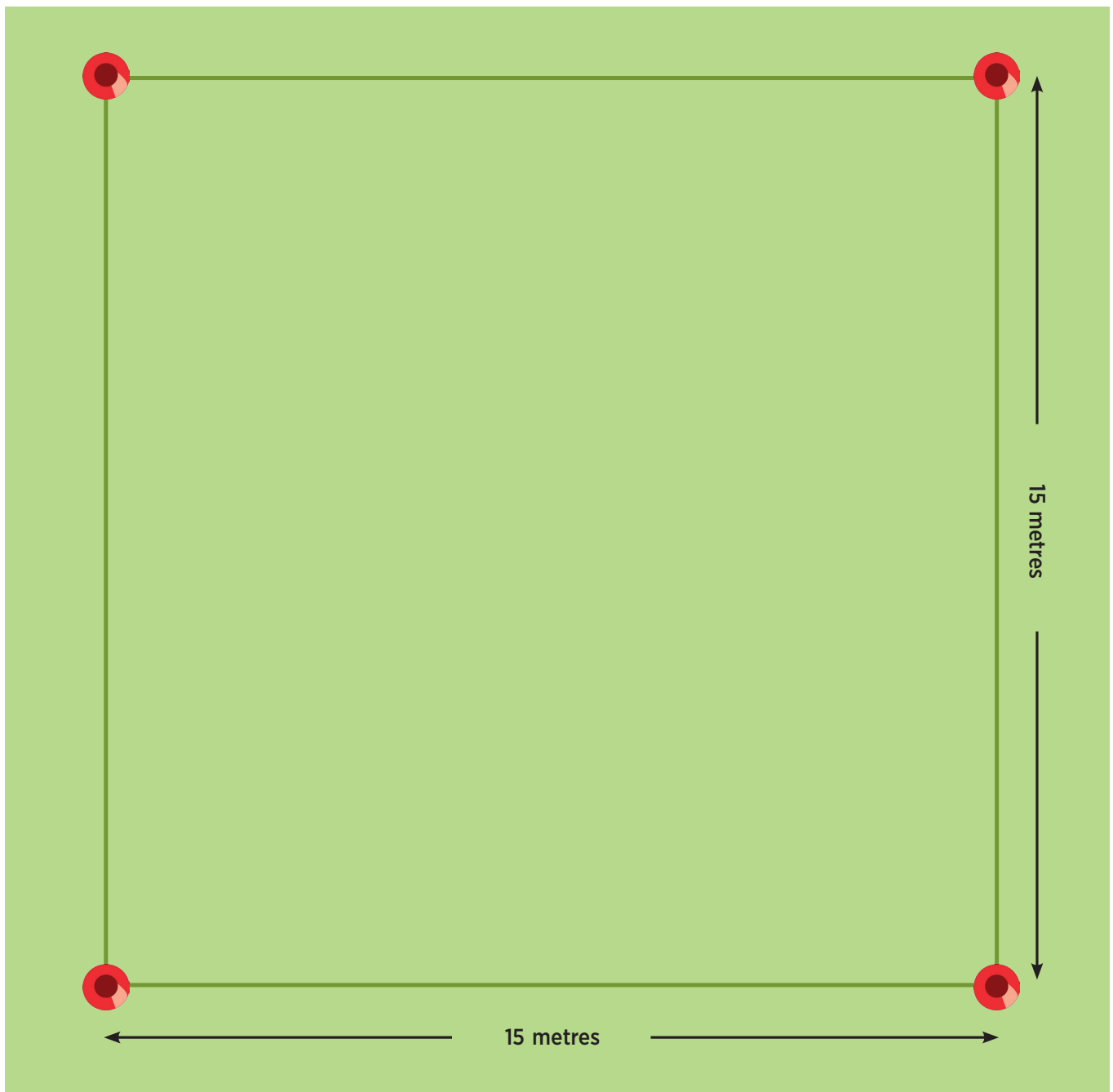
4 cones



Bibs or different colour shirts for one team



1 tag belt for each player



# Defend against attackers

ACTIVITY: TAG BULLDOG

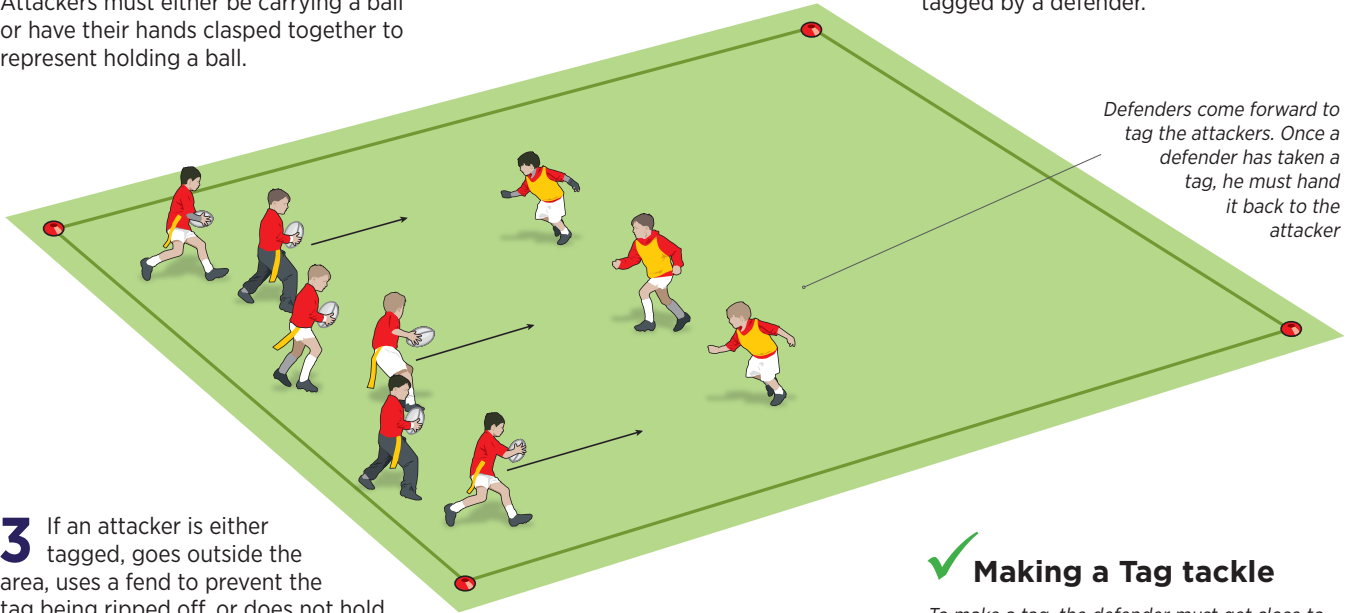


“Chase the ball carrier” • “Get close to the ball carrier”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Three defenders are spread out in the middle of the area. The rest of the players – the attackers – start at one end. Attackers must either be carrying a ball or have their hands clasped together to represent holding a ball.

**2** When you say “go”, all of the attackers run into the area. Their aim is to get to the far end without being tagged by a defender.



*Defenders come forward to tag the attackers. Once a defender has taken a tag, he must hand it back to the attacker*

**3** If an attacker is either tagged, goes outside the area, uses a fend to prevent the tag being ripped off, or does not hold the ball in two hands, he becomes a defender.

## ✓ Making a Tag tackle

*To make a tag, the defender must get close to the attacker, reach out and cleanly rip the tag from the attacker's tag belt.*

**4** Run the game up and down the area until the last player is tagged. Make sure everyone has a go as a defender.



**5** When the game is over, ask the defenders whether they think it's better to defend together in a line or as individuals to see if they understand the benefit of teamwork.

### How many players do I need?

You can run this activity with nine or more players. If you have upwards of 20 players, run two games side by side.

### Key

Direction of run



# Defend against attackers

ACTIVITY: TAG BULLDOG

## You will need



1 ball per attacker (or hands clasped together)



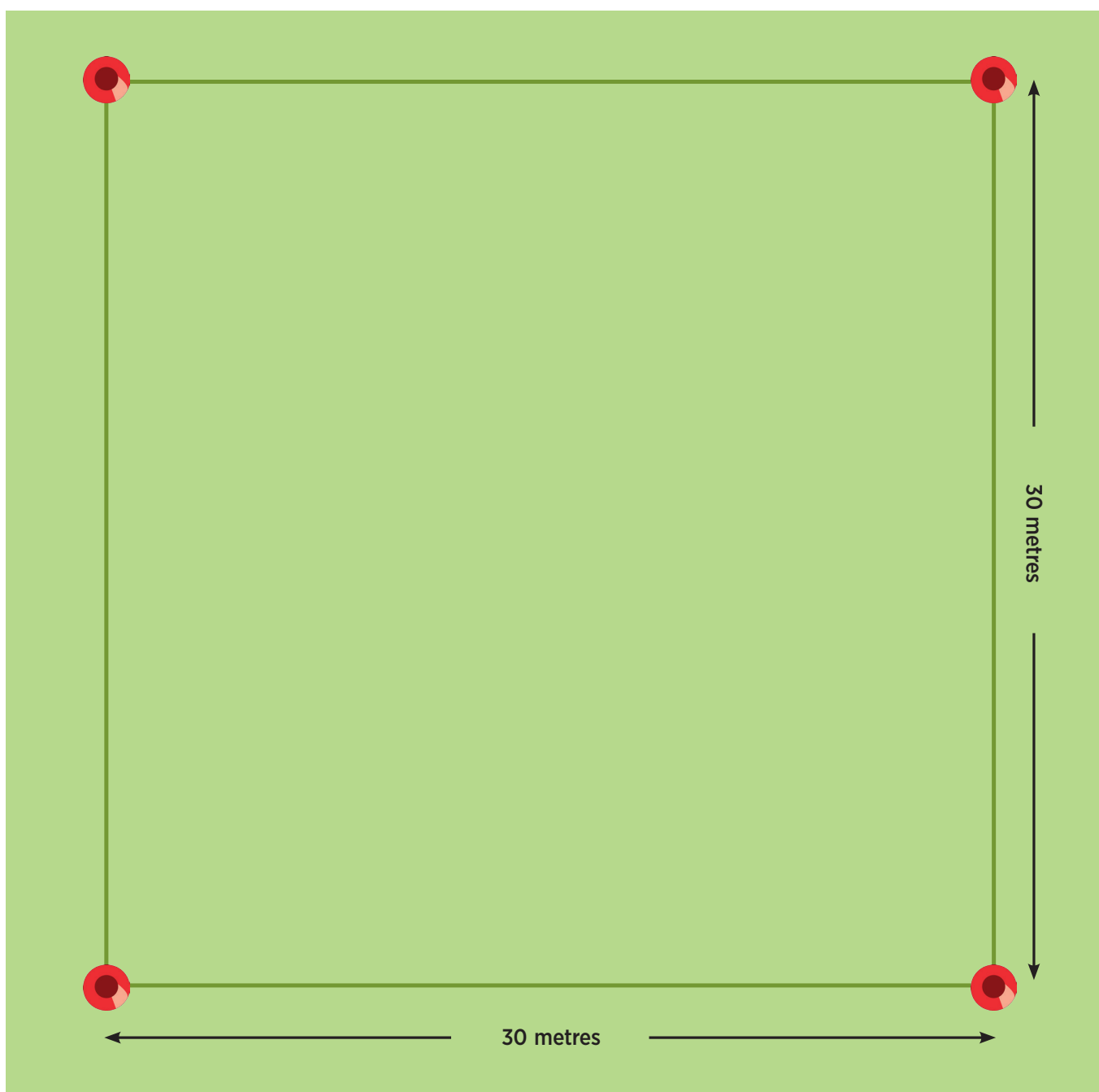
4 cones



Bibs (optional)



1 tag belt for each player



# Understand the offside law

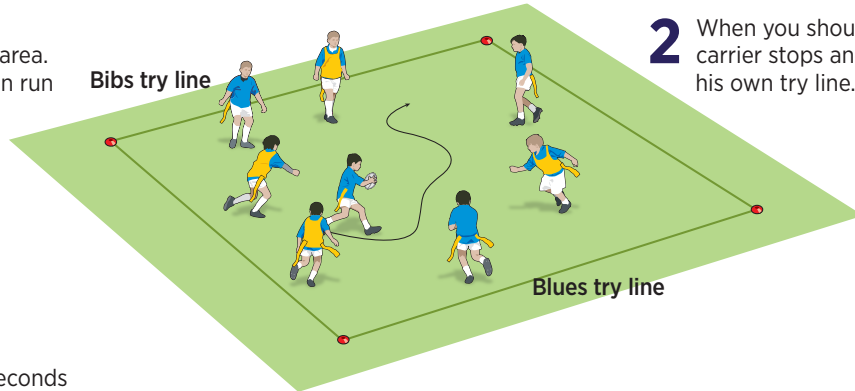
ACTIVITY: GET ONSIDE



“Defenders must go back behind the offside line when a player is tagged”

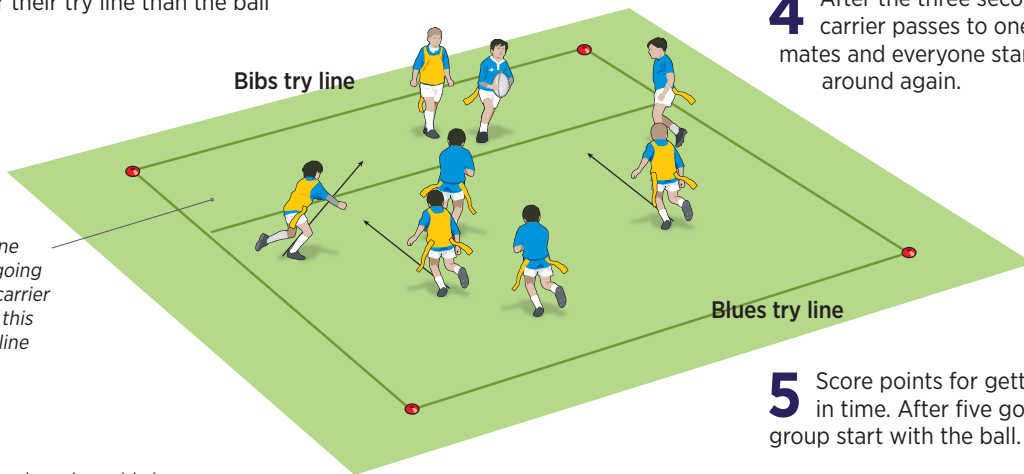
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Have four attackers and four defenders run around in the area. One attacker has the ball and can run anywhere in the box.



**2** When you shout “Tag!”, the ball carrier stops and turns to face his own try line.

**3** The defenders have three seconds to get back outside. That is, they must be nearer their try line than the ball carrier.

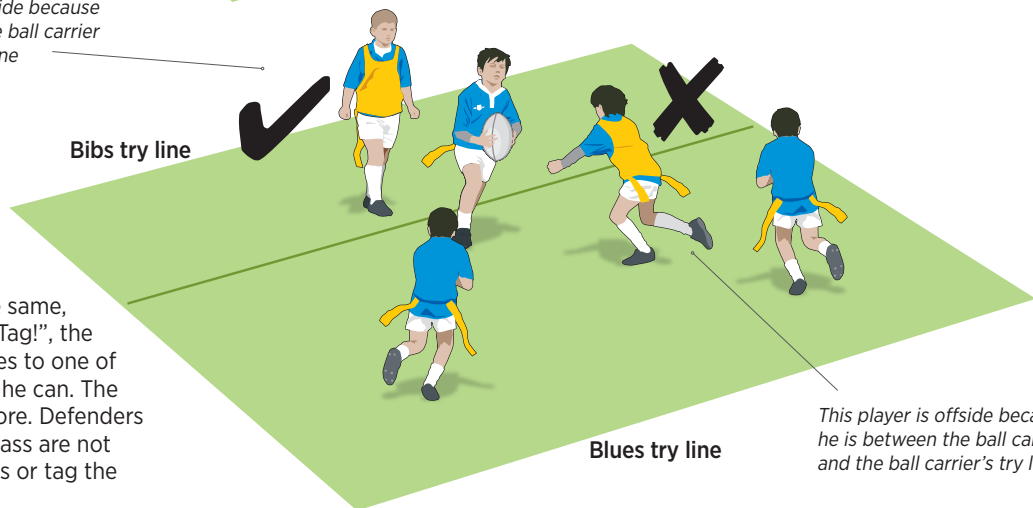


The bibs players must imagine a line across the pitch going through the ball carrier and get between this line and their try line

**4** After the three seconds the ball carrier passes to one of his team mates and everyone starts running around again.

**5** Score points for getting back outside in time. After five goes, let the other group start with the ball.

This player is onside because he is between the ball carrier and his own try line



**6** Progress by doing the same, but when you shout “Tag!”, the ball carrier stops and passes to one of his team mates as soon as he can. The new ball carrier aims to score. Defenders who are offside after the pass are not allowed to prevent the pass or tag the new ball carrier.

This player is offside because he is between the ball carrier and the ball carrier’s try line

## How many players do I need?

Eight players in a 10m square is ideal, but you can add players to each team and make the square bigger.

## Key

Direction of run



# Understand the offside law

ACTIVITY: GET ONSIDE

## You will need



1 ball



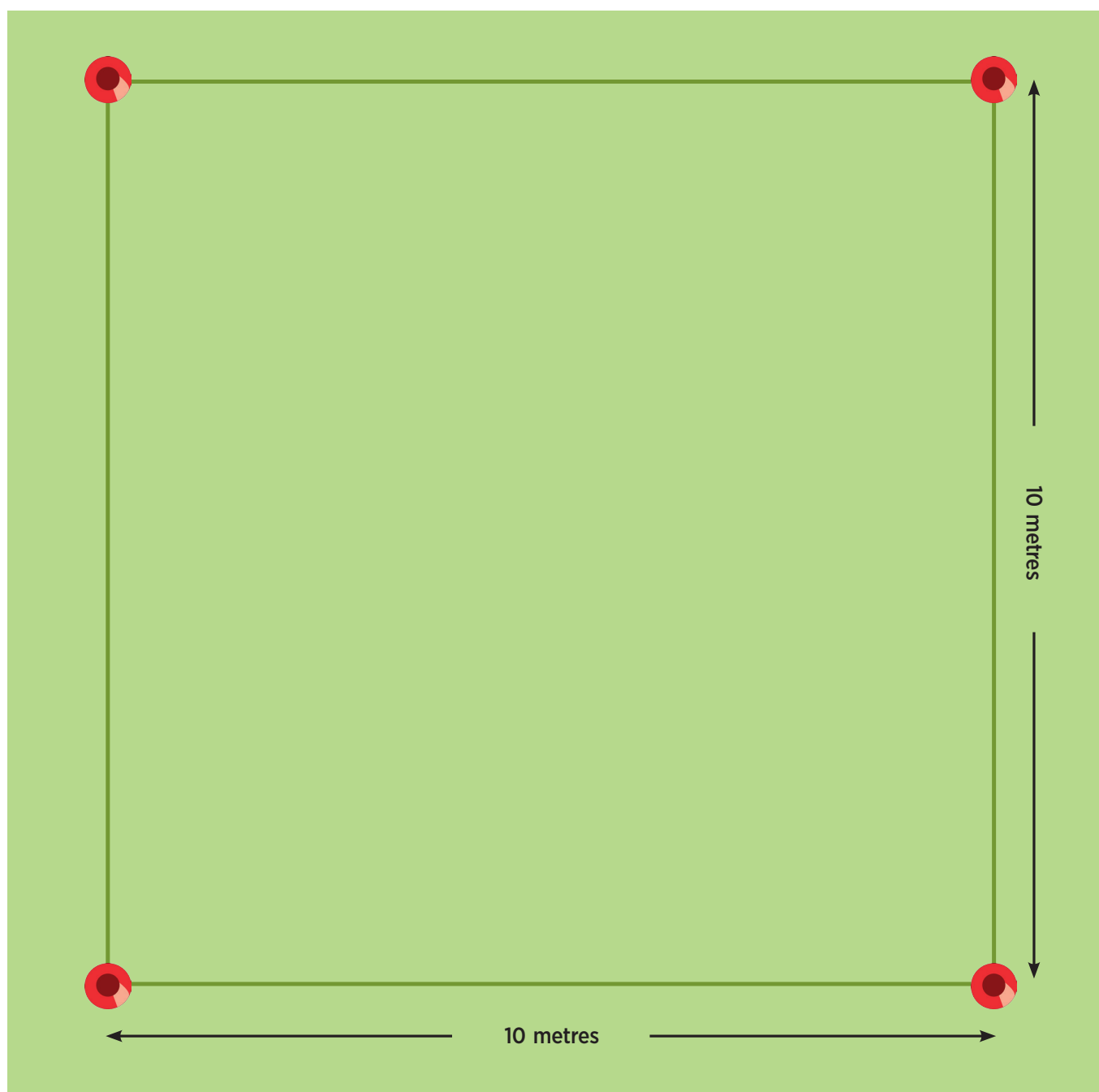
4 bibs



4 cones



1 tag belt for each player



# Stand in the correct position for a restart

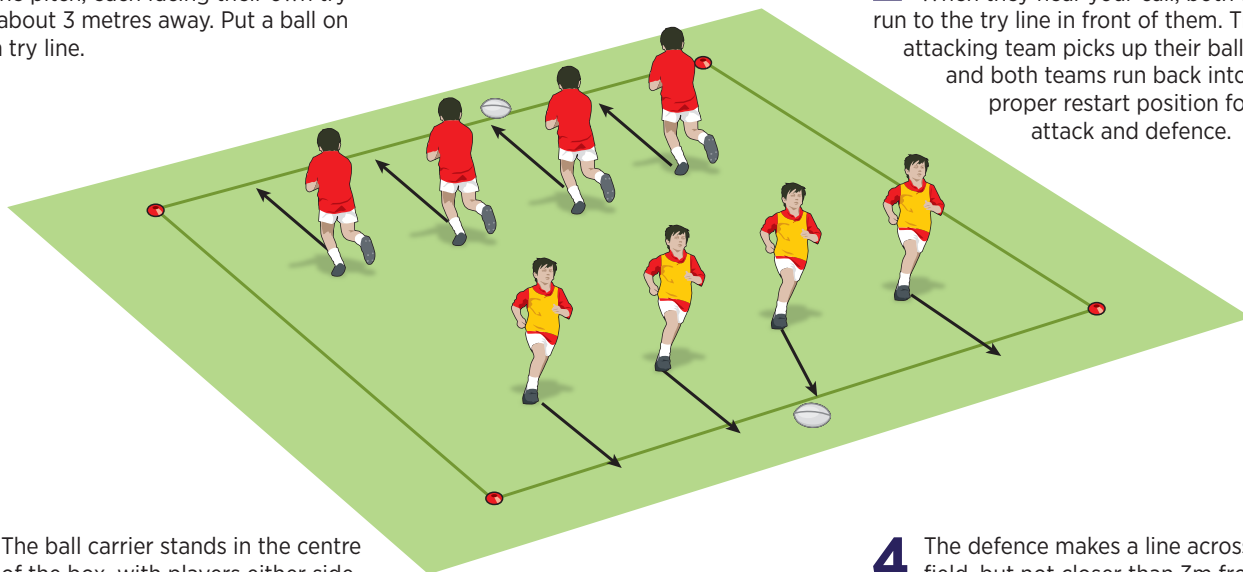
ACTIVITY: READY, STEADY, READY!



“Form part of a line” • “Encourage others to form part of a line”

WHAT YOU SAY

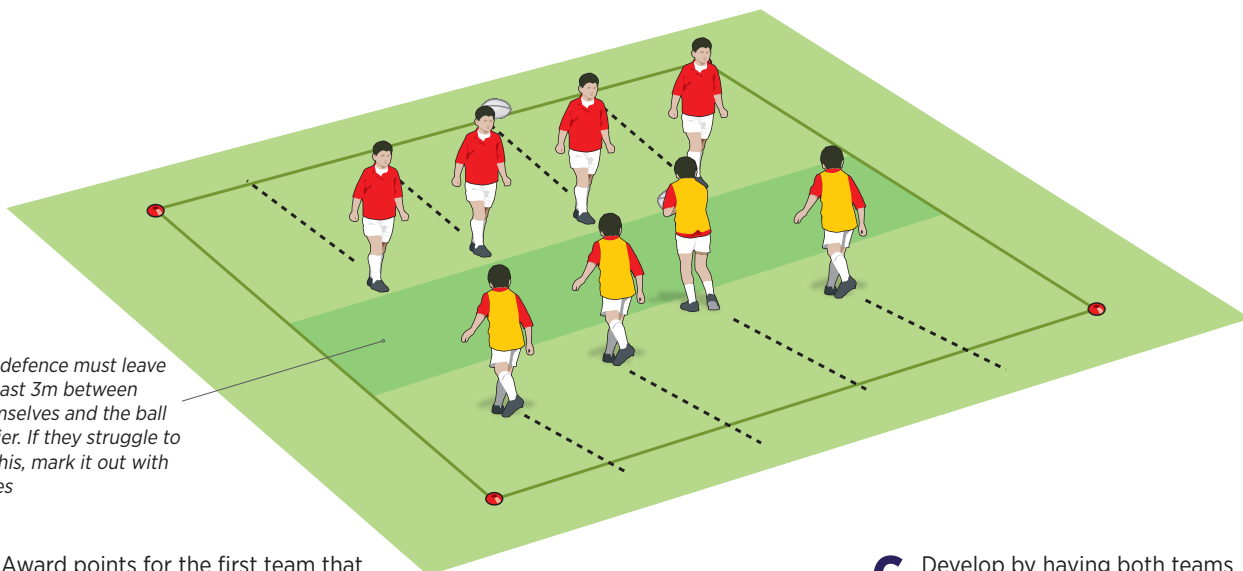
**1** Put two teams of four in lines across the pitch, each facing their own try line about 3 metres away. Put a ball on each try line.



**2** Call out which team is attacking. When they hear your call, both teams run to the try line in front of them. The attacking team picks up their ball and both teams run back into the proper restart position for attack and defence.

**3** The ball carrier stands in the centre of the box, with players either side of him.

**4** The defence makes a line across the field, but not closer than 3m from the ball carrier.



*The defence must leave at least 3m between themselves and the ball carrier. If they struggle to do this, mark it out with cones*

**5** Award points for the first team that gets into place.

**6** Develop by having both teams running around inside the box before you shout “restart” and a team name. Each team has to be in place, with the attacking team ball carrier in position on the centre line.

## How many players do I need?

Eight players in a 10m square is ideal, but you can add players to each team and make the square bigger.

## Key

Ground covered    Direction of run



# Stand in the correct position for a restart

ACTIVITY: READY, STEADY, READY!

## You will need



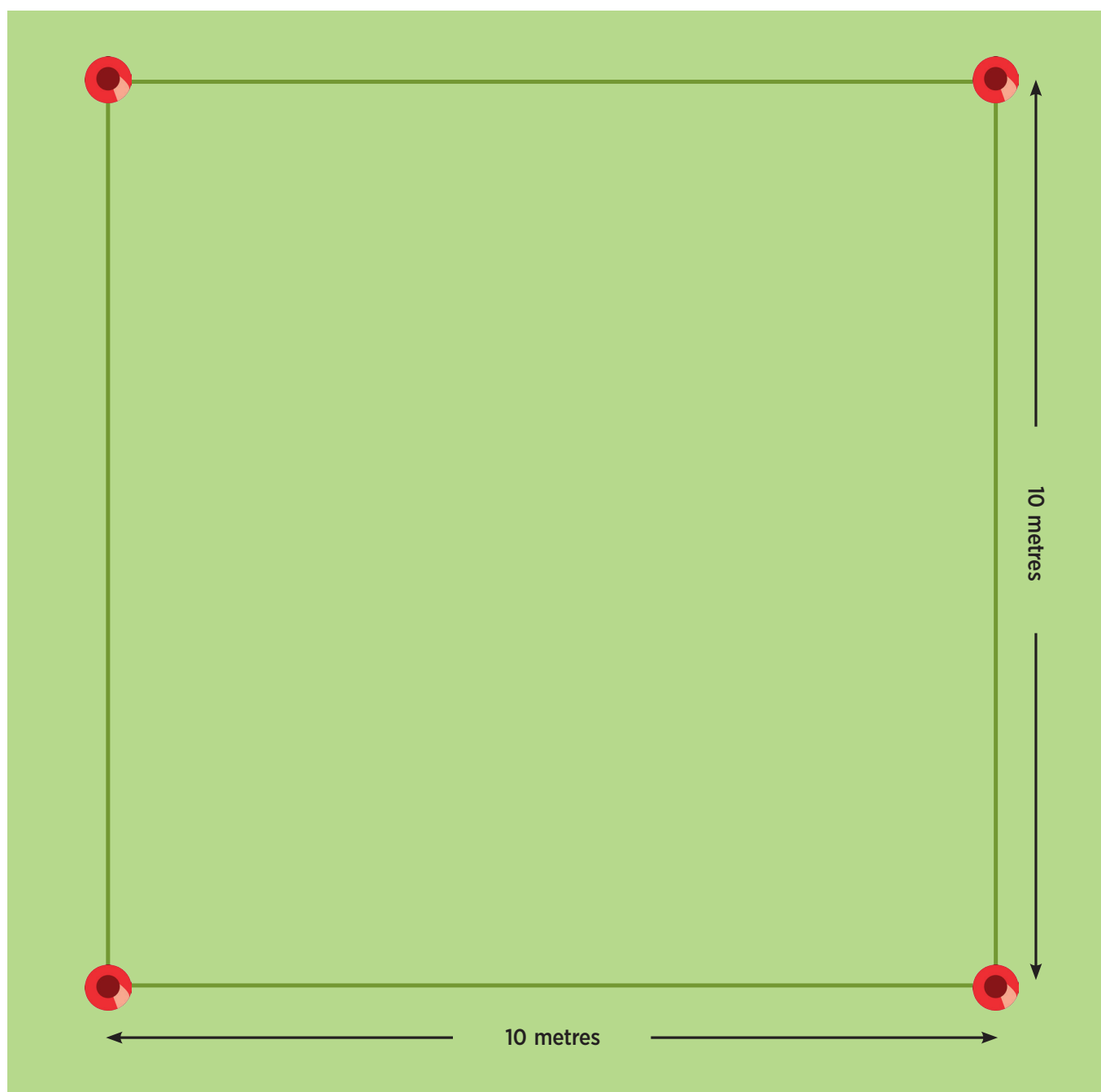
2 balls



4 bibs



4 cones



# Work together as defenders

ACTIVITY: TURN AND TAG

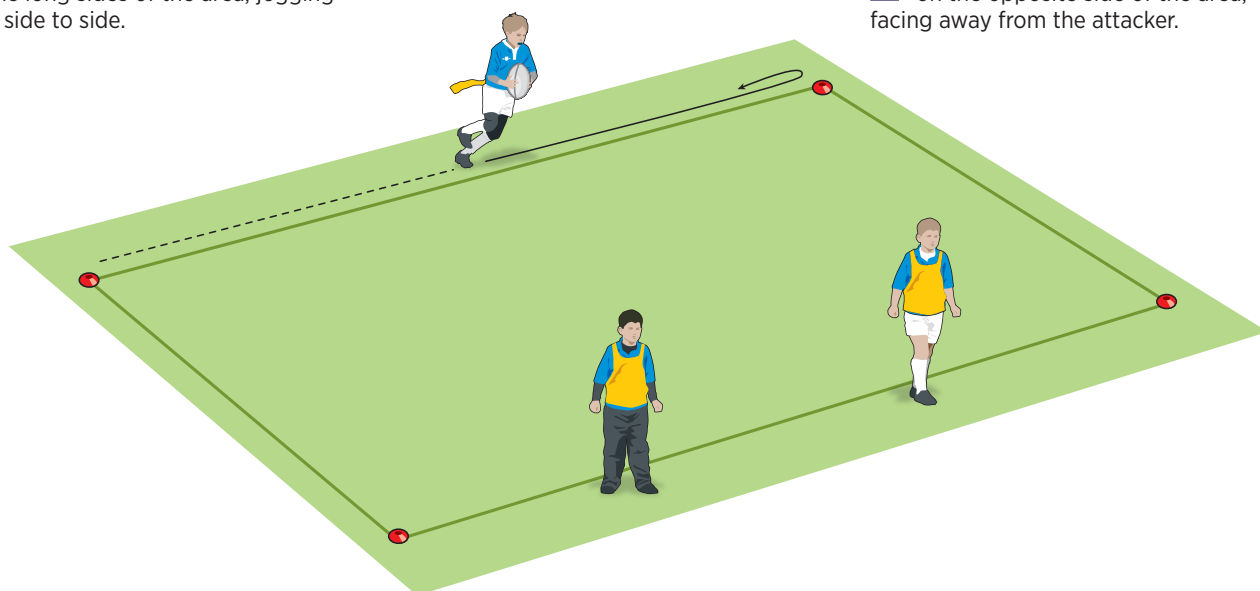


“Move together towards a target”

WHAT YOU SAY

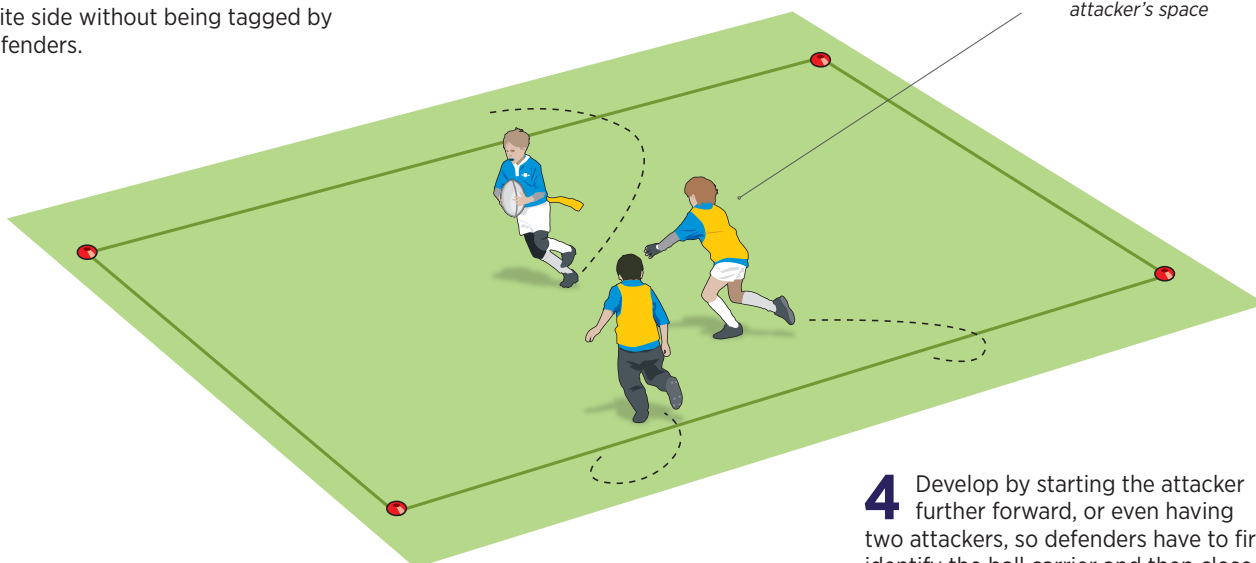
**1** Put an attacker with a ball on one of the long sides of the area, jogging from side to side.

**2** Put two defenders about 4m apart on the opposite side of the area, facing away from the attacker.



**3** When you shout “turn”, the defenders turn around and run into the area towards the attacker. At the same time, the attacker runs into the area and aims to run across to the opposite side without being tagged by the defenders.

*The defenders will be more successful if they work together to close down the attacker's space*



**4** Develop by starting the attacker further forward, or even having two attackers, so defenders have to first identify the ball carrier and then close him down.

## How many players do I need?

This activity requires three players at a time, but you can have attackers and defenders lined up ready to take their turn.

## Key

Ground covered

Direction of run



# Work together as defenders

ACTIVITY: TURN AND TAG

## You will need



1 ball per attacker (or hands clasped together)



Bibs for the defenders



4 cones



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Understand that the ball goes backwards

ACTIVITY: PASSING RACE

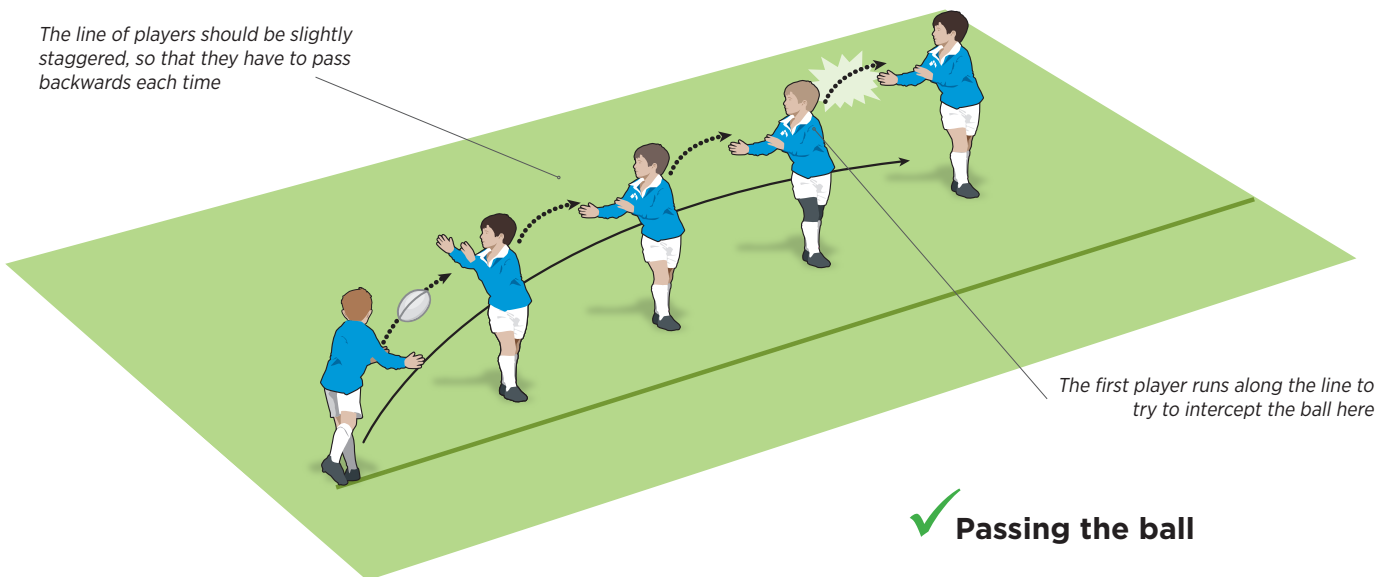


“Look where the ball should go” • “Push the ball towards the target player”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Spread your players out in a line, standing about 1m apart and slightly staggered. Give a ball to the first player in the line.

**2** When you say “go”, the first player passes the ball to the player next to him then races to the far end of the line. His aim is to intercept the last pass to the final player.

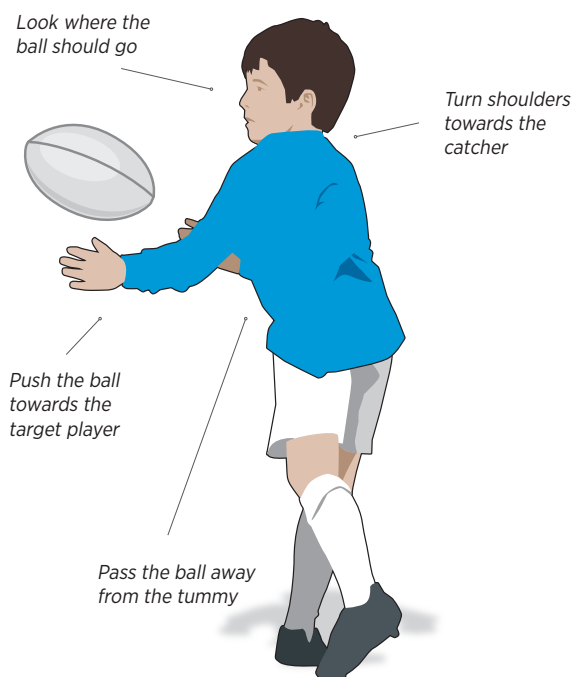


**3** As the first player is running, the other players try to pass the ball along the line, as quickly as possible, to the final player. Their aim is to get the ball to the final player before the first player can intercept.

**4** If the first player intercepts the ball, or the ball is dropped, he goes back to the beginning and starts again.

**5** When the ball gets to the end of the line successfully, the first player stays at the end and the second player repeats.

## ✓ Passing the ball



### How many players do I need?

Five players in a line is ideal, although you can adjust to suit your numbers. You can run more than one line at a time.

### Key

Pass

Direction of run



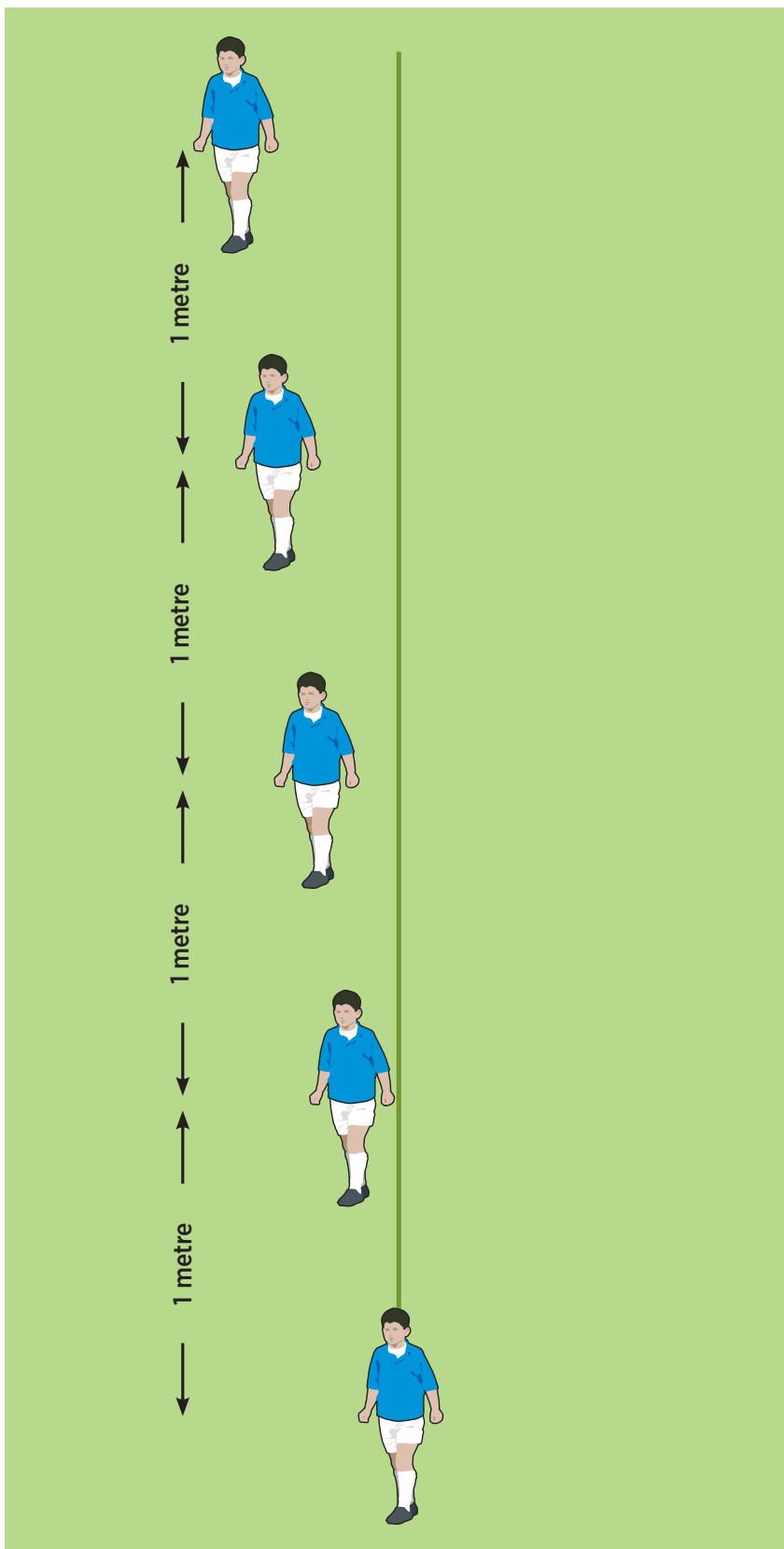
# Understand that the ball goes backwards

ACTIVITY: PASSING RACE

## You will need



1 ball



# Pass 1 metre to another player

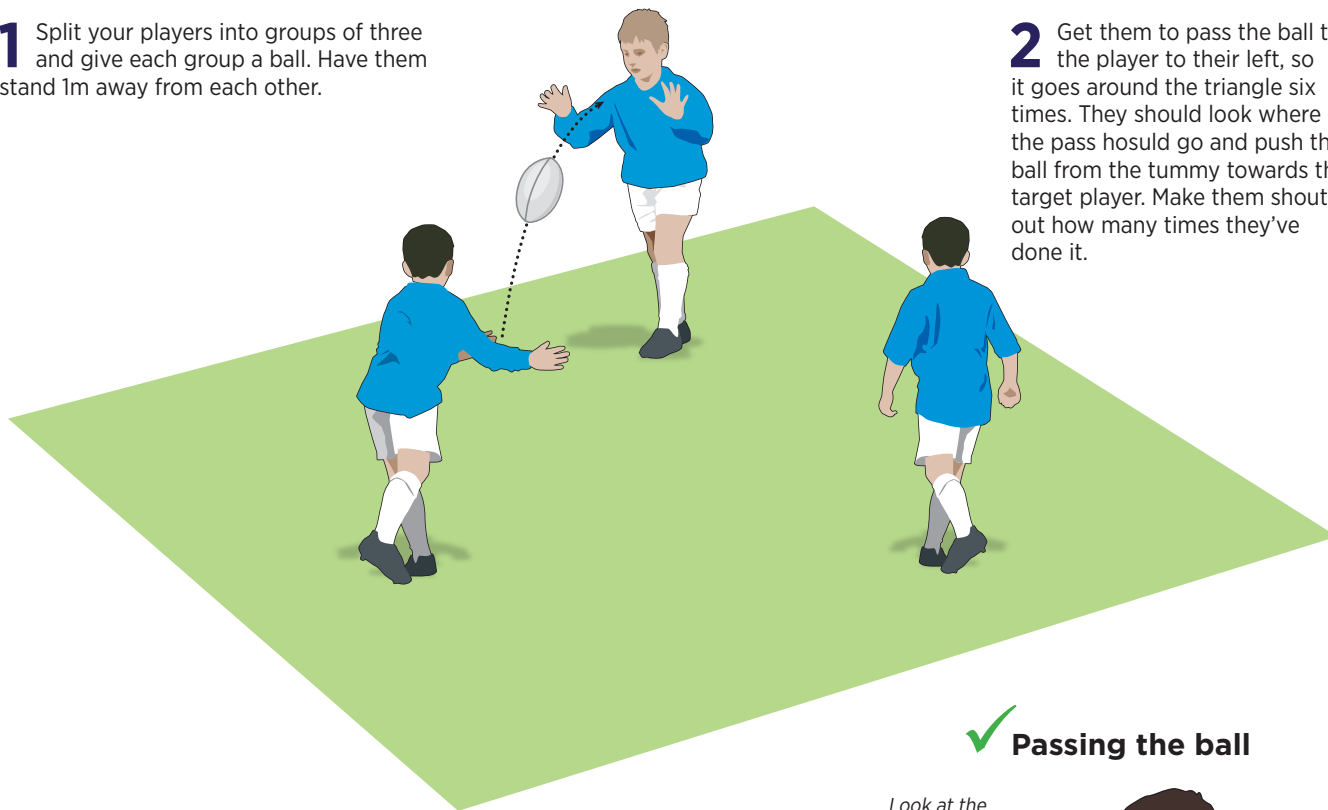
ACTIVITY: PASSING TRIANGLES



WHAT YOU SAY

“Look where the pass should go” • “Push the ball towards the target player”

**1** Split your players into groups of three and give each group a ball. Have them stand 1m away from each other.



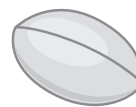
**2** Get them to pass the ball to the player to their left, so it goes around the triangle six times. They should look where the pass should go and push the ball from the tummy towards the target player. Make them shout out how many times they've done it.

**3** Then, ask them do it six times the other way.

**4** Once they have completed this, they each take one step backwards, to make the triangle slightly larger, and repeat. They should do this, making the triangle larger each time, until they make two drops in a row. Then they take a step back in.

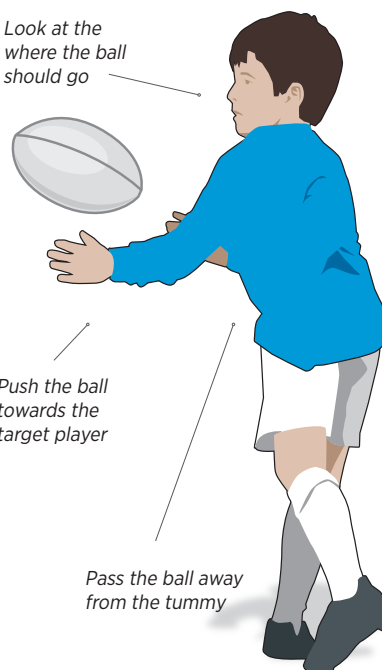
## ✓ Passing the ball

Look at the where the ball should go



Push the ball towards the target player

Pass the ball away from the tummy



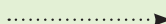
### LAWS OF RUGBY

In Tag Rugby...

The ball must not be handed to another player.

**How many players do I need?**  
Organise the players in groups of three.

**Key**  
**Pass**



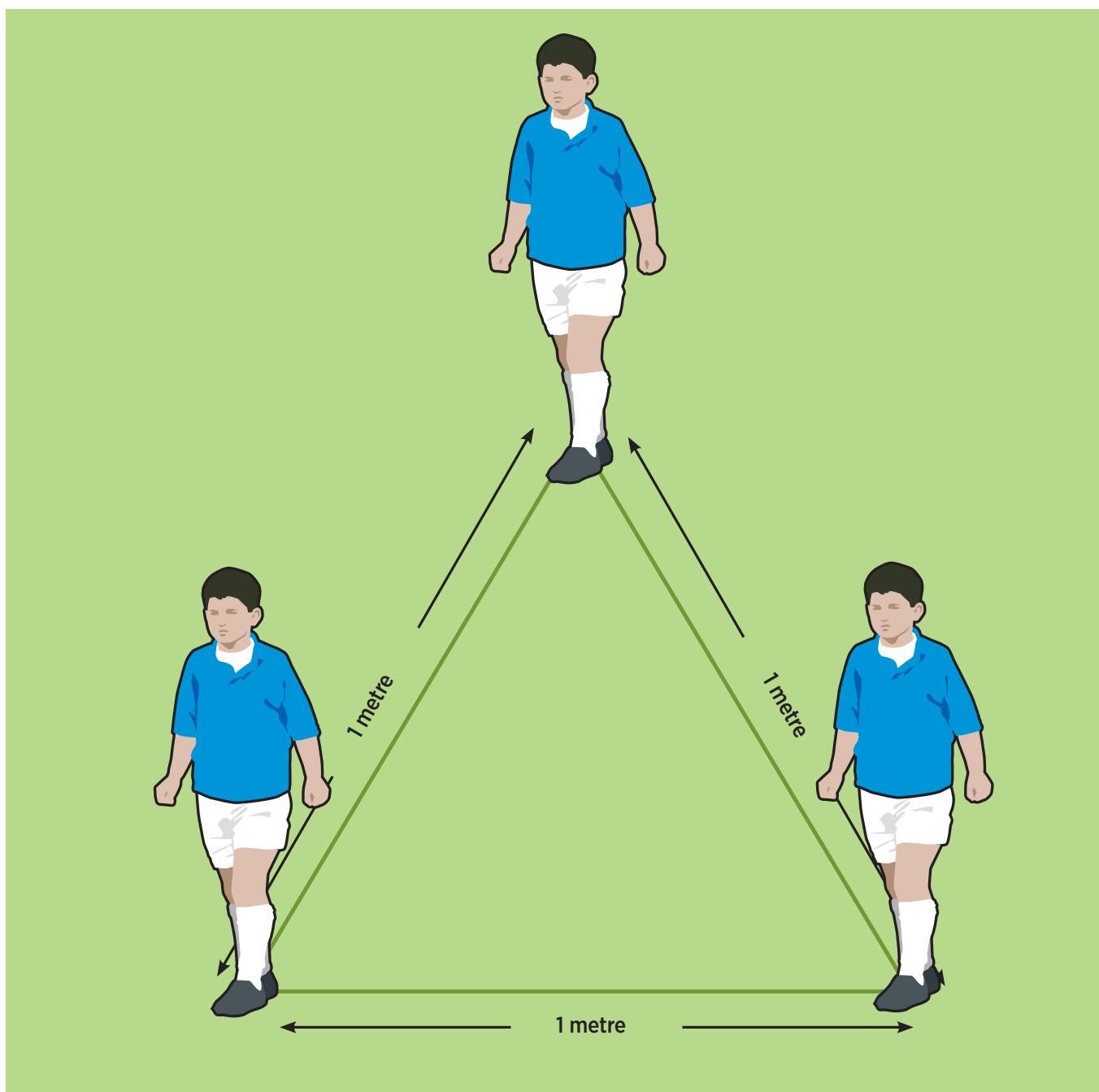
# Pass 1 metre to another player

ACTIVITY: PASSING TRIANGLES

## You will need



1 ball for every three players



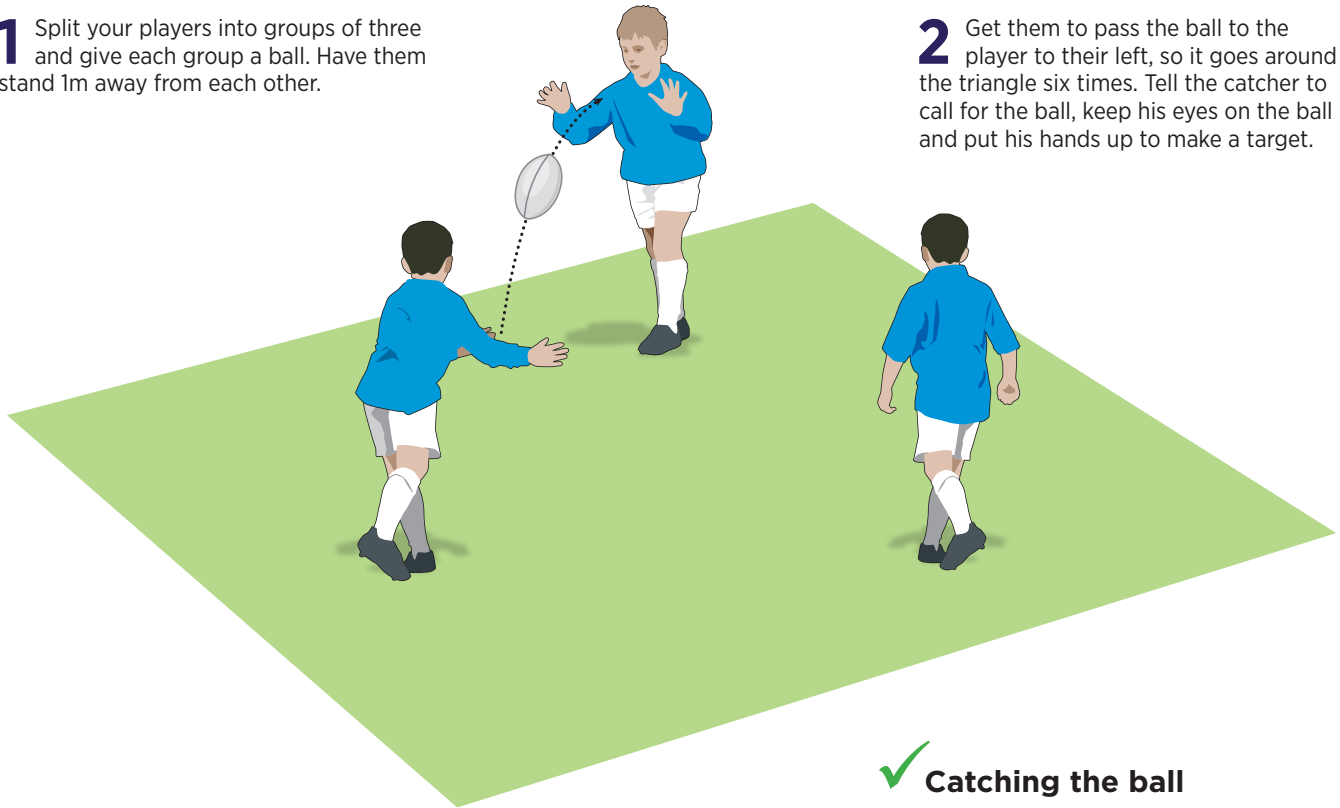
# Catch the ball from another player

ACTIVITY: PASSING TRIANGLES



“Call for the ball” • “Keep your eyes on the ball” •  
“Put your hands up to make a target”

**1** Split your players into groups of three and give each group a ball. Have them stand 1m away from each other.

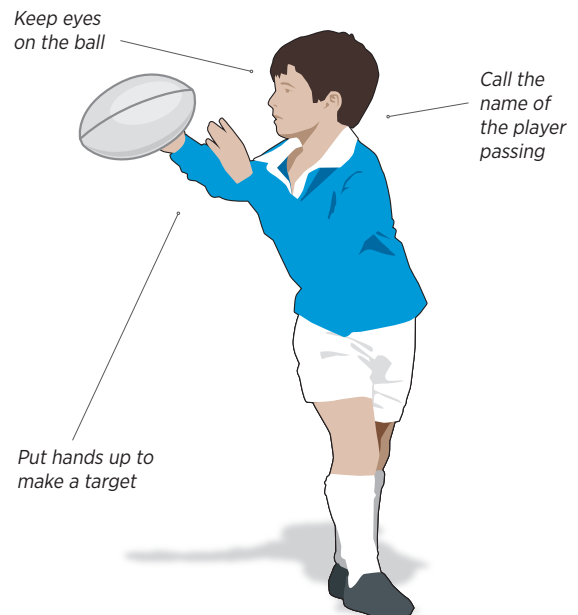


**2** Get them to pass the ball to the player to their left, so it goes around the triangle six times. Tell the catcher to call for the ball, keep his eyes on the ball and put his hands up to make a target.

**3** Then, ask them do it six times the other way.

**4** Once they have completed this, they each take one step backwards, to make the triangle slightly larger, and repeat. They should do this, making the triangle larger each time, until they make two drops in a row. Then they take a step back in.

## ✓ Catching the ball



**How many players do I need?**  
Organise the players in groups of three.

**Key**  
**Pass**



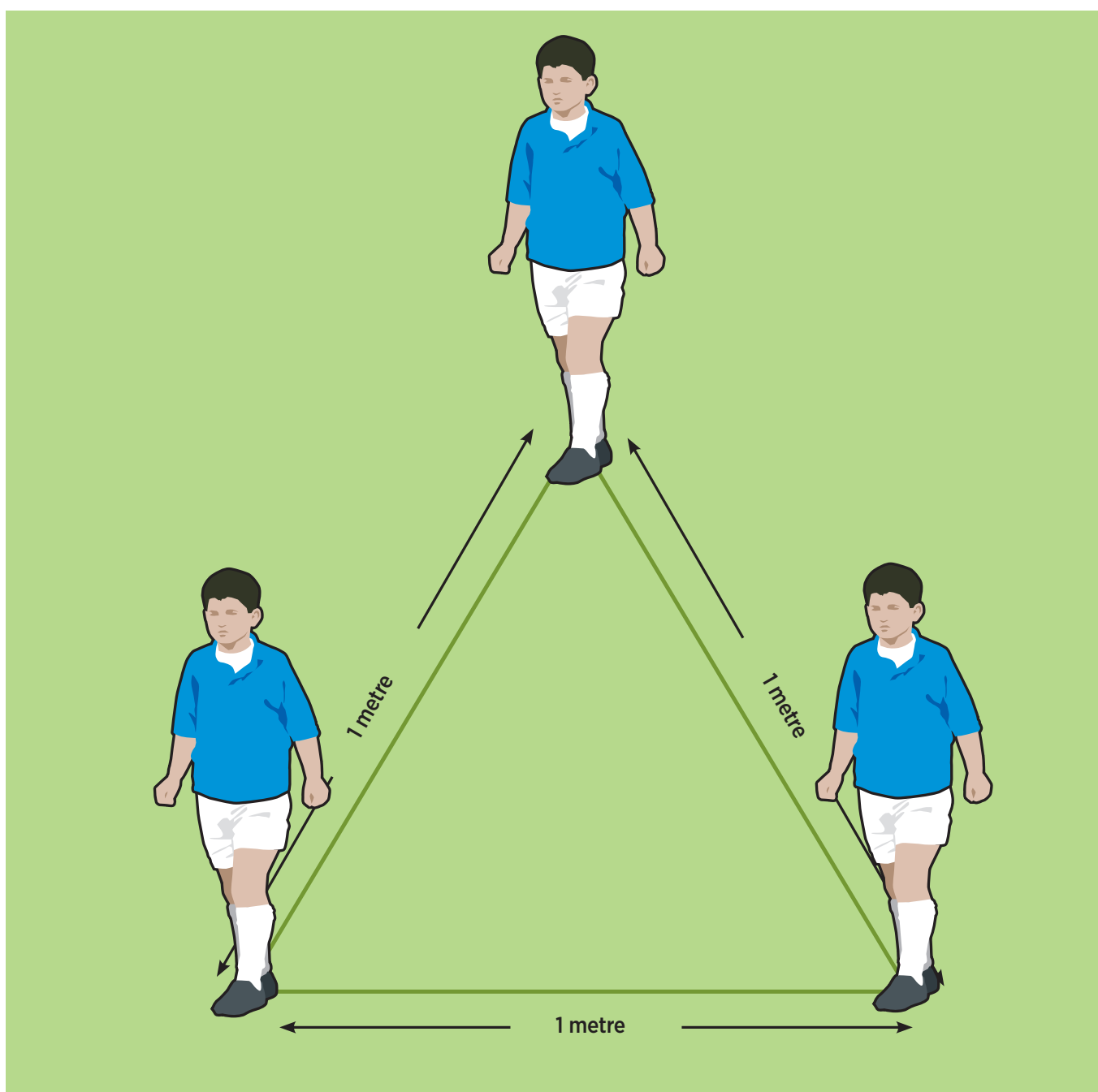
# Catch the ball from another player

ACTIVITY: PASSING TRIANGLES

## You will need



1 ball for every three players



# Run with the ball in two hands

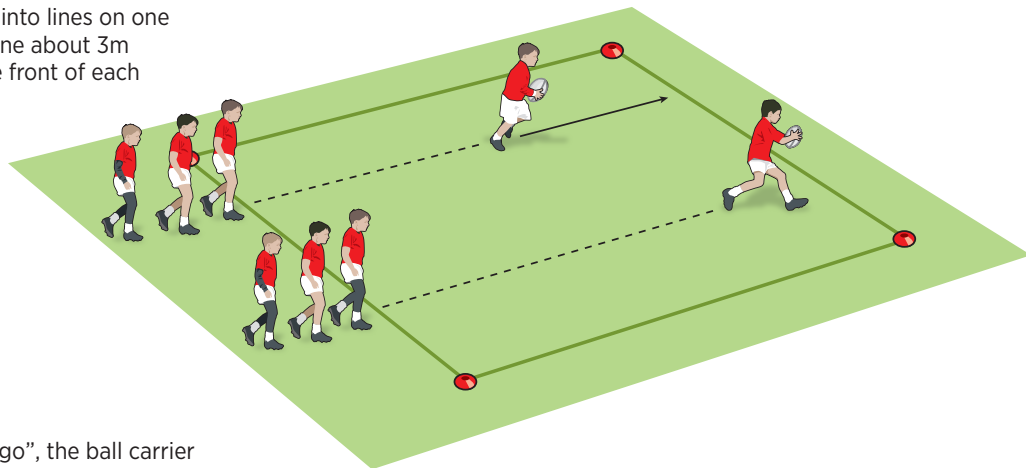
ACTIVITY: CATCH AND PASS RELAY



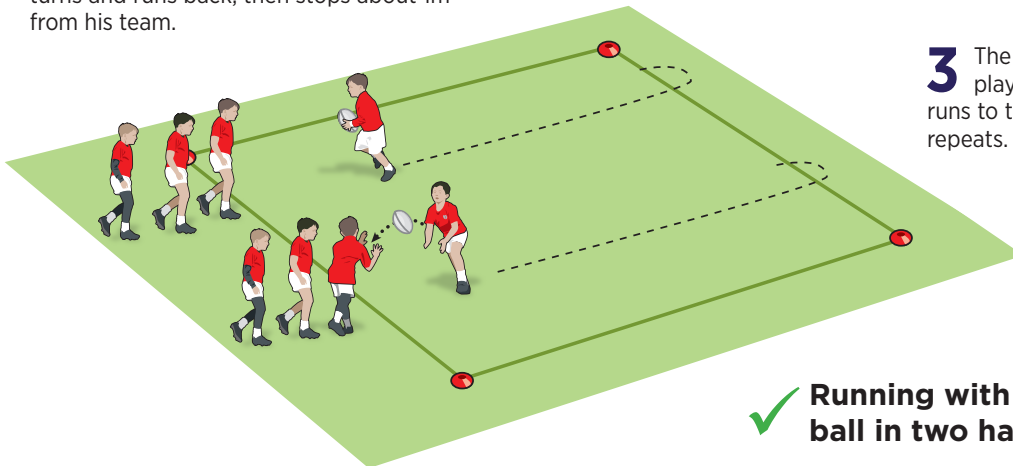
“Place both your hands in middle of the ball” • “Keep the ball off your chest”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Divide your players into teams of four. Put the teams into lines on one side of the area, each line about 3m apart. The player at the front of each line starts with a ball.



**2** When you say “go”, the ball carrier runs to the other side of the area, turns and runs back, then stops about 1m from his team.



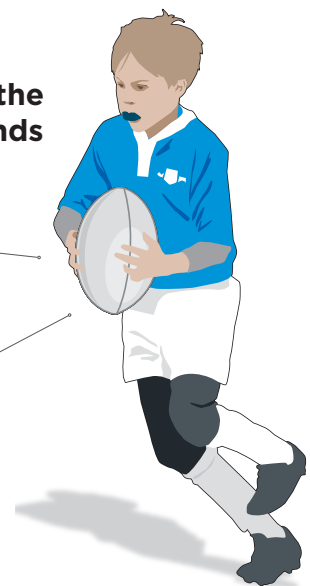
**3** The ball carrier then passes to the player at the front of his line and runs to the back. The new ball carrier repeats.

**4** Each player runs and passes twice. The first team back in their line and sitting down wins.

## ✓ Running with the ball in two hands

Place both hands in the middle of the ball

Keep the ball off the chest



### How many players do I need?

Eight players divided into two groups of four. You can make the area wider and run more groups of four if you have enough room.

### Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Run with the ball in two hands

ACTIVITY: CATCH AND PASS RELAY

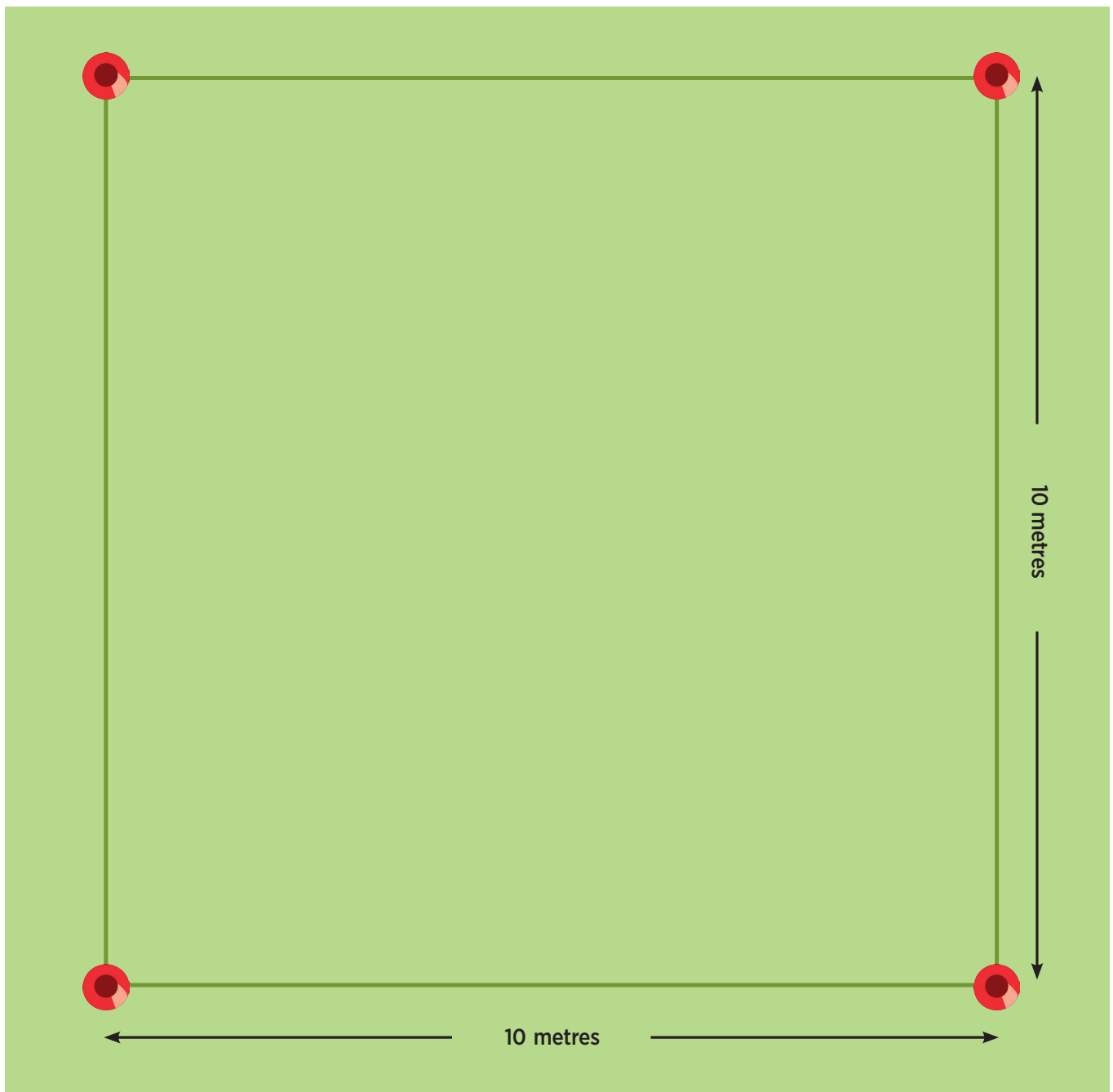
## You will need



1 ball for every four players



4 cones



# Run to a ball and pick it up

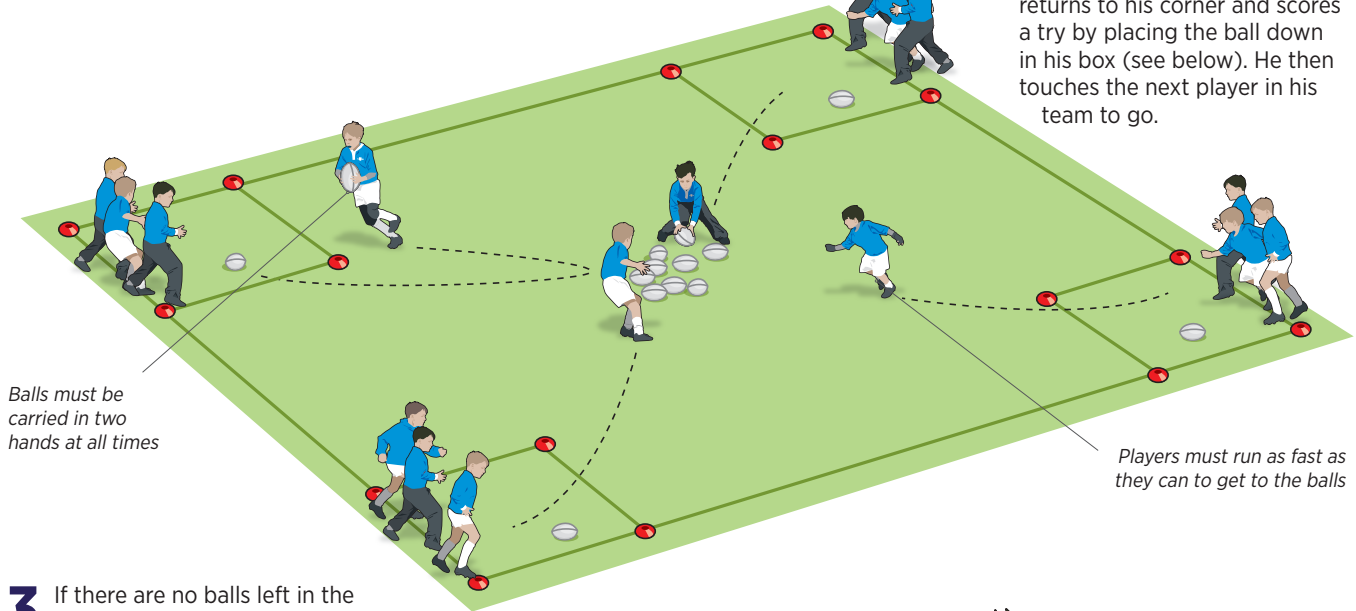
ACTIVITY: CAPTURE THE BALL



“Put your foot by the ball” • “Put one hand in front and one hand behind the ball” • “Bend before you get to the ball”

**1** Put teams of four players behind each of the 2m corner boxes and place at least 12 balls in the middle.

**2** When you say “go”, one player from each team runs into the middle to grab a ball. He returns to his corner and scores a try by placing the ball down in his box (see below). He then touches the next player in his team to go.



Balls must be carried in two hands at all times

Players must run as fast as they can to get to the balls

**3** If there are no balls left in the middle, the players can steal them from another team’s box (unopposed).

**4** The first team to get four balls inside their box wins the game.

**5** Develop by making the players perform a skill before scoring a try, such as passing to a team mate inside the box.

## ✓ Picking a ball up

Bend before you get to the ball

Put one hand in front and one hand behind the ball

Put your foot by the ball



### How many players do I need?

Ideally you need 16 players – four teams of four, but you can play with teams of three if you need to.

### Key

Ground covered



# Run to a ball and pick it up

ACTIVITY: CAPTURE THE BALL

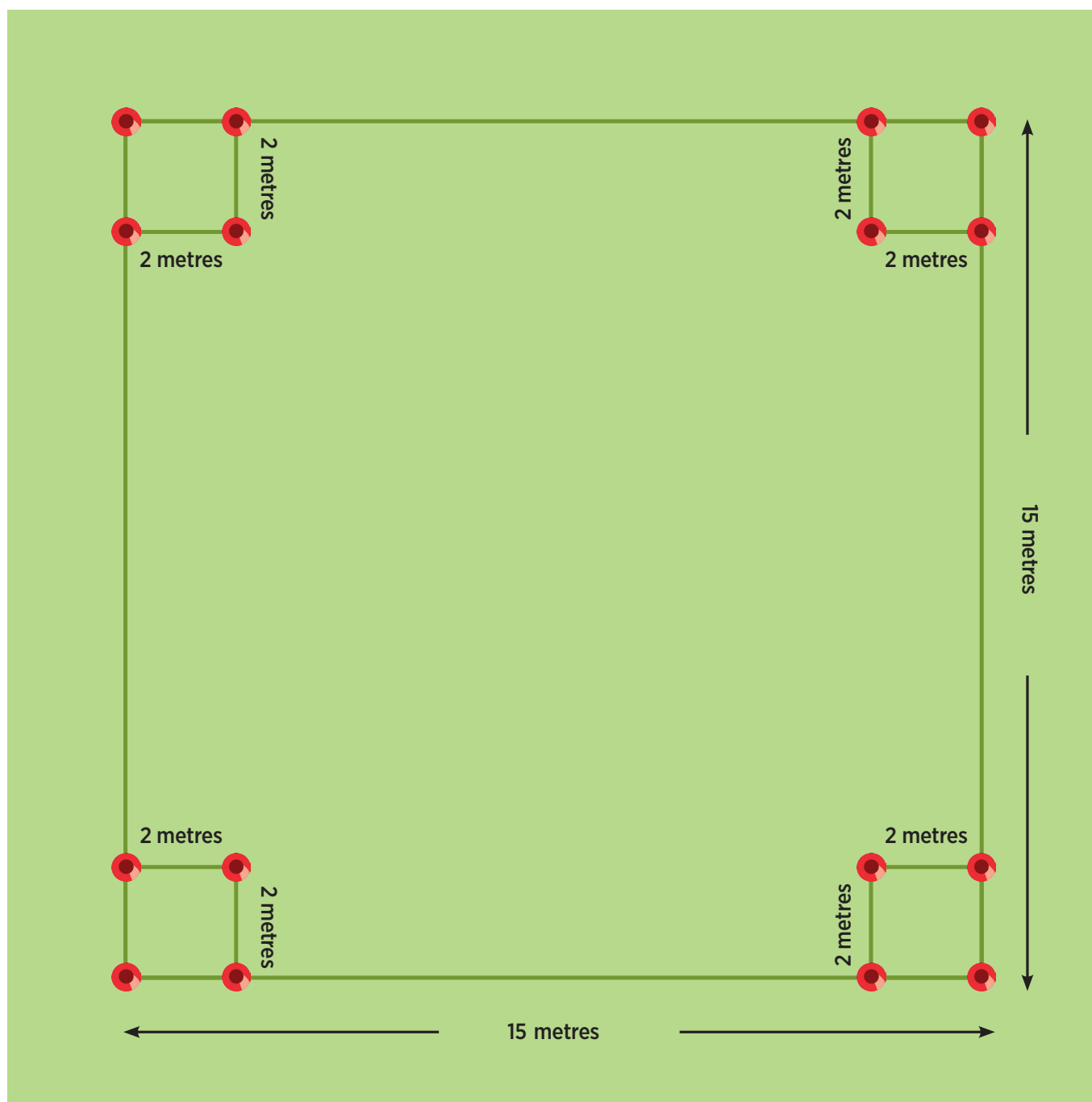
## You will need



12+ balls



16 cones





# EasiCoach™

RUGBY SKILLS ACTIVITIES

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## U8 Mini-Tag ACTIVITIES

# Understand that you must run forward to score tries

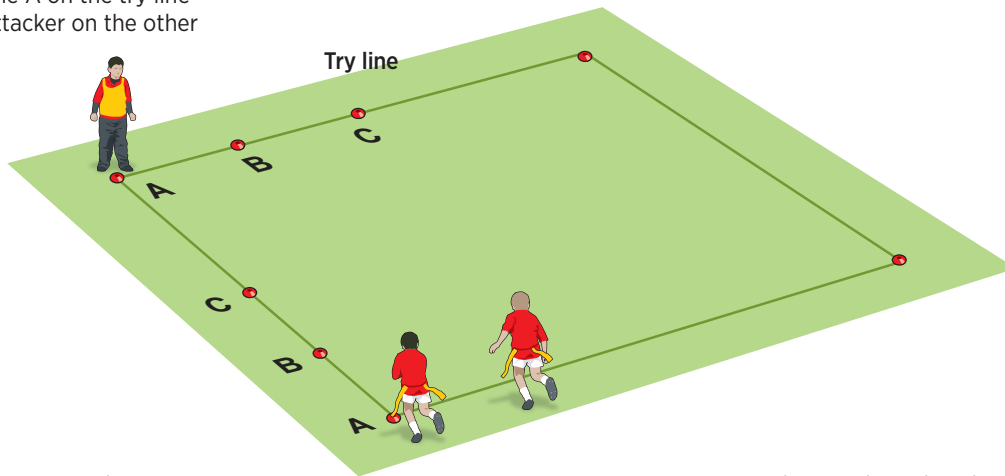
ACTIVITY: SCORE MORE TRIES



“Run forward to score tries”

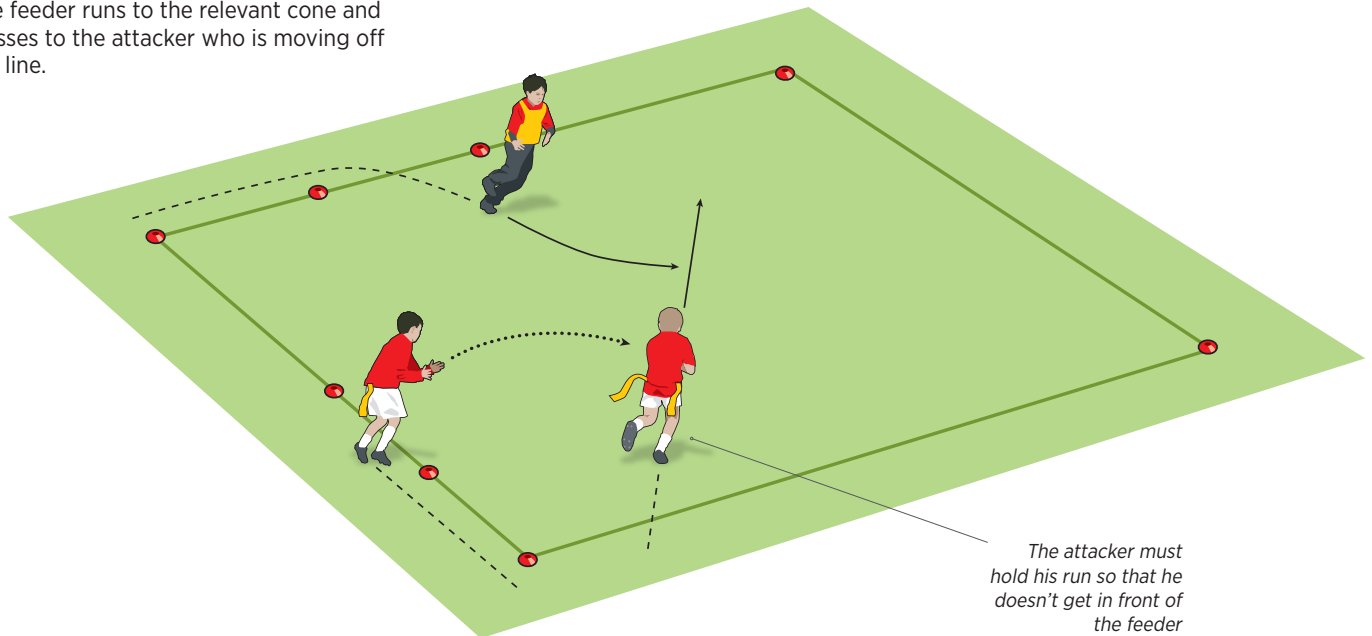
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Set up the area as shown. Put a defender on cone A on the try line and a feeder and attacker on the other cone A facing him.



**2** You call out a letter – in this case “B”. The defender runs to that cone then turns into the area to defend, while the feeder runs to the relevant cone and passes to the attacker who is moving off his line.

**3** The attacker takes the pass and aims to get over the try line without being tagged by the defender.



**4** Develop by allowing the attacker to pass the ball back to the feeder if he is tagged. The feeder then becomes a second attacker.

## How many players do I need?

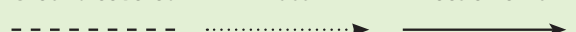
You need three players to run this activity. You can line up more player for each position and/or run another game alongside.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Understand that you must run forward to score tries

ACTIVITY: SCORE MORE TRIES

## You will need



1 ball



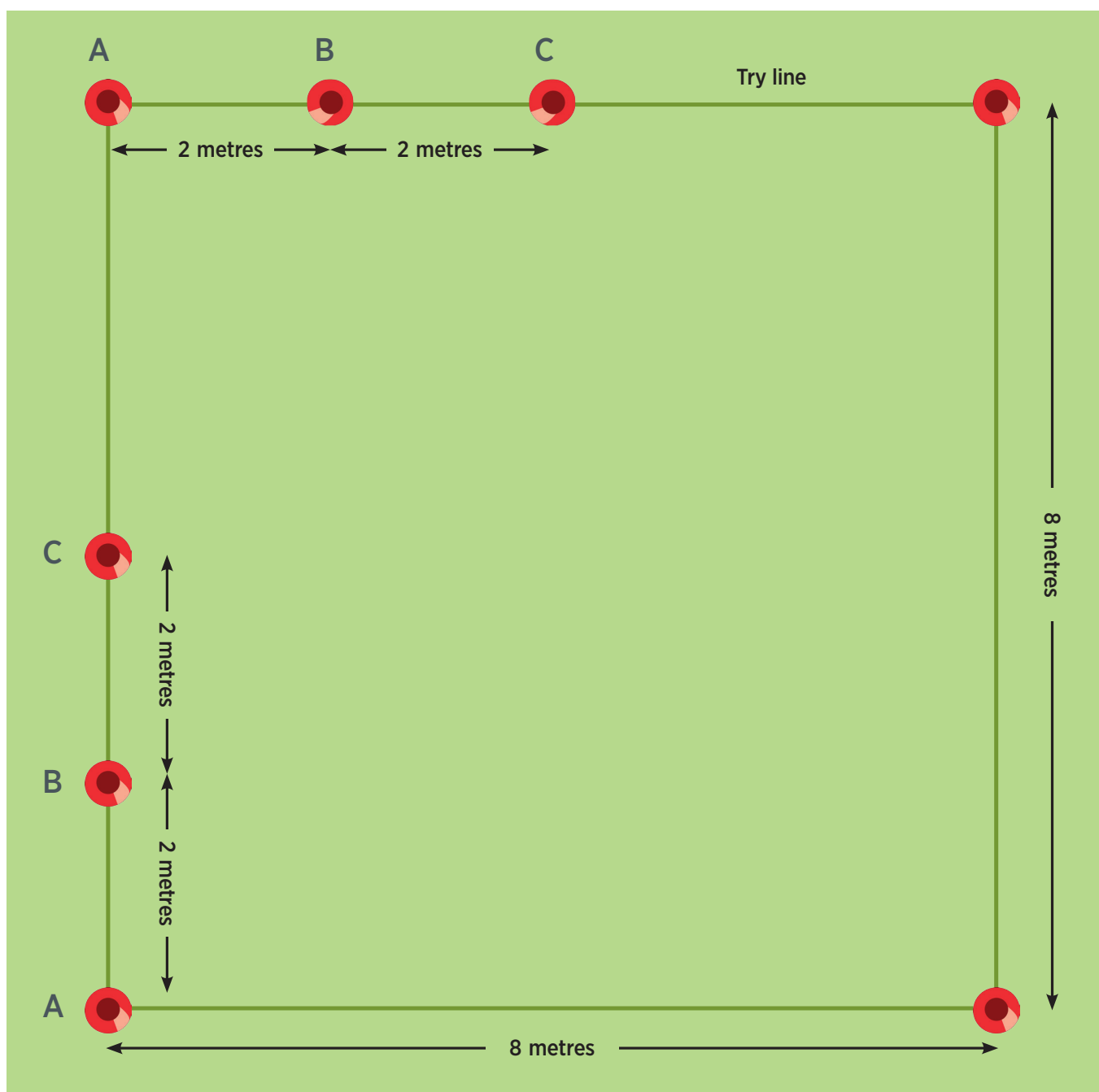
1 bib for each defender



8 cones



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Score a Tag try

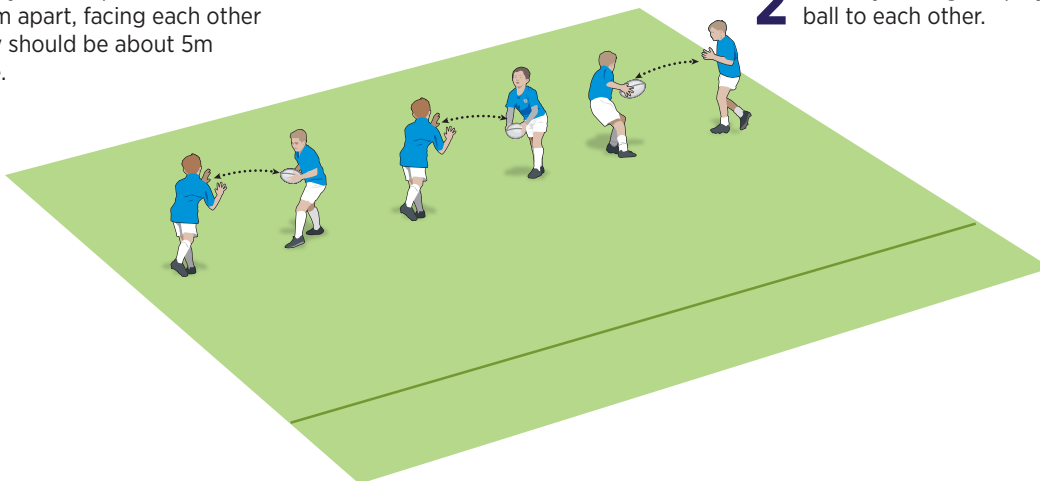
ACTIVITY: PASS THE PARCEL



“Touch the ball down using both hands”

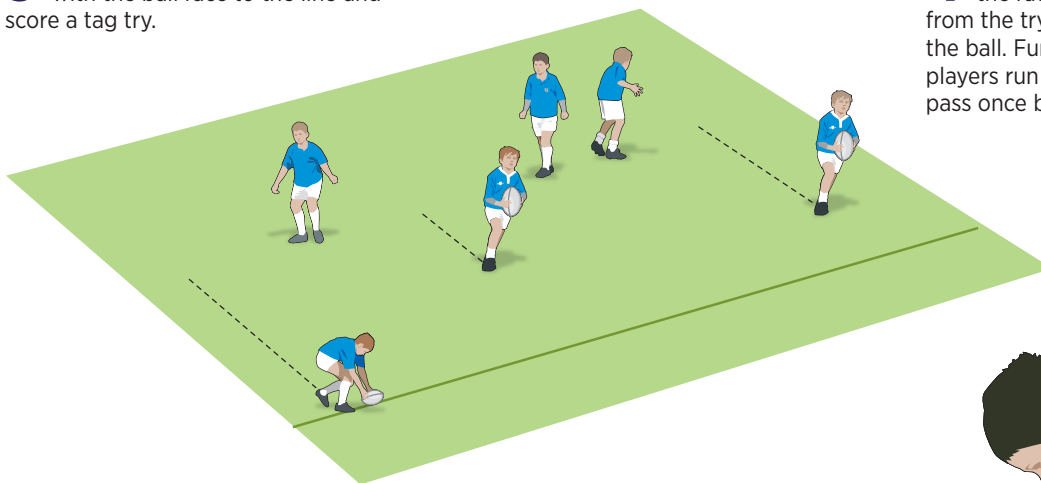
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Split your players into pairs. Put each pair about 1m apart, facing each other with a ball. They should be about 5m from the try line.



**2** Start by having the players pass the ball to each other.

**3** When you shout “go”, the players with the ball race to the line and score a tag try.



**4** Develop by having the winners of the race take one large step away from the try line before they start passing the ball. Further develop by having both players run to the line, but they have to pass once before the line.



## LAWS OF RUGBY

In Tag Rugby, a player...

1. Must not dive to score.
2. Can score with one step after being tagged.



## Scoring a tag try

When scoring a try, a player must bend at the knees and hips and touch the ball down using both hands. If the ball doesn't move after it is put down, it shows the player is in control.



## How many players do I need?

You can run this activity with as many players of players as you like – make sure you have enough balls for one per pair.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass



# Score a Tag try

ACTIVITY: PASS THE PARCEL

## You will need



1 ball per pair



# Run past defenders

ACTIVITY: RUN TO SPACE

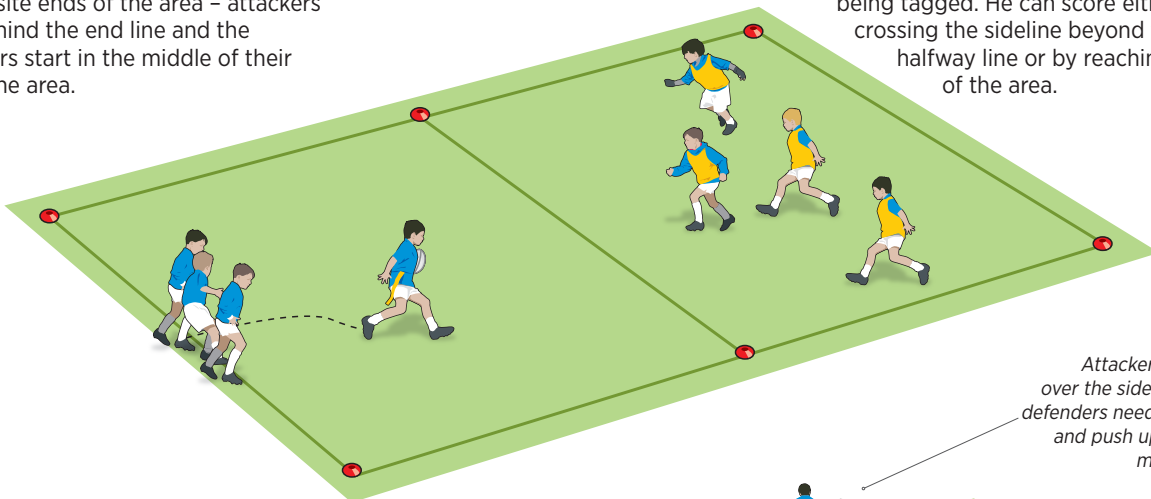


“Use pretend moves and dodges to change direction”

WHAT YOU SAY

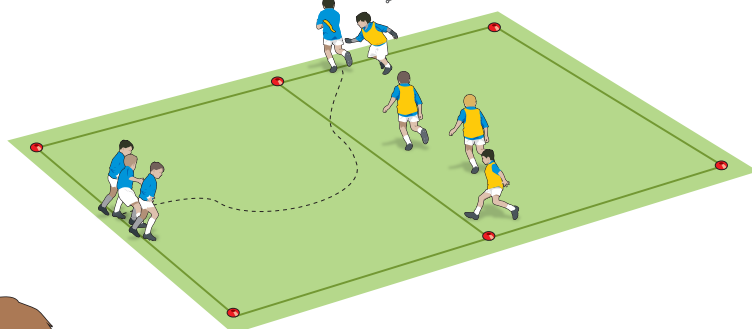
**1** Divide your players into two teams of four – make one team attackers, the other defenders. Position the teams at opposite ends of the area – attackers start behind the end line and the defenders start in the middle of their half of the area.

**2** Give a ball to one of the attackers. When you say “go”, the ball carrier runs forward and aims to score without being tagged. He can score either by crossing the sideline beyond the halfway line or by reaching the end of the area.



Attackers can score over the side line, so the defenders need to be alert and push up quickly to make the tag

**3** As the attacker comes forward, the defenders are allowed to move, but they must stay in their half of the area. Their aim is to tag the attacker.



## ✓ Running past a defender

Use pretend moves and dodges to change direction and avoid the defender



**4** Attackers earn 2 points for scoring over the end or 1 point for scoring at the side. All four attackers have a go before you swap attackers and defenders.

### How many players do I need?

You need a minimum of eight players. With greater numbers, increase the size of the area and have bigger teams, or run two games.

### Key

Ground covered



# Run past defenders

ACTIVITY: RUN TO SPACE

## You will need



1 ball



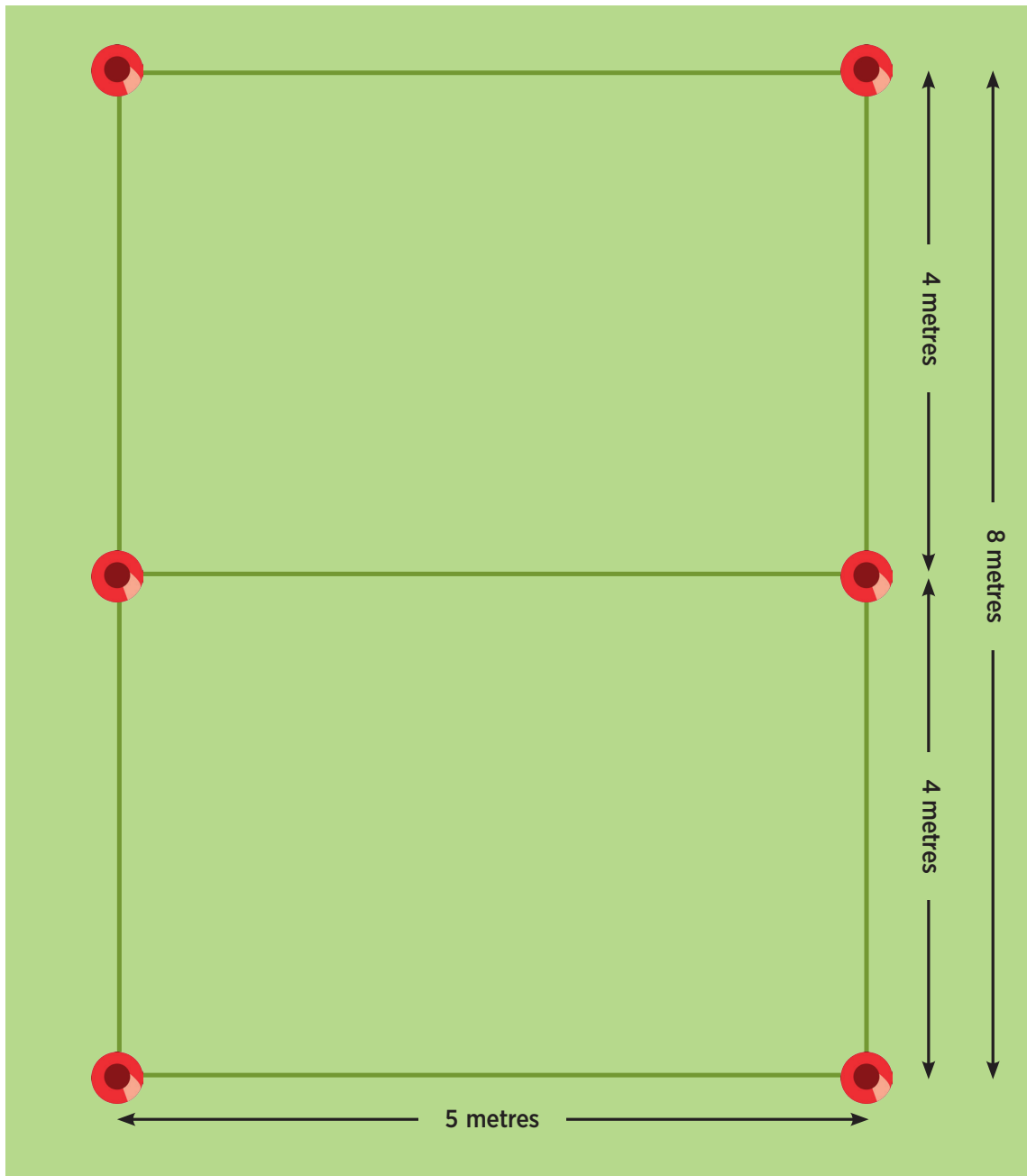
1 bib for each defender



6 cones



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Support the ball carrier

ACTIVITY: BEAT THE DEFENDERS

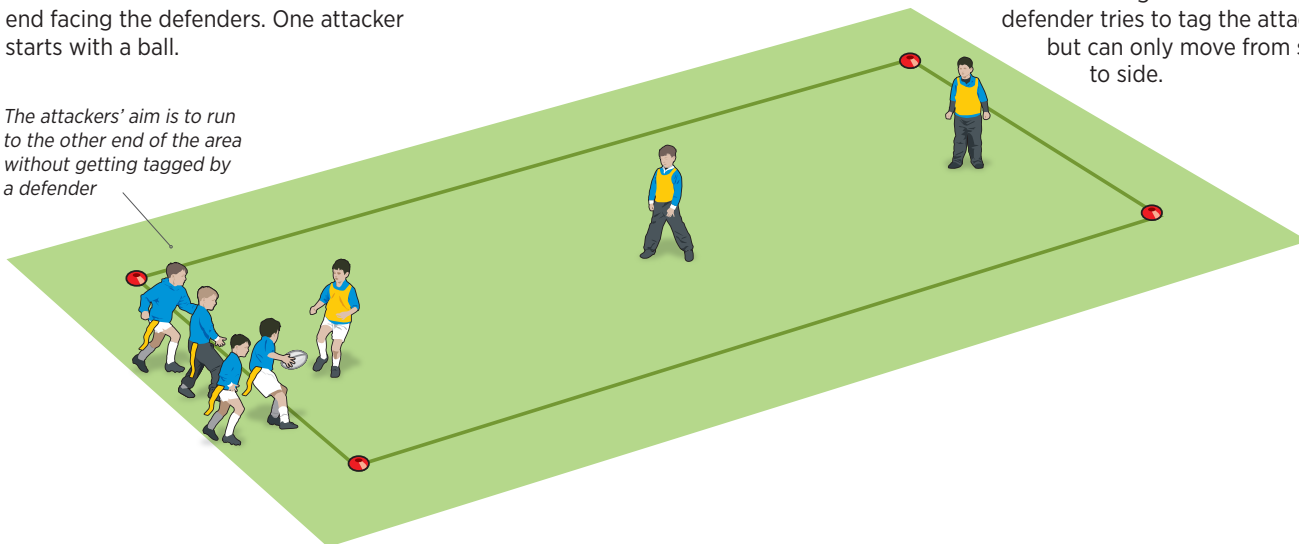


“Get behind the ball carrier” • “Call the name of the ball carrier”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Three defenders stand 8m apart in a line down the centre of the area. Four attackers start outside the area at one end facing the defenders. One attacker starts with a ball.

*The attackers' aim is to run to the other end of the area without getting tagged by a defender*

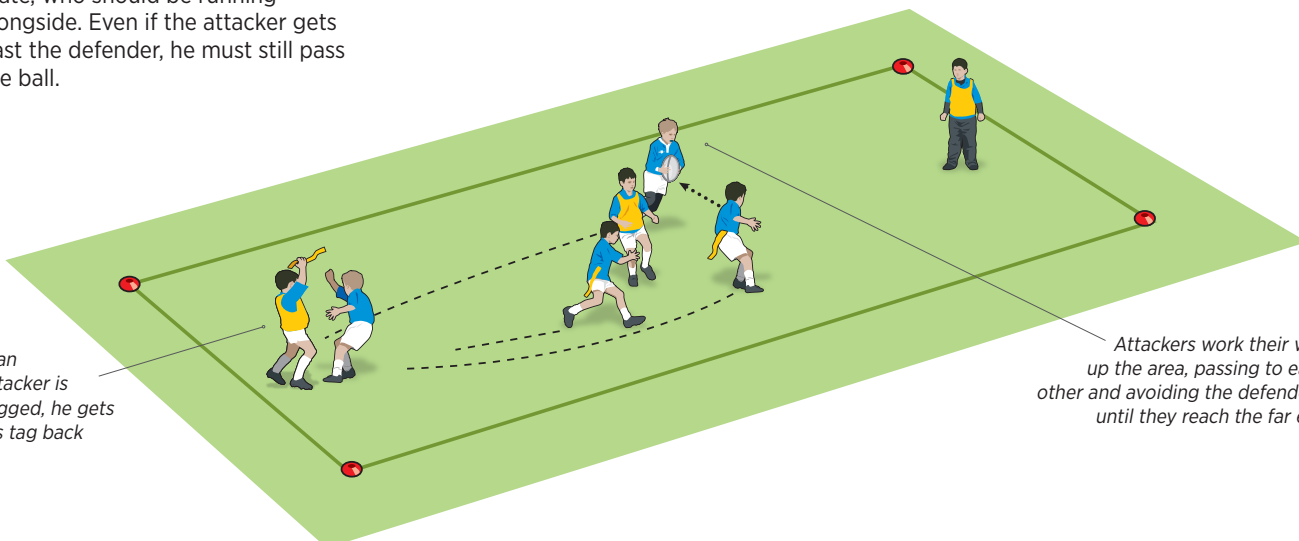


**2** The ball carrier runs up the area past the first defender with the other attackers following close behind. The defender tries to tag the attacker, but can only move from side to side.

**3** If the attacker is tagged by a defender, he immediately passes to his team mate, who should be running alongside. Even if the attacker gets past the defender, he must still pass the ball.

**4** The attackers continue their run to the end of the area, passing when tagged or when they go past a defender.

*If an attacker is tagged, he gets his tag back*



*Attackers work their way up the area, passing to each other and avoiding the defenders, until they reach the far end*

**5** Attackers who make it to the end without being tagged turn and repeat the exercise once the defenders have got back into their starting positions.

**6** Repeat until everyone has had a go at defending. Develop by having a player only pass when he is actually tagged.

## How many players do I need?

A minimum of seven players. With more than seven, have another attacking group at the other end. Rotate the defenders every run.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass



# Support the ball carrier

ACTIVITY: BEAT THE DEFENDERS

## You will need



1 ball



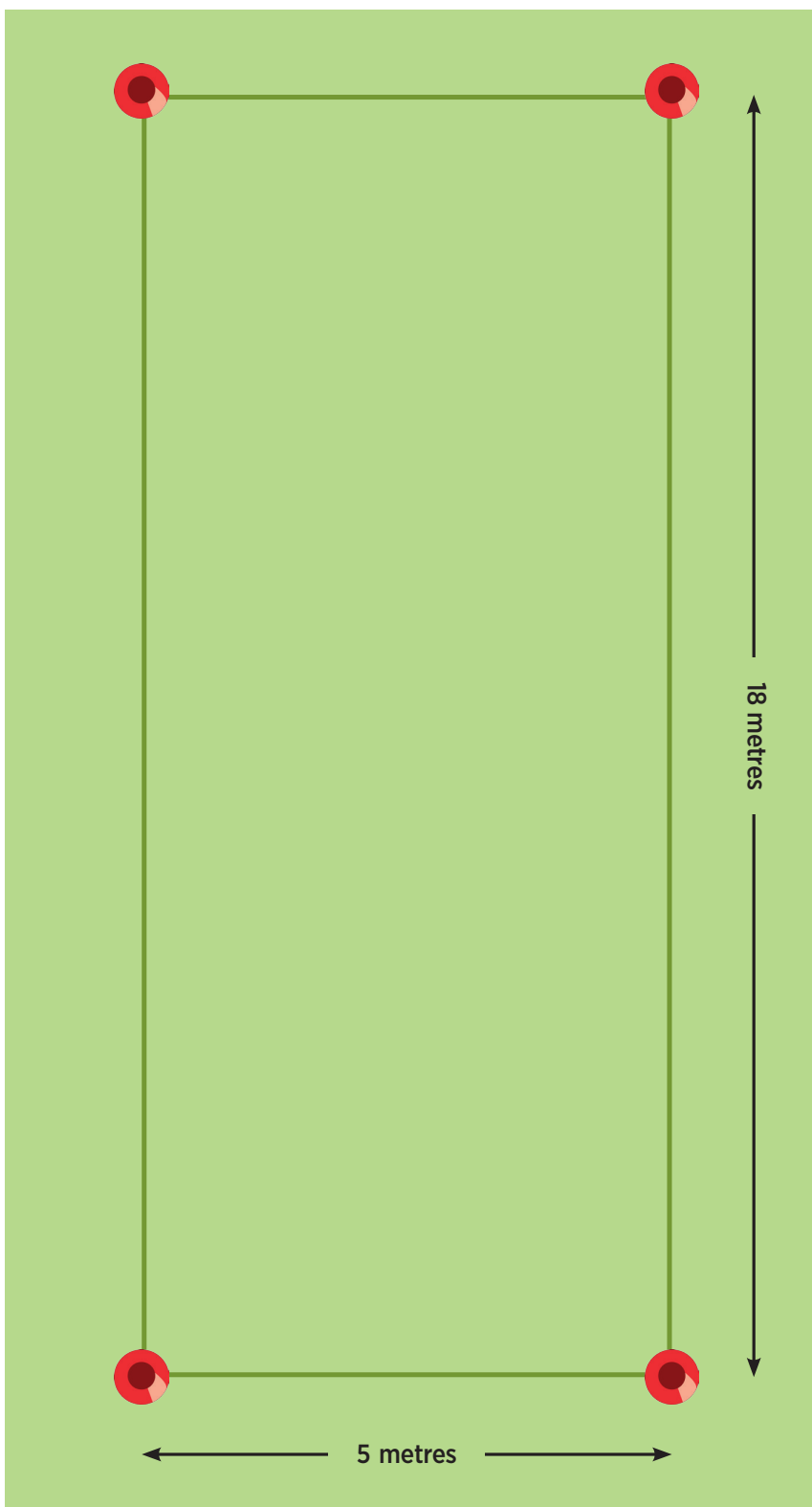
6 cones



1 bib for each defender



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Take the pass as you move forward

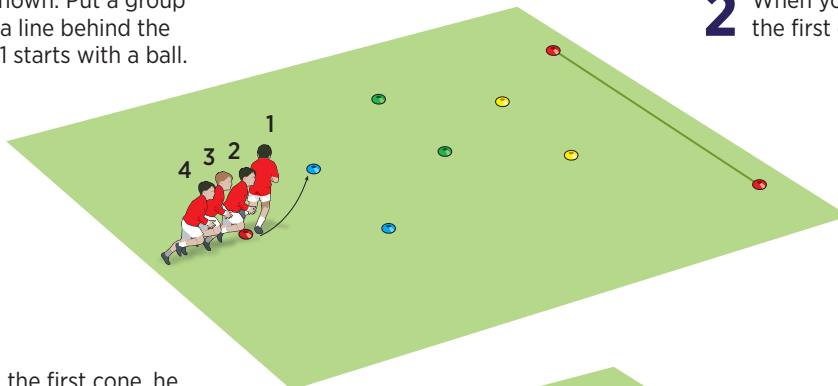
ACTIVITY: SNAKES AND LADDERS



“Reach out to take the pass”

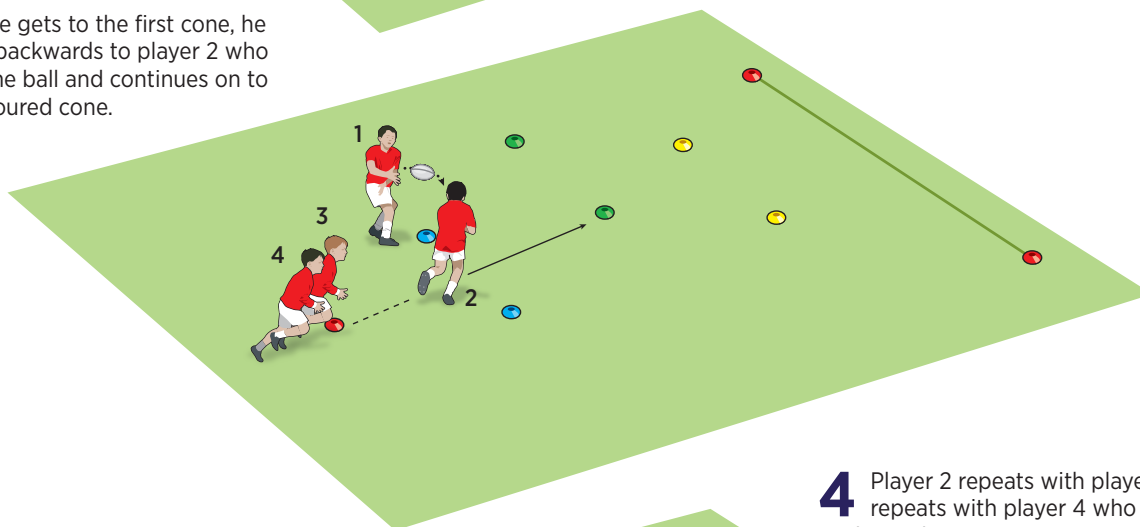
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Set up cones as shown. Put a group of four players in a line behind the starting cone. Player 1 starts with a ball.



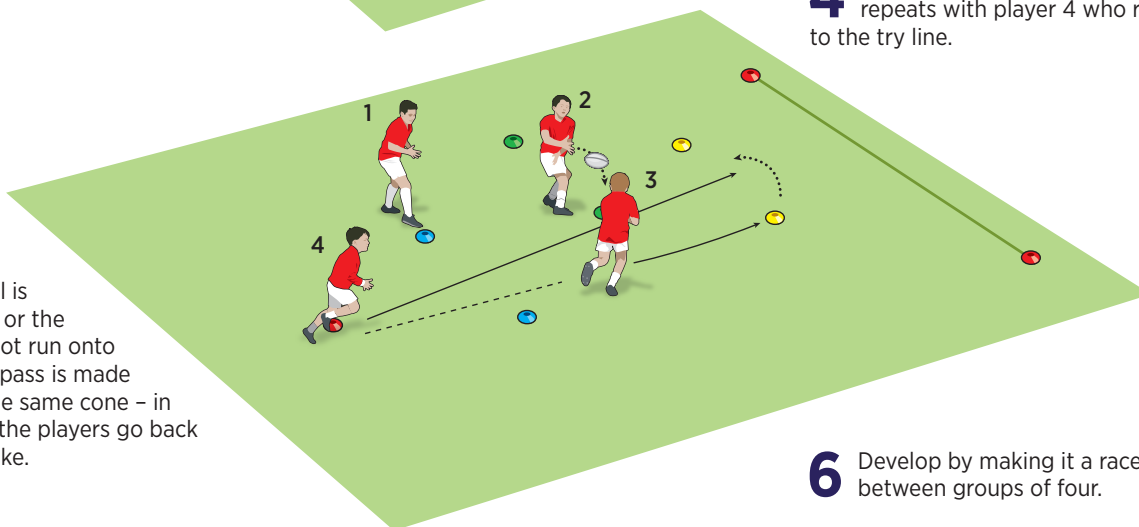
**2** When you say “go”, player 1 runs to the first cone.

**3** When he gets to the first cone, he passes backwards to player 2 who runs on to the ball and continues on to the next coloured cone.



**4** Player 2 repeats with player 3 who repeats with player 4 who runs on to the try line.

**5** If the ball is dropped or the player does not run onto the pass, the pass is made again from the same cone – in other words, the players go back down the snake.



**6** Develop by making it a race between groups of four.

## How many players do I need?

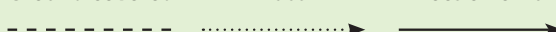
You need four players for this activity. With more players, set up more cones alongside and have teams of four racing each other.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Take the pass as you move forward

ACTIVITY: SNAKES AND LADDERS

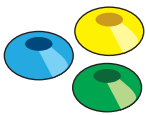
## You will need



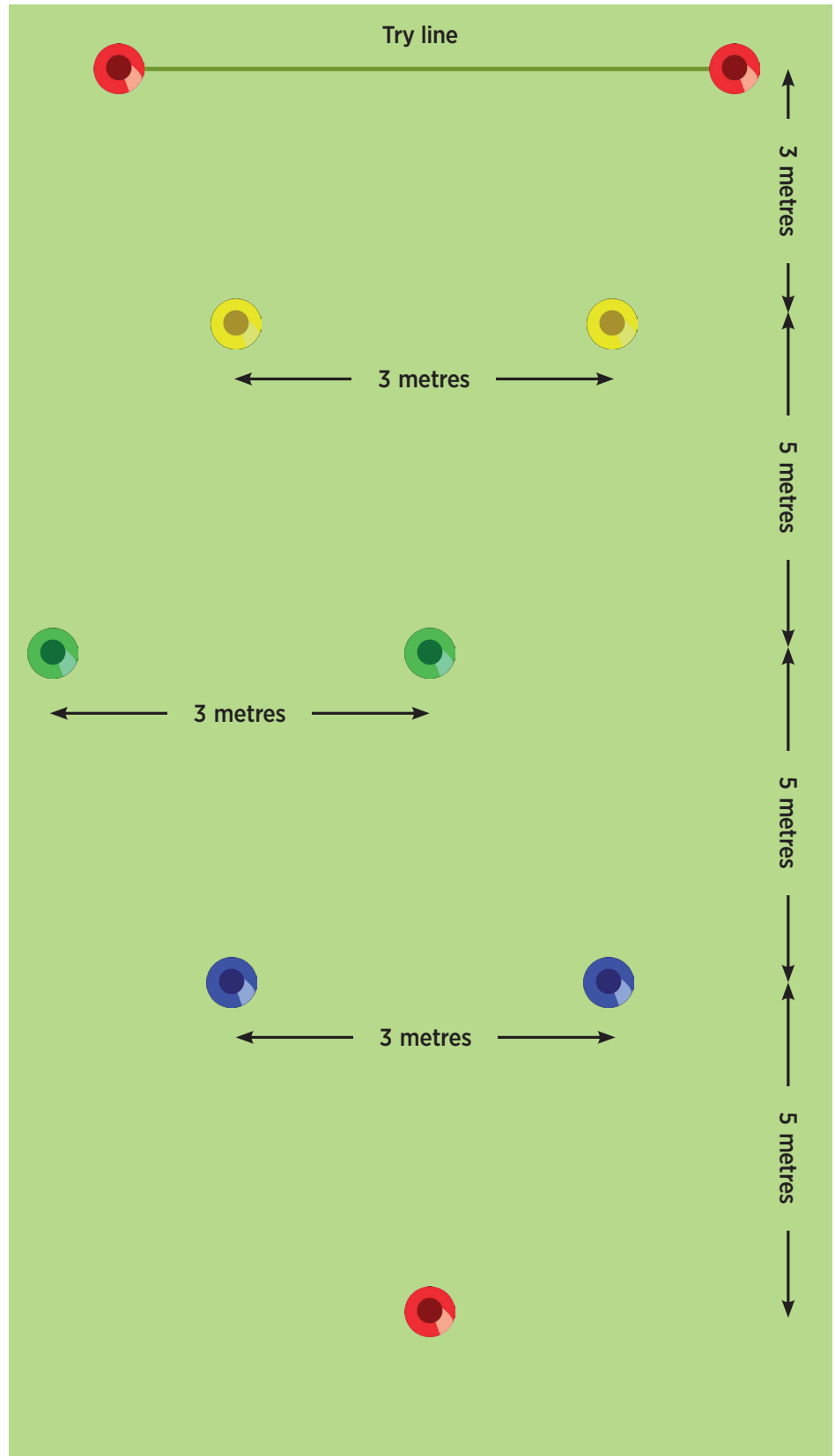
1 ball



3 standard cones



3 pairs of different coloured cones



# Understand that you need to pass once tagged

ACTIVITY: WALKING RUGBY

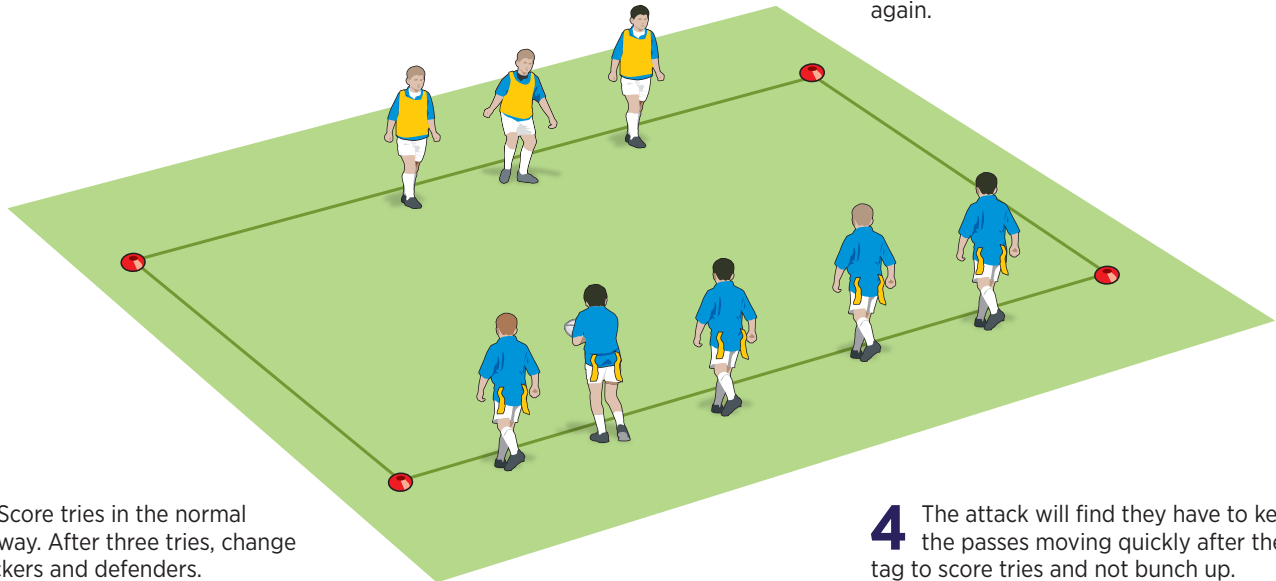


“Pass the ball once you are tagged”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Play a game of five attackers v three defenders walking rugby. All the players are only allowed to walk.

**2** If a player is tagged, he has to pass the ball within one step. The tagger must return the tag before he can defend again.



**3** Score tries in the normal way. After three tries, change attackers and defenders.

**4** The attack will find they have to keep the passes moving quickly after the tag to score tries and not bunch up.

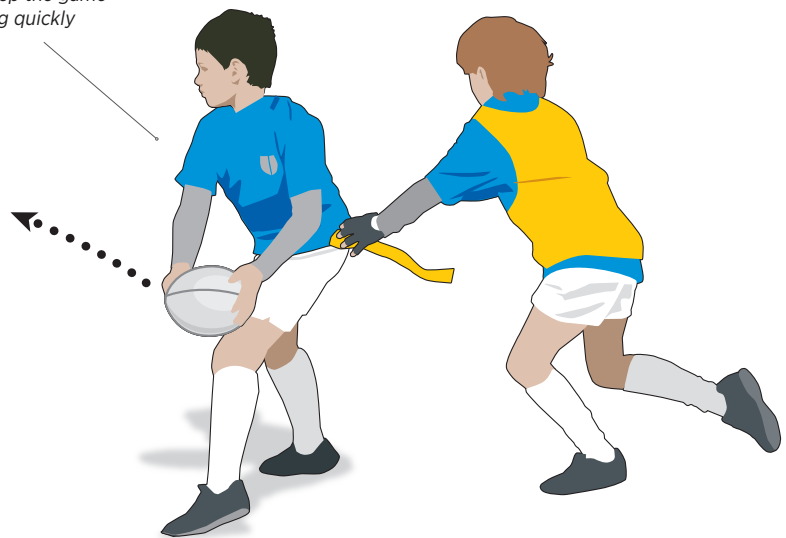
## ✓ Walking rugby



Players must walk at all times - if anyone runs, the ball goes back to the start line again

## ✓ Quick passing

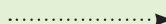
Encourage players to pass as they are tagged, as this will keep the game moving quickly



### How many players do I need?

You need a minimum of eight players playing 5v3 for this activity but you could also play 6v4 or 7v5.

**Key**  
Pass



# Understand that you need to pass once tagged

ACTIVITY: WALKING RUGBY

## You will need



1 ball



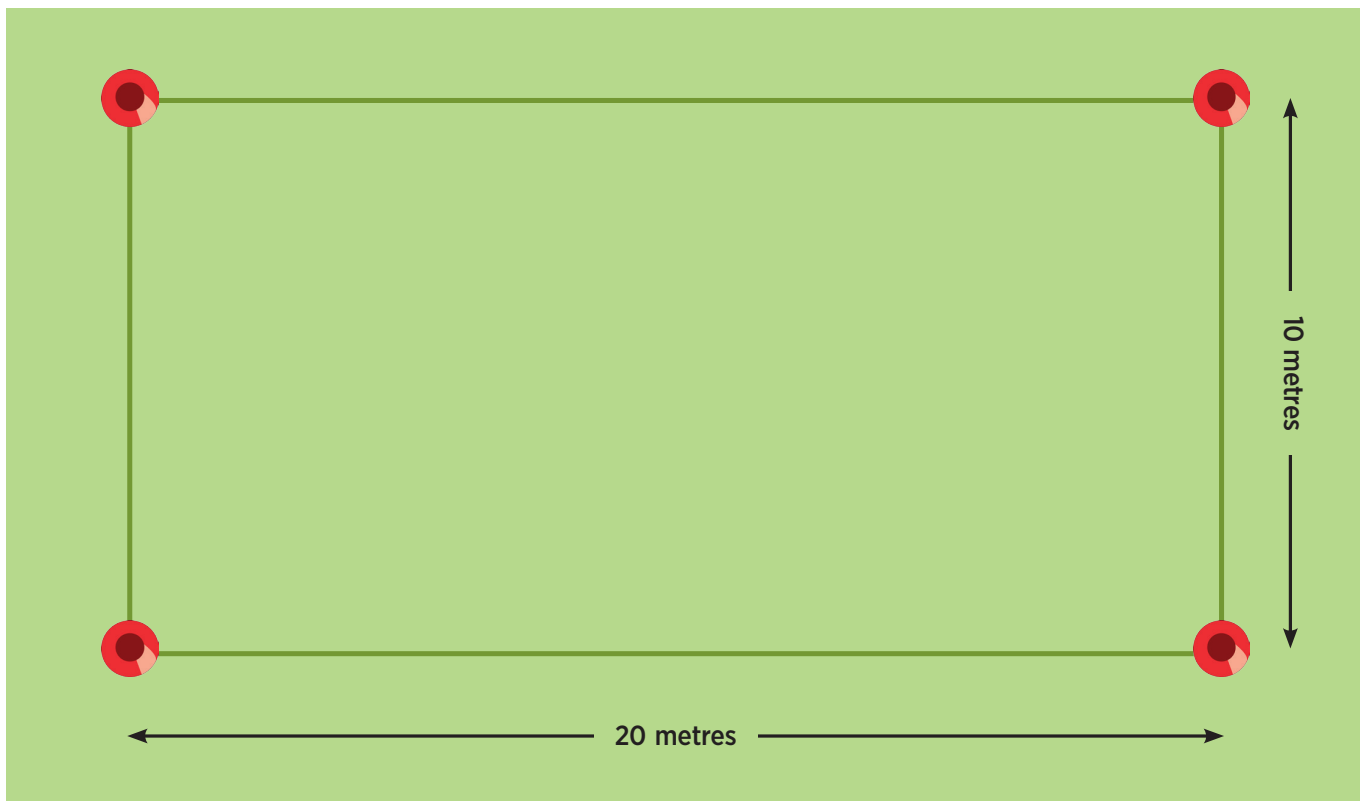
4 cones



1 bib for each defender



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Defend against attackers

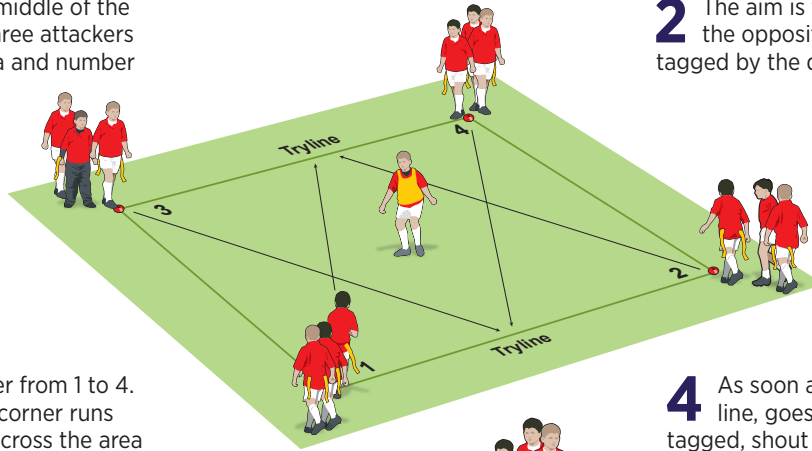
ACTIVITY: TAG THE RUNNERS



“Decide whether to chase the ball carrier” • “Get close to the ball carrier”

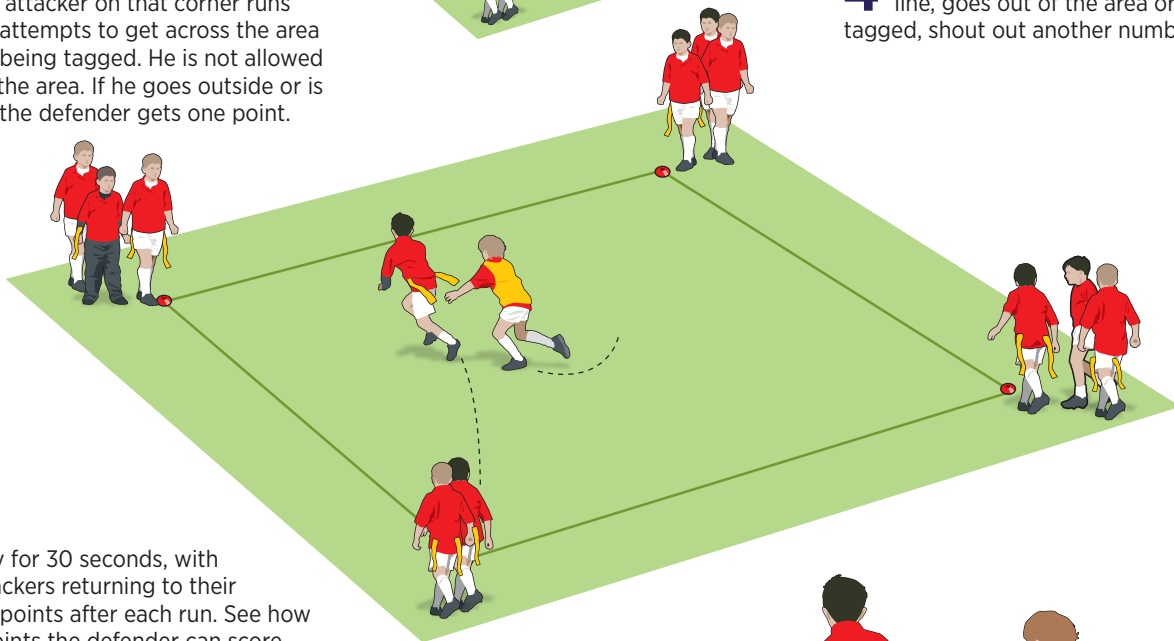
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Put a defender in the middle of the area. Put a group of three attackers on each corner of the area and number the groups 1 to 4.



**2** The aim is for the attackers to run to the opposite try line without being tagged by the defender.

**3** Shout out any number from 1 to 4. The attacker on that corner runs out and attempts to get across the area without being tagged. He is not allowed outside the area. If he goes outside or is tagged, the defender gets one point.

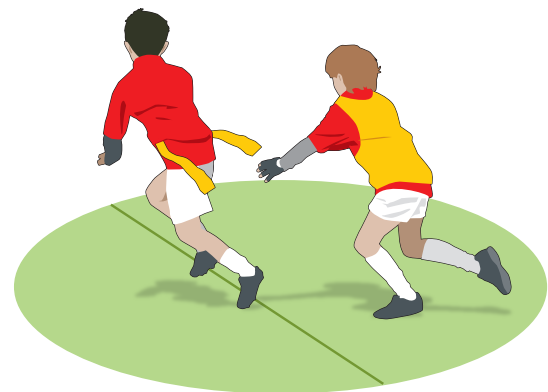


**4** As soon as the attacker reaches his line, goes out of the area or gets tagged, shout out another number.

**5** Play for 30 seconds, with attackers returning to their starting points after each run. See how many points the defender can score. Make sure everyone has a go as the defender.

**✓ Chasing an attacker out of the area**

*Even if the defender doesn't make a tag, he can still score a point by closing down the attacker and making him run out of the area.*



**How many players do I need?**

You can start with 13 players (three on each corner and one defender) but you can load up the corners with more attackers if necessary.

**Key**

Ground covered    Direction of run  
 ----->

# Defend against attackers

ACTIVITY: TAG THE RUNNERS

## You will need



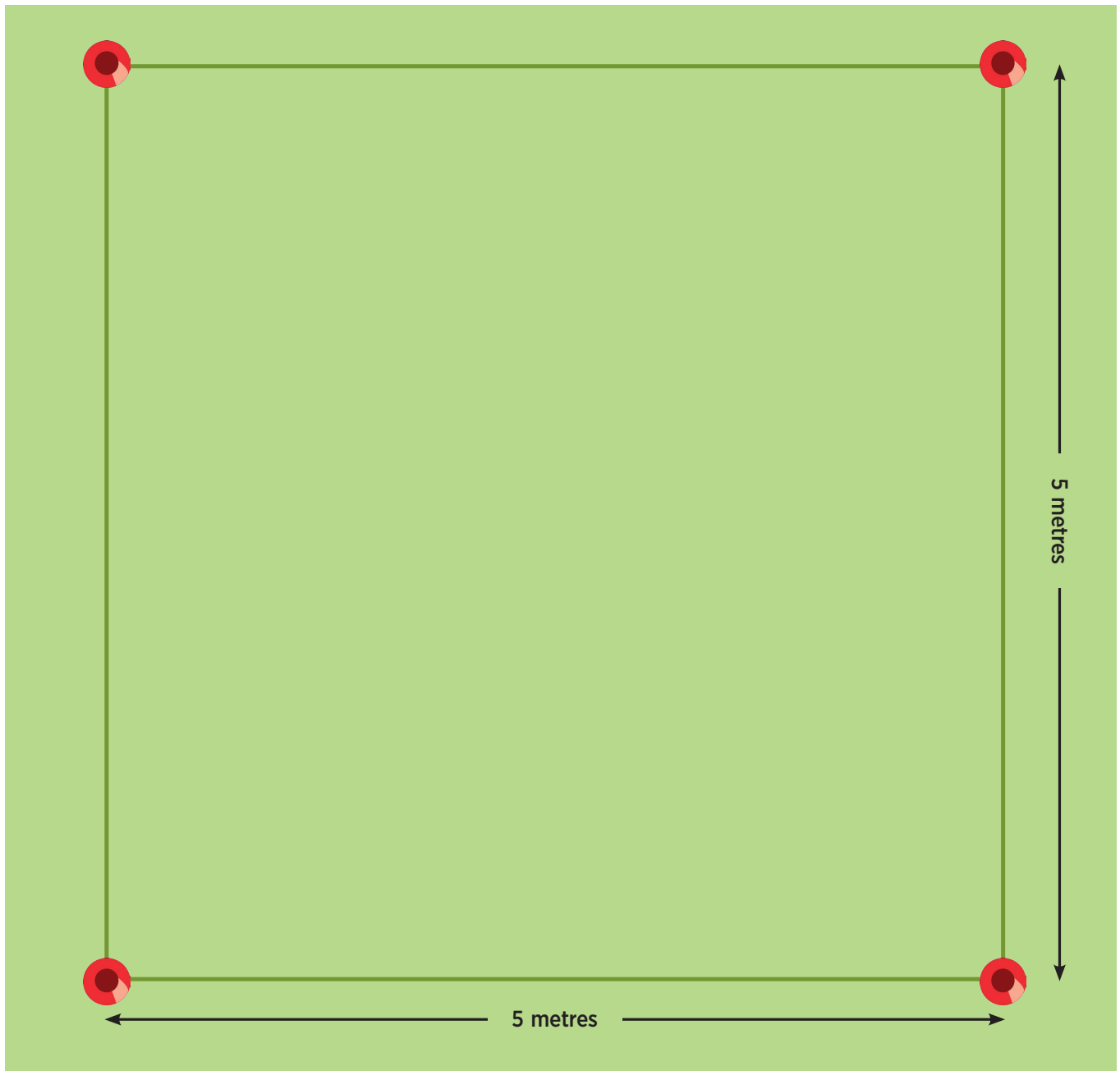
4 cones



1 bib for the defender



1 tag belt for each attacker



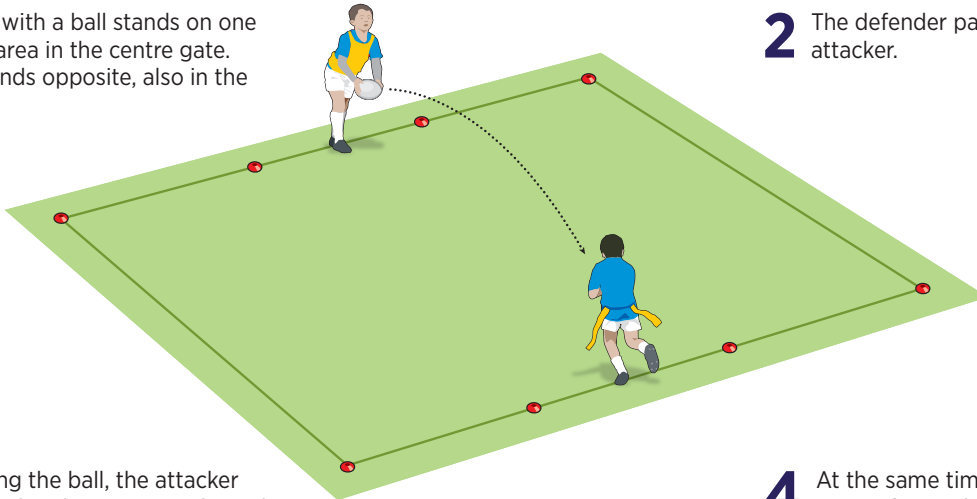
# Make a Tag tackle

ACTIVITY: 1V1 DEFENCE



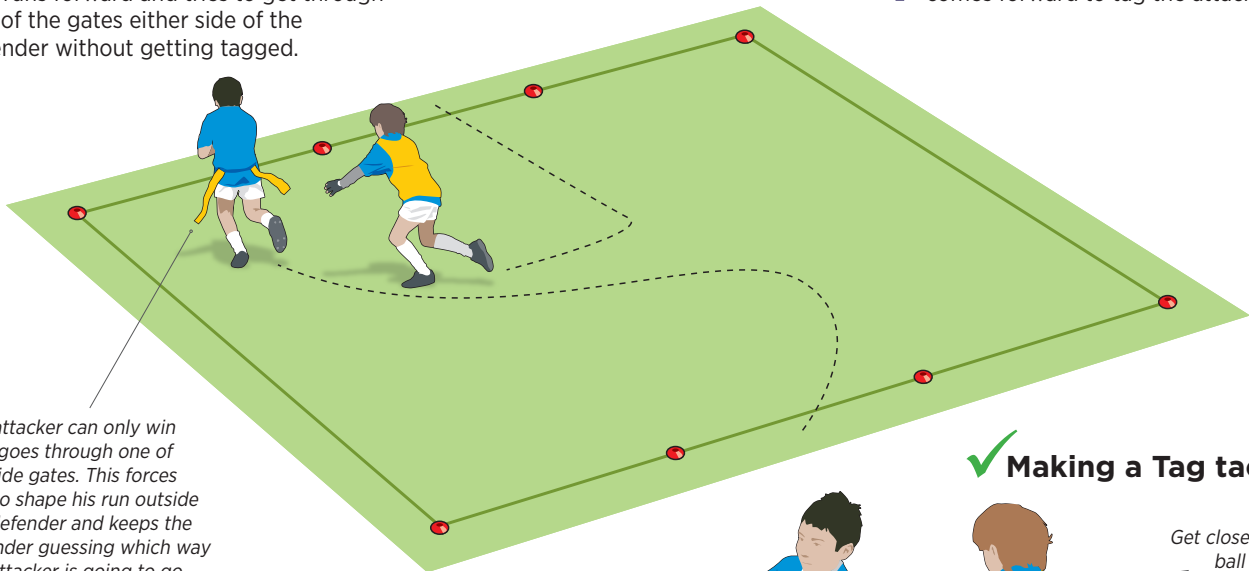
“Get close to the ball carrier” • “Grab and remove the tag belt” • “Hold the tag above your head and shout “Tag!”” • “Return the tag to the tagged player”

**1** A defender with a ball stands on one side of the area in the centre gate. An attacker stands opposite, also in the centre gate.



**2** The defender passes the ball to the attacker.

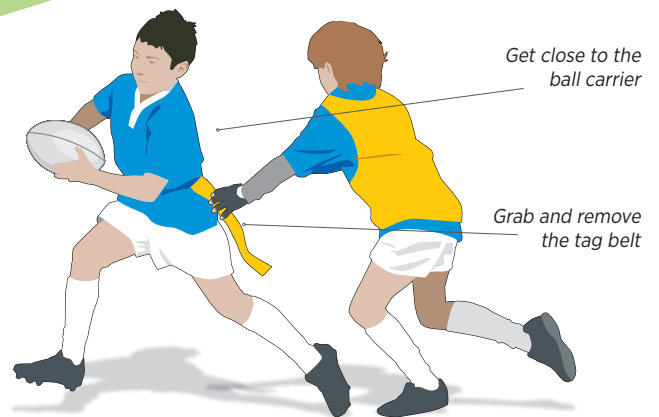
**3** On receiving the ball, the attacker runs forward and tries to get through one of the gates either side of the defender without getting tagged.



**4** At the same time, the defender comes forward to tag the attacker.

*The attacker can only win if he goes through one of the side gates. This forces him to shape his run outside the defender and keeps the defender guessing which way the attacker is going to go*

## ✓ Making a Tag tackle



**5** Play winner stays on – If a tag is made, the defender returns the tag and becomes the attacker, and a new player comes in as defender. If no tag is made, the attacker becomes the defender and a new player comes in as attacker.

### How many players do I need?

You only need two players at a time, but it's a dynamic game, so players can wait their turn, or run more than one game at once.

### Key

Ground covered

Pass



# Make a Tag tackle

ACTIVITY: 1V1 DEFENCE

## You will need



1 ball



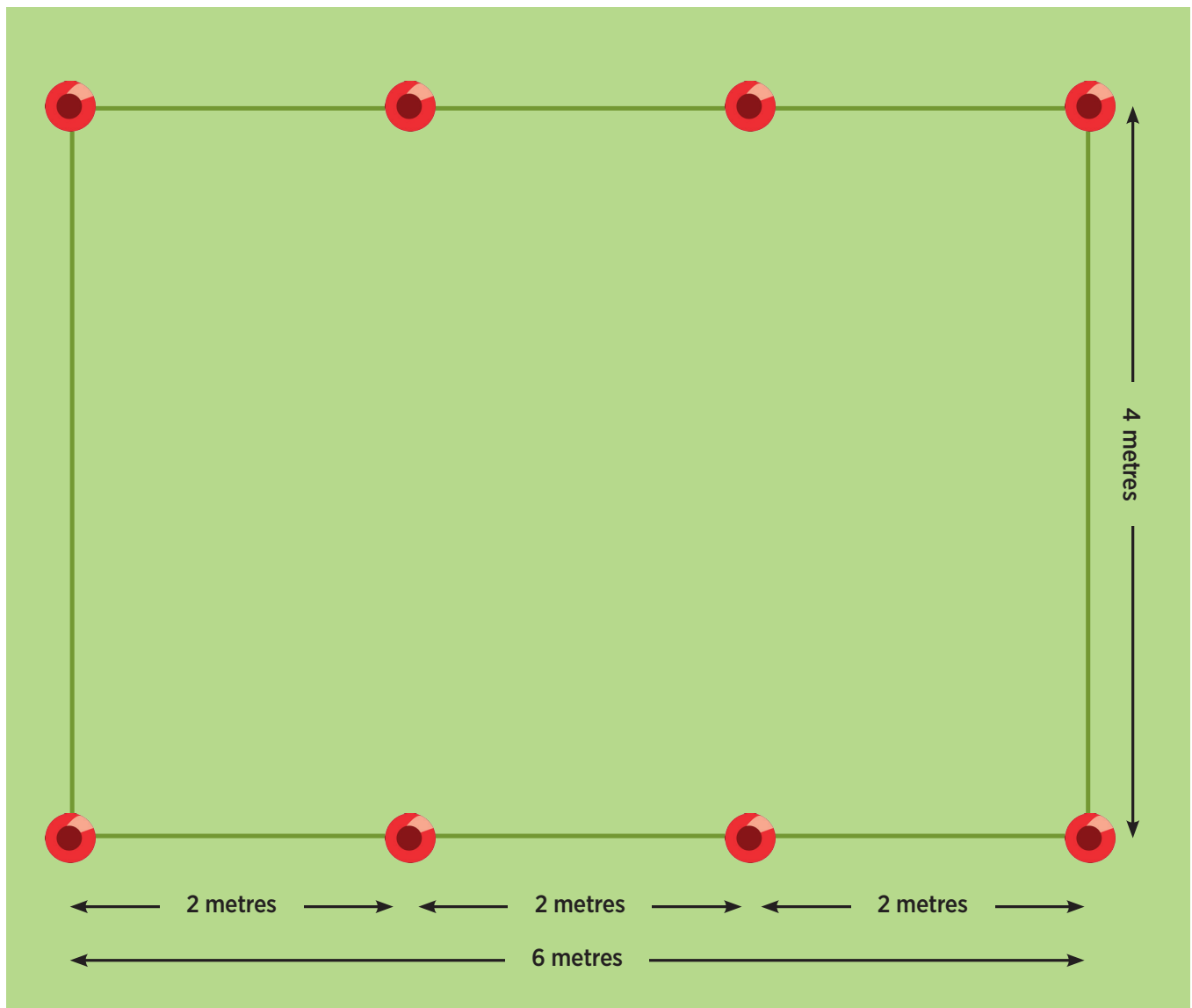
1 bib for each defender



8 cones



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Understand the offside law

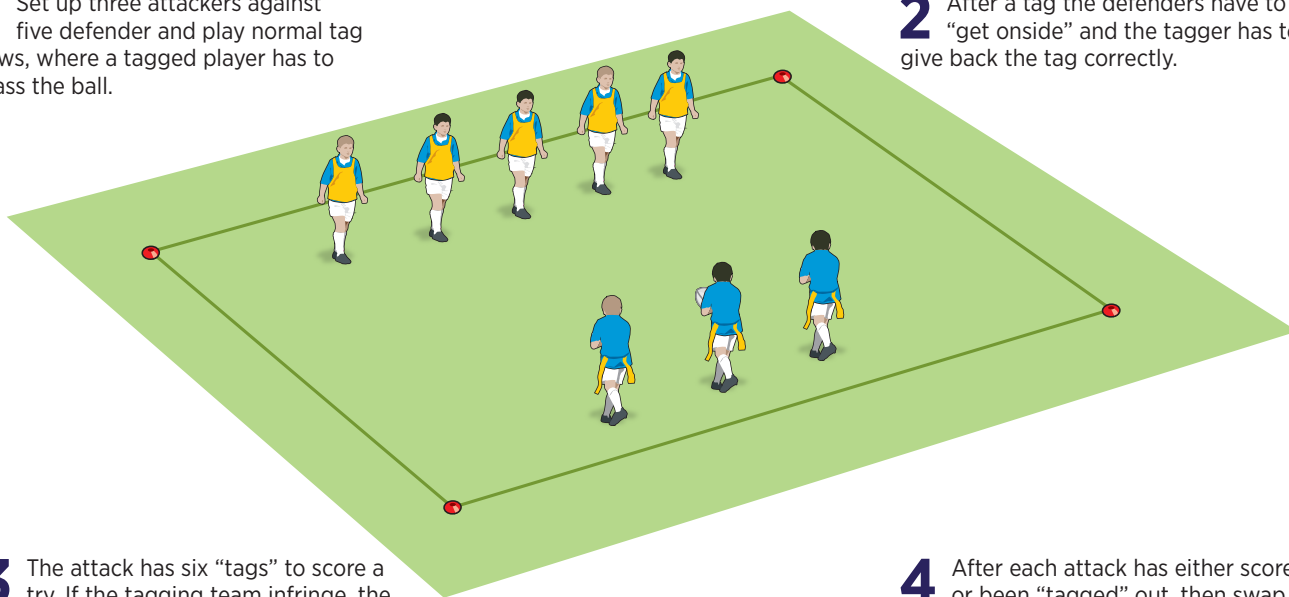
ACTIVITY: SQUEAKY CLEAN



“The offside line is through the centre of the ball across the pitch” • “Defenders must go back behind the offside line when a player is tagged”

**1** Set up three attackers against five defender and play normal tag laws, where a tagged player has to pass the ball.

**2** After a tag the defenders have to “get onside” and the tagger has to give back the tag correctly.

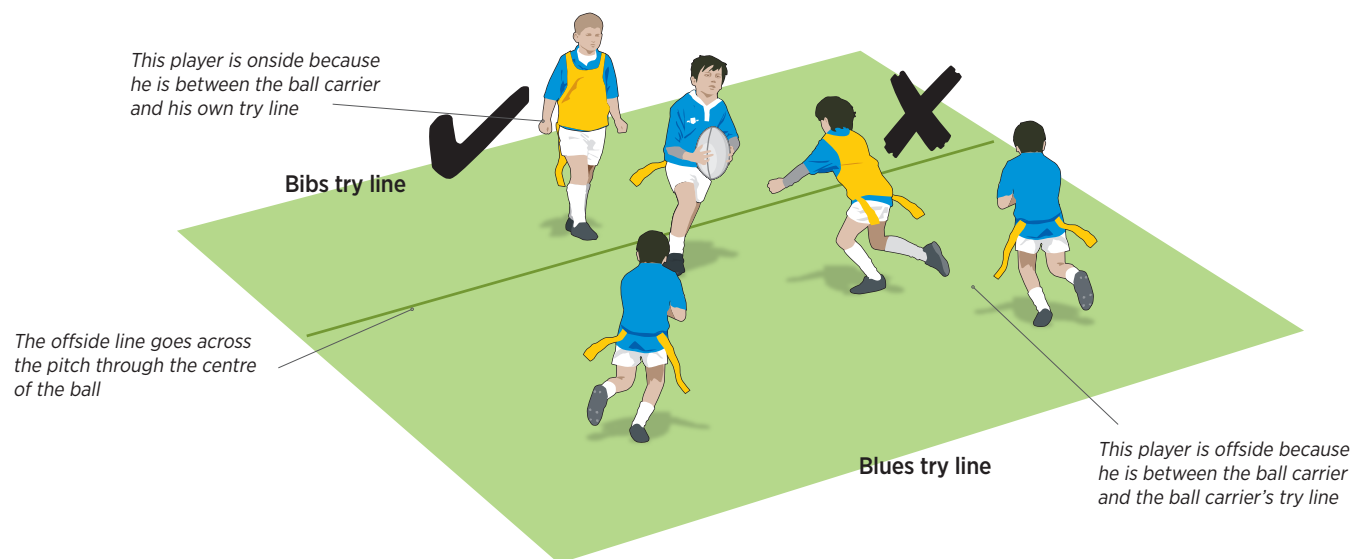


**3** The attack has six “tags” to score a try. If the tagging team infringe, the attack get a further six tags.

**4** After each attack has either scored or been “tagged” out, then swap attackers and defenders.

**5** Adjust the number of “tags” to score according to the ability of each team.

## Knowing the offside law



### How many players do I need?

You need a minimum of eight players playing 5v3 for this activity but you could also play 6v4 or 7v5.

### Key

# Understand the offside law

ACTIVITY: SQUEAKY CLEAN

## You will need



1 ball



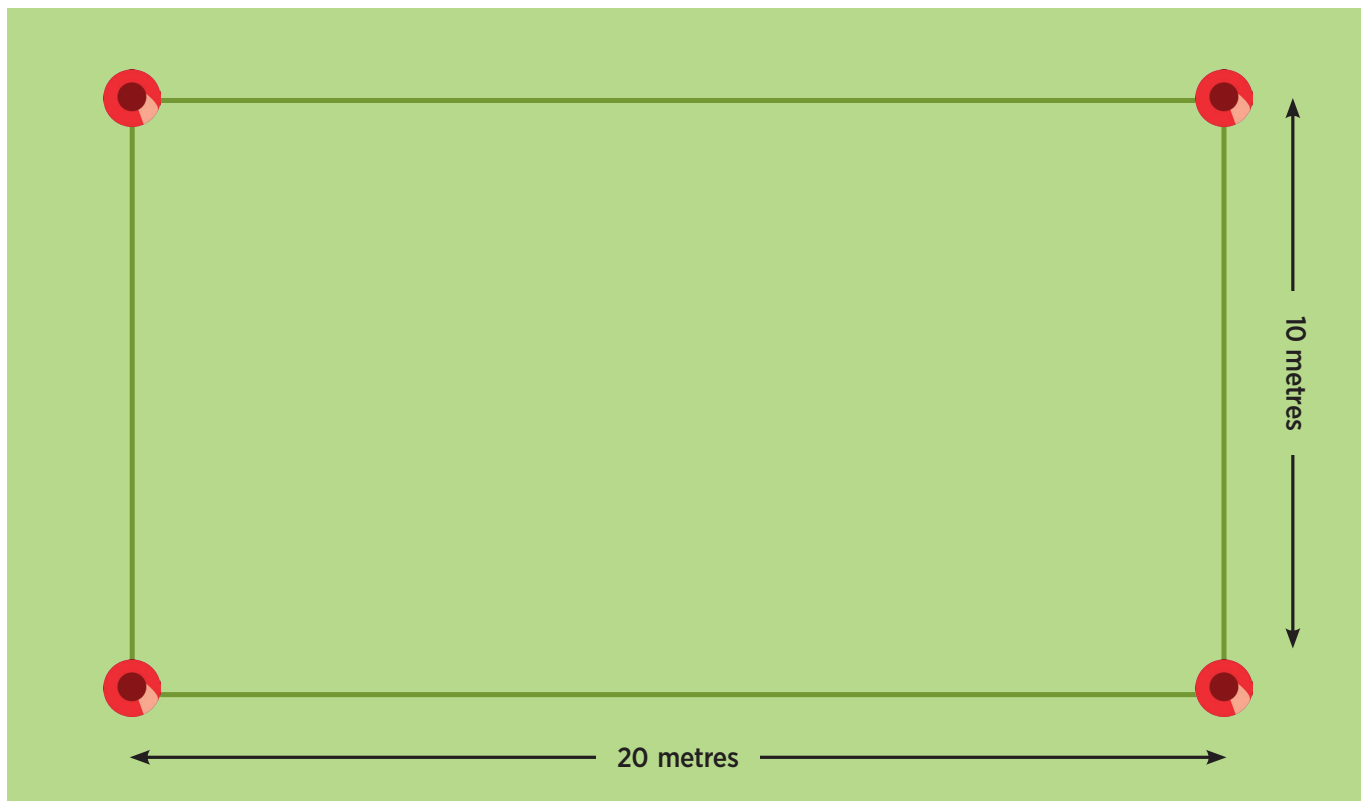
4 cones



1 bib for each defender



1 tag belt for each attacker



# Stand in the correct position for a restart

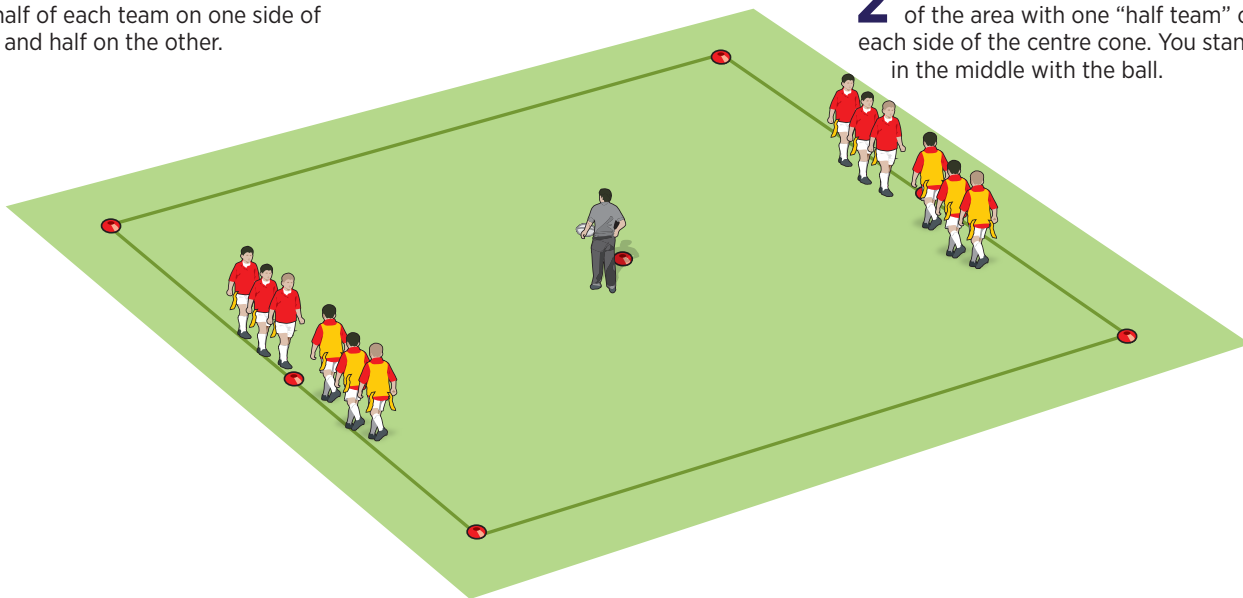
ACTIVITY: WHO'S READY FIRST?



WHAT YOU SAY

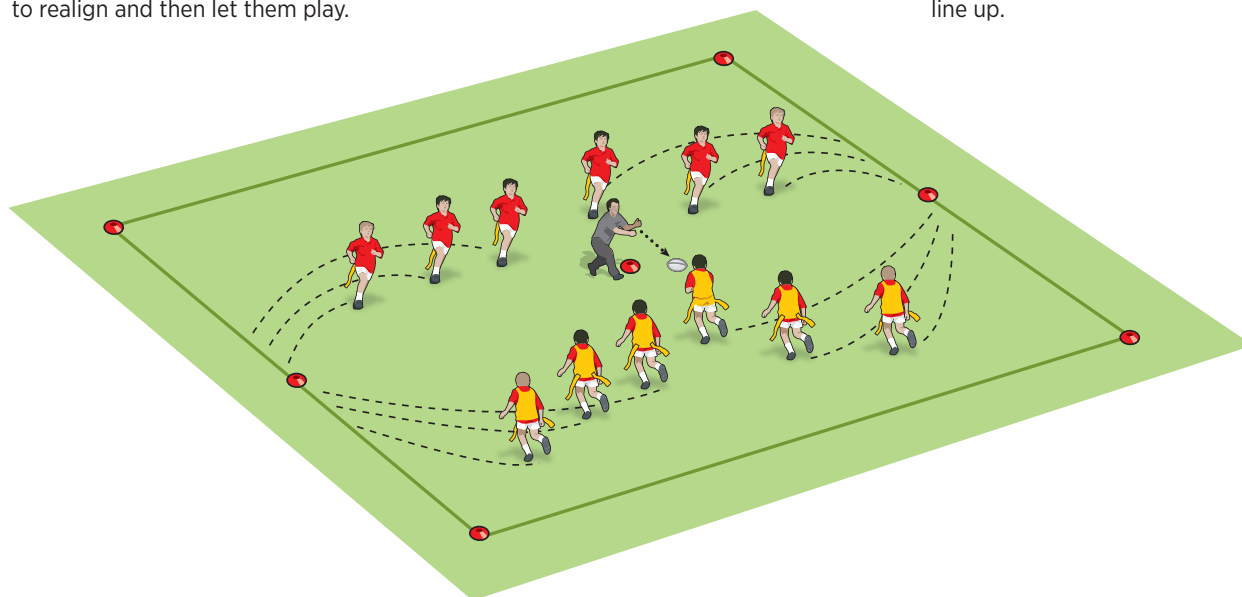
“Form part of a line” • “Get others to form part of a line”

**1** Split your players into two teams. Put half of each team on one side of the area and half on the other.



**2** Players should line up along the side of the area with one “half team” on each side of the centre cone. You stand in the middle with the ball.

**3** When you say “go”, all the players run into the middle. The first group to form the correct defensive line will receive the ball. Give them a few seconds to realign and then let them play.



**4** Develop by calling out a number from 2 to how ever many you have in the lines. That number of players from the front of each line run into the box to line up.

## How many players do I need?

You need a minimum of eight players for this activity but can play with up to 16 (adjusting the size of the area to suit).

## Key

Ground covered

Pass



# Stand in the correct position for a restart

ACTIVITY: WHO'S READY FIRST?

## You will need



1 ball



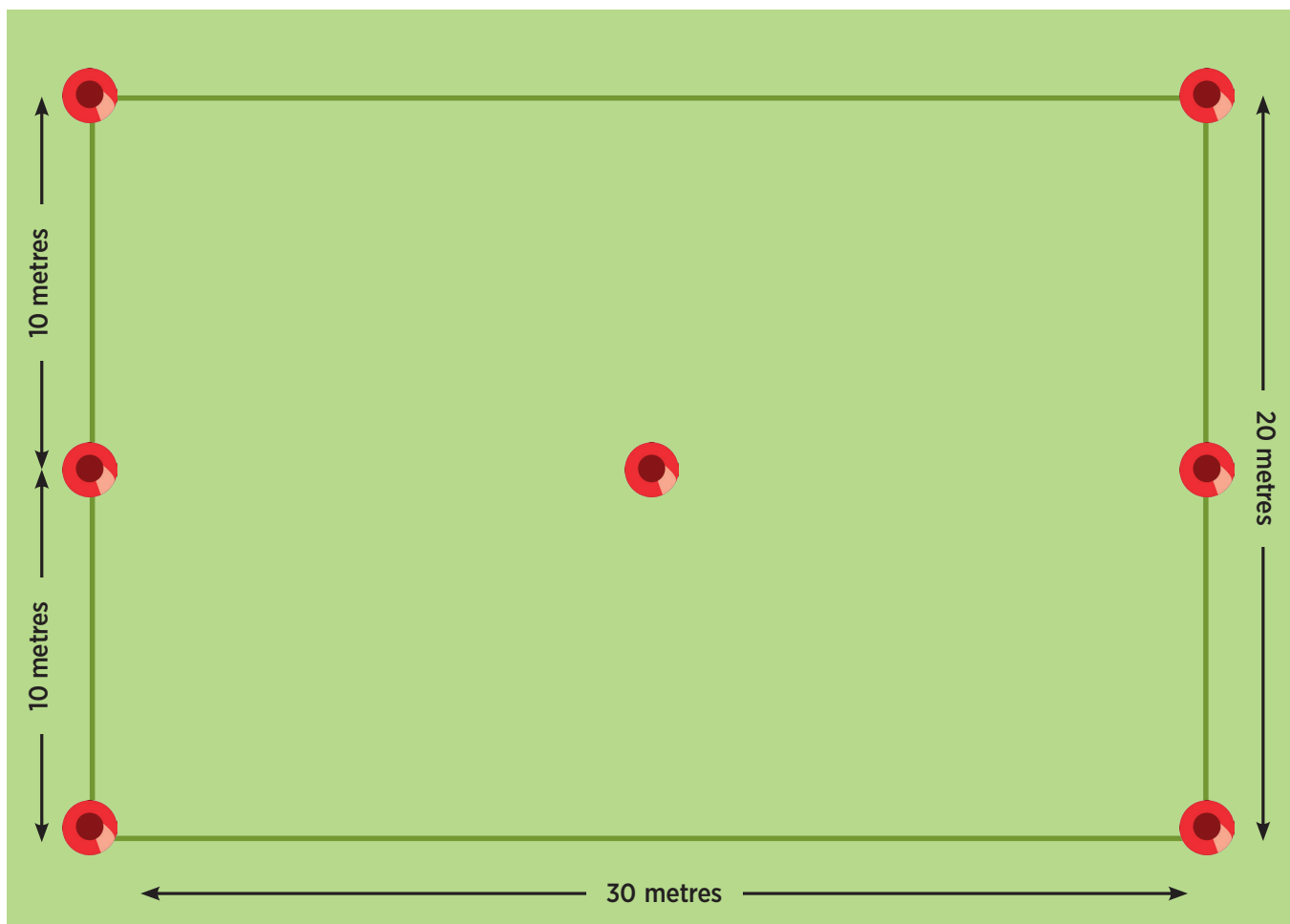
Bibs for one team



7 cones



1 tag belt for each player



# Work together as defenders

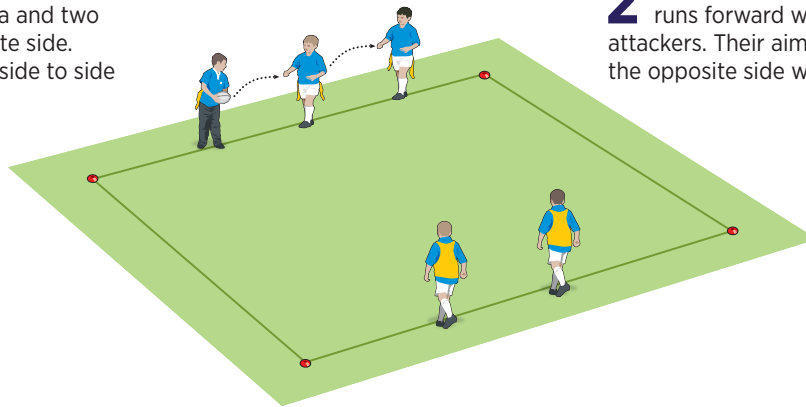
ACTIVITY: TRACK THE ATTACKERS



“Move together towards a target” • “Tell other defenders which way to move”

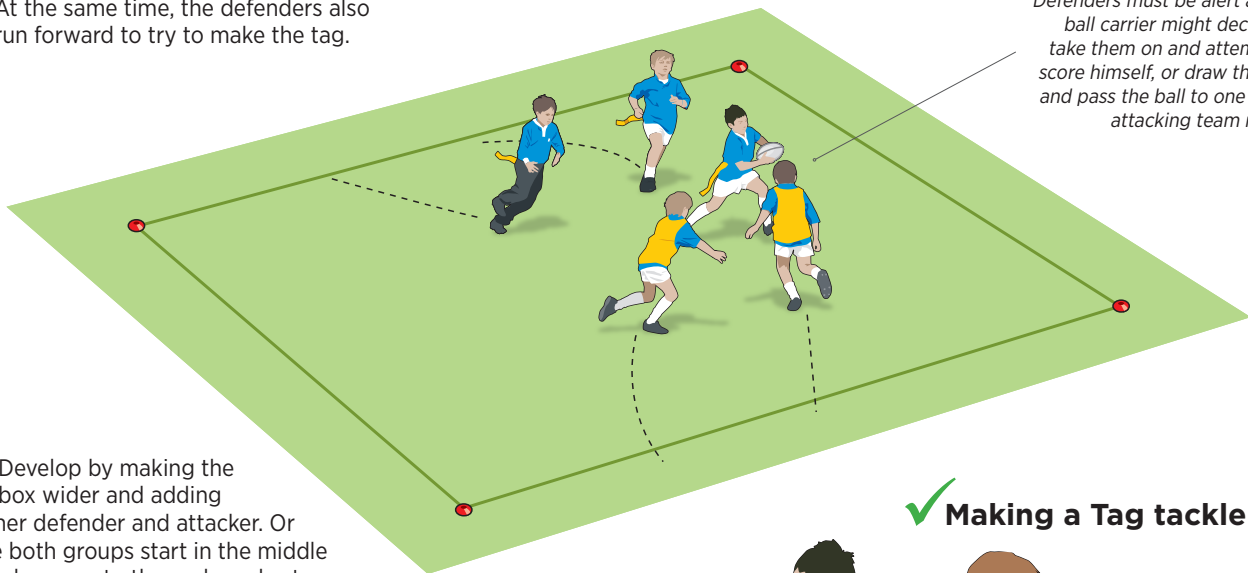
WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Three attackers spread out along one of the long sides of the area and two defenders stand on the opposite side. The attackers pass a ball from side to side between themselves.



**2** When you shout “go”, the ball carrier runs forward with the other two attackers. Their aim is to get the ball to the opposite side without being tagged.

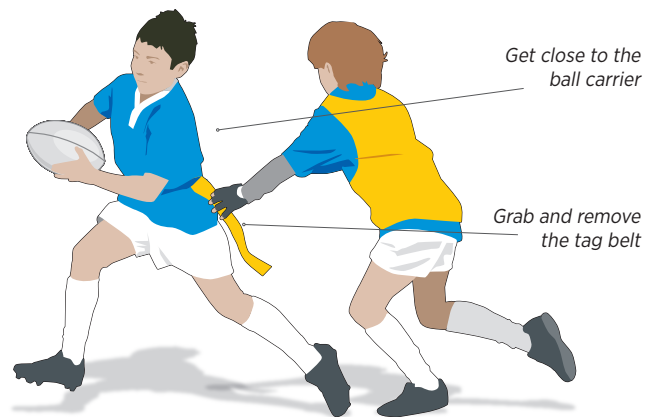
**3** At the same time, the defenders also run forward to try to make the tag.



*Defenders must be alert as the ball carrier might decide to take them on and attempt to score himself, or draw them in and pass the ball to one of his attacking team mates*

**4** Develop by making the box wider and adding another defender and attacker. Or make both groups start in the middle of the box, run to the ends and set up (realign) before starting the exercise.

## ✓ Making a Tag tackle



### How many players do I need?

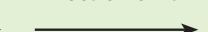
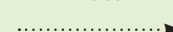
A minimum of five players. If you have more, make the area bigger and add players to each side up to 5v4, or run another game alongside.

### Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Work together as defenders

ACTIVITY: TRACK THE ATTACKERS

## You will need



1 ball



1 bib for each defender



4 cones



1 tag belt for each attacker



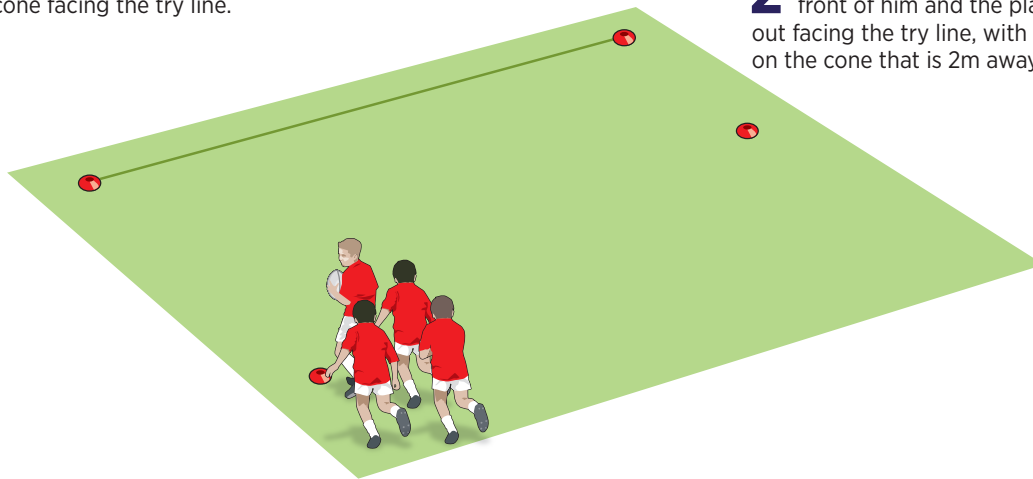
# Understand that the ball goes backwards

ACTIVITY: SPREAD, PASS AND RUN FORWARD



“Look where the ball should go” • “Push the ball towards the target player”

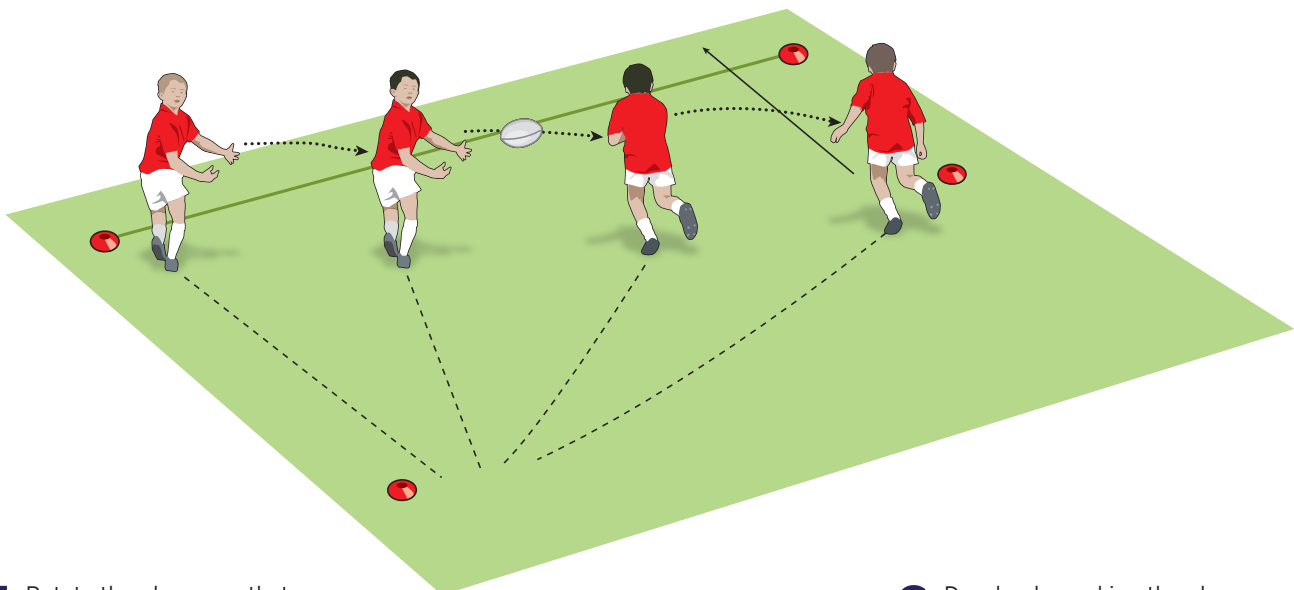
**1** Put four players, one with a ball, on the starting cone facing the try line.



**2** The ball carrier runs to the cone in front of him and the players spread out facing the try line, with the end player on the cone that is 2m away from the line.

**3** When all the players are in position, they pass the ball along the line, with the end player taking the final pass and running forward to put the ball down over the try line.

**4** If the ball is dropped, the players go back to their starting point.



**5** Rotate the players so that they all get a chance to start and end with the ball.

**6** Develop by making the players run forward as they receive the ball. Further develop by timing the players to see how quickly they can set up and pass the ball.

## How many players do I need?

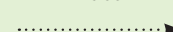
You need four players to run this drill. With more players, either queue up groups of four by the starting cone or run another drill alongside.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Understand that the ball goes backwards

ACTIVITY: SPREAD, PASS AND RUN FORWARD

## You will need



1 ball



4 cones



# Pass 3 metres to another player

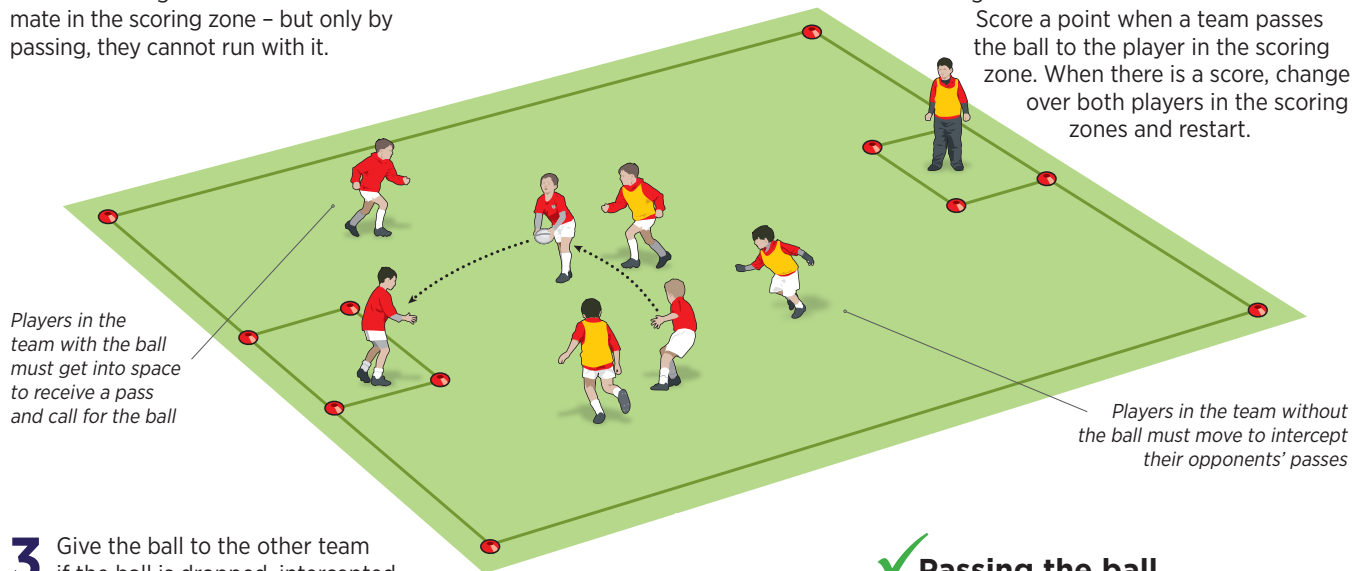
ACTIVITY: RUGBY NETBALL



“Look where the pass should go” • “Push the ball towards the target player” • “Pass to the receiver calling for the ball” • “Pass in front of a receiver”

**1** Split the players into two teams and put one player from each team inside a scoring zone. Throw the ball to one team. Their aim is to get the ball to their team mate in the scoring zone – but only by passing, they cannot run with it.

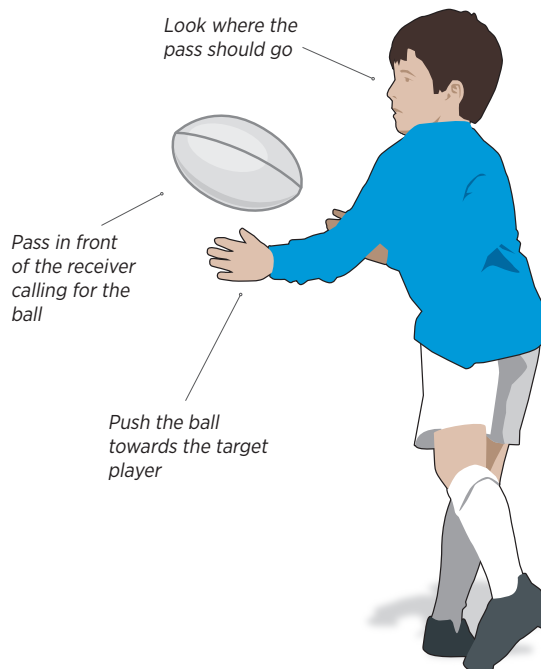
**2** The other team aim to intercept or knock down the ball. There is no contact and the defending team cannot get within 1m of the ball carrier. Score a point when a team passes the ball to the player in the scoring zone. When there is a score, change over both players in the scoring zones and restart.



**3** Give the ball to the other team if the ball is dropped, intercepted or goes out of play, or if the player in the scoring zone steps out of the zone.

**4** Develop by allowing the players to run with the ball, but they must pass when they are touched or tagged. They still must pass the ball into the scoring zone (not run in with it).

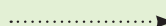
## ✓ Passing the ball



### How many players do I need?

You can run this game with up to seven players on each side. If you have more players, make the square bigger or run two games.

### Key Pass



# Pass 3 metres to another player

ACTIVITY: RUGBY NETBALL

## You will need



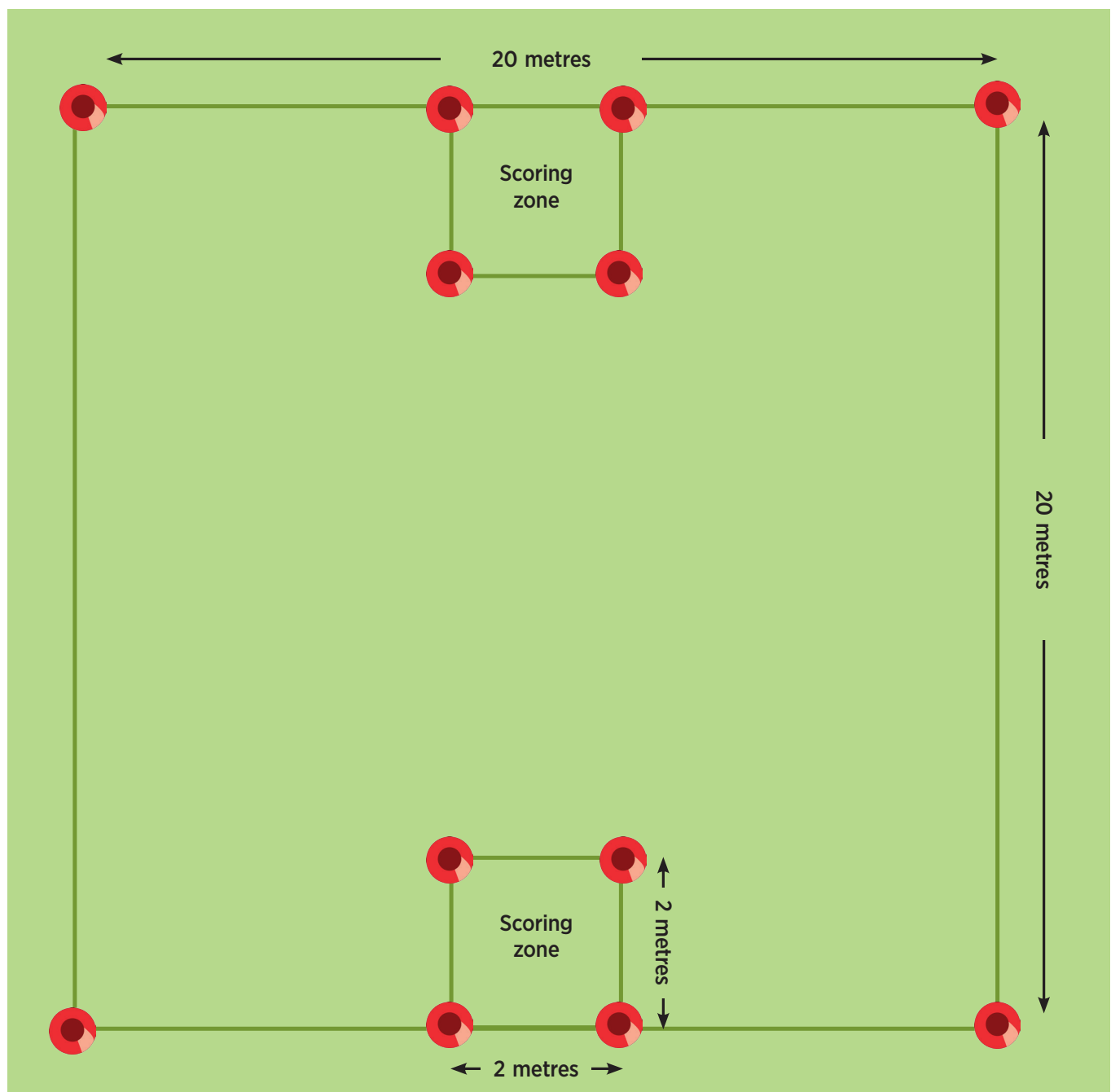
1 ball



1 bib for each player on one team



12 cones



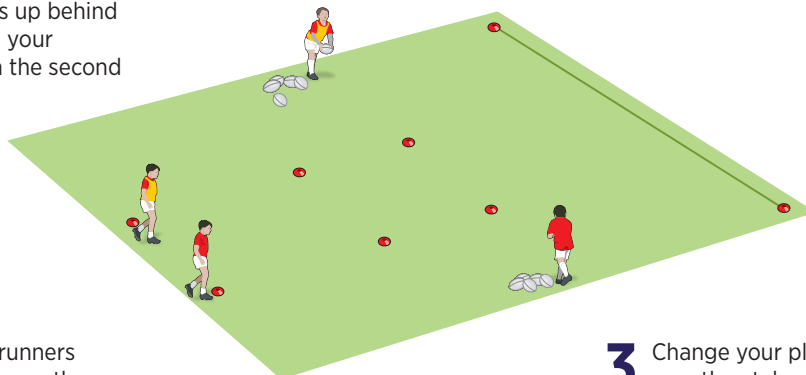
# Catch the ball from another player moving

ACTIVITY: RUN ONTO A PASS

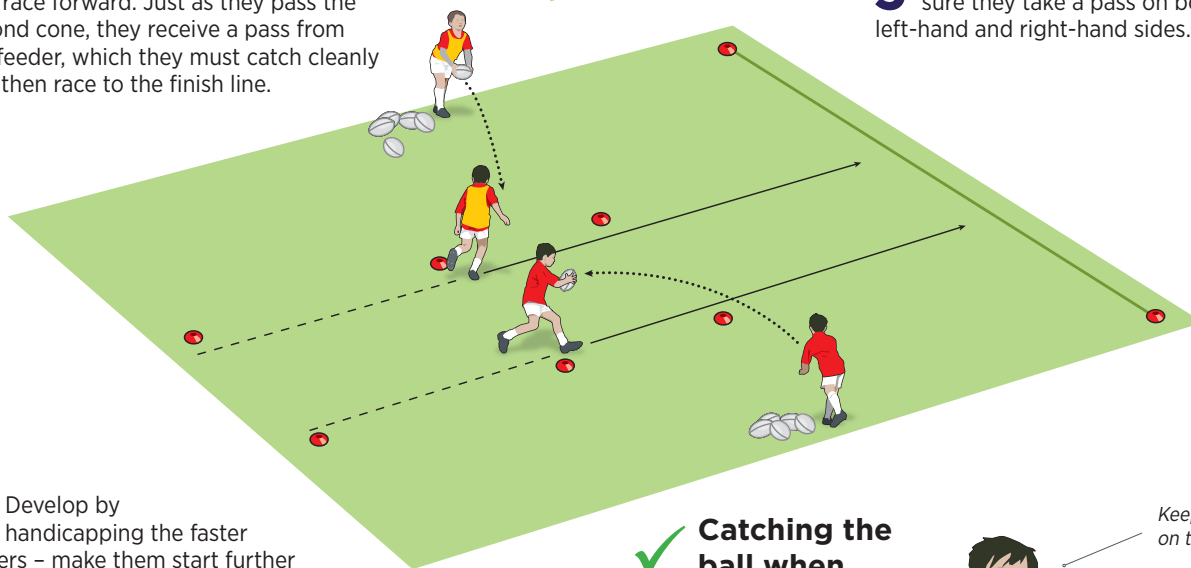


“Call for the ball” • “Keep your eyes on the ball” •  
“Put your hands up to make a target” • “Reach out to take the pass”

**1** Divide your players into “runners” and “feeders”. Line your runners up behind the two starting cones and put your feeders on either side between the second and third cones.



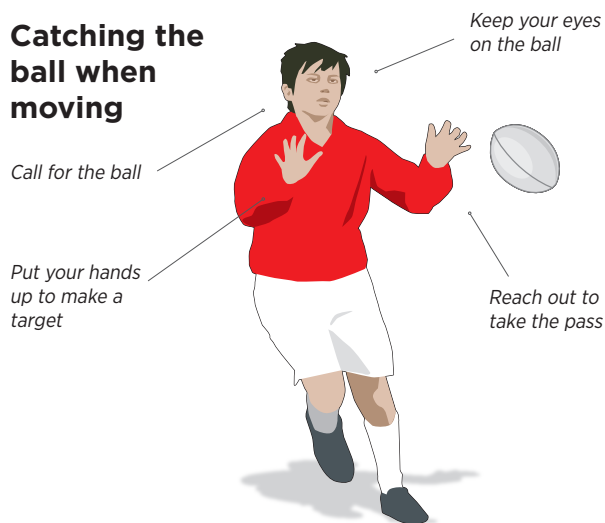
**2** When you shout “go” the runners race forward. Just as they pass the second cone, they receive a pass from the feeder, which they must catch cleanly and then race to the finish line.



**3** Change your players round, making sure they take a pass on both their left-hand and right-hand sides.

**4** Develop by handicapping the faster players – make them start further back, or say that they have to run from an angle before straightening up.

**✓ Catching the ball when moving**



**How many players do I need?**

You need four to start with, but this is a fast-moving activity, so players can line up behind each position to take their turn.

**Key**

Ground covered

Pass

Direction of run



# Catch the ball from another player moving

ACTIVITY: RUN ONTO A PASS

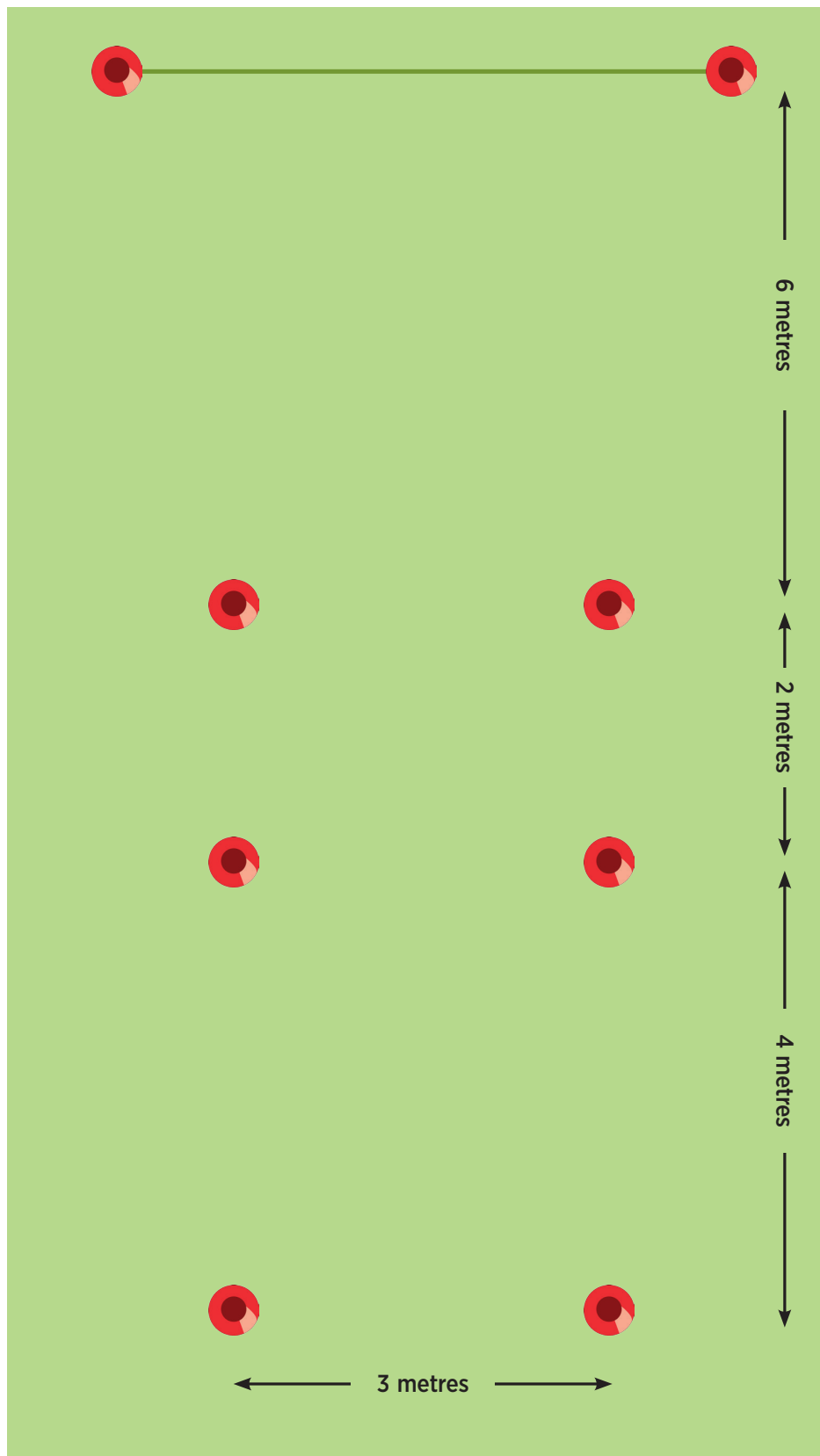
## You will need



2 balls minimum, but it's best to have a pile of balls next to each feeder



8 cones



# Run with the ball in two hands

ACTIVITY: RUNNING CROSSOVERS

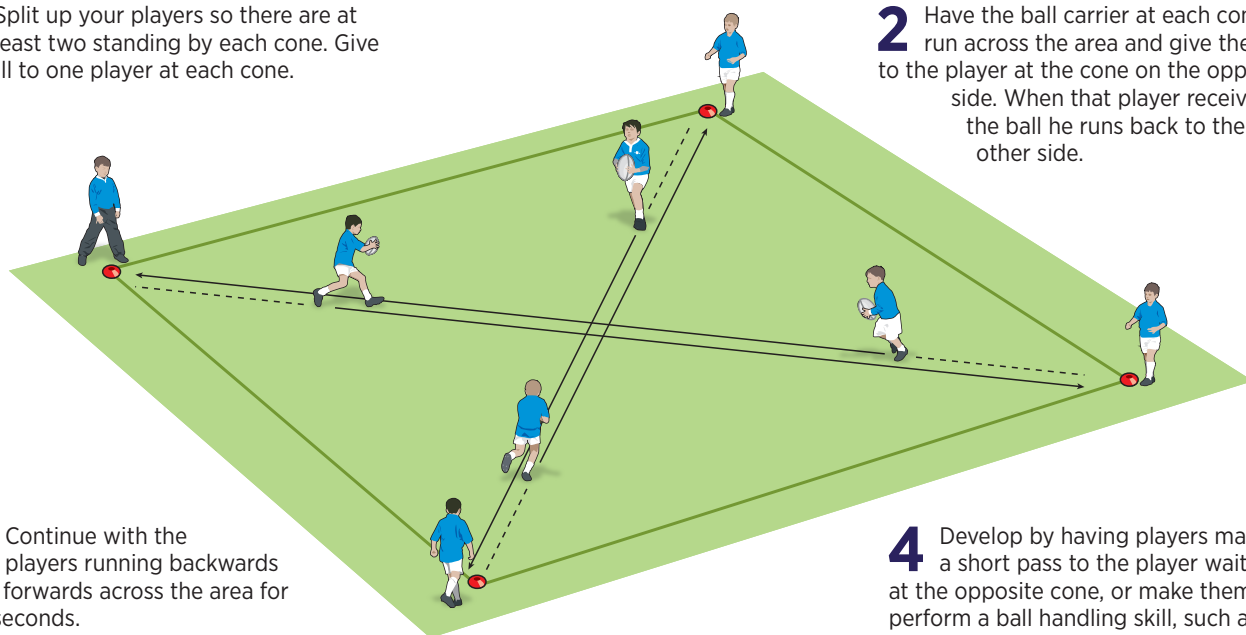


“Place both your hands in the middle of the ball” • “Keep the ball off your chest”

WHAT YOU SAY

**1** Split up your players so there are at least two standing by each cone. Give a ball to one player at each cone.

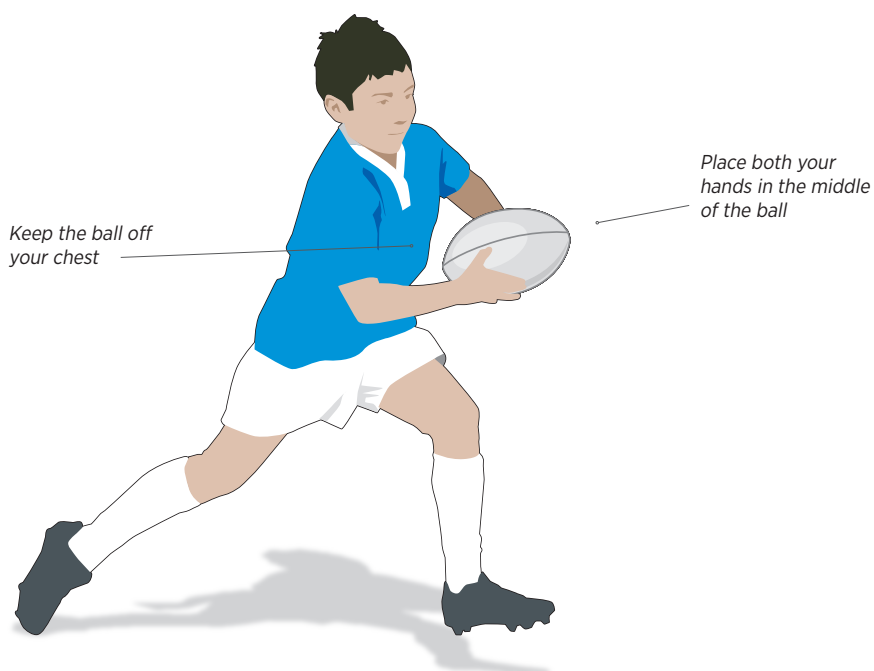
**2** Have the ball carrier at each cone run across the area and give the ball to the player at the cone on the opposite side. When that player receives the ball he runs back to the other side.



**3** Continue with the players running backwards and forwards across the area for 30 seconds.

**4** Develop by having players make a short pass to the player waiting at the opposite cone, or make them perform a ball handling skill, such as throwing the ball up and catching it.

## ✓ Running with the ball in two hands



### How many players do I need?

Minimum of eight players, but you can run this game with 6 or 8 cones – place the extra cones in the middle of each side of the area.

### Key

Ground covered    Direction of run  
 -----                      —————>

# Run with the ball in two hands

ACTIVITY: RUNNING CROSSOVERS

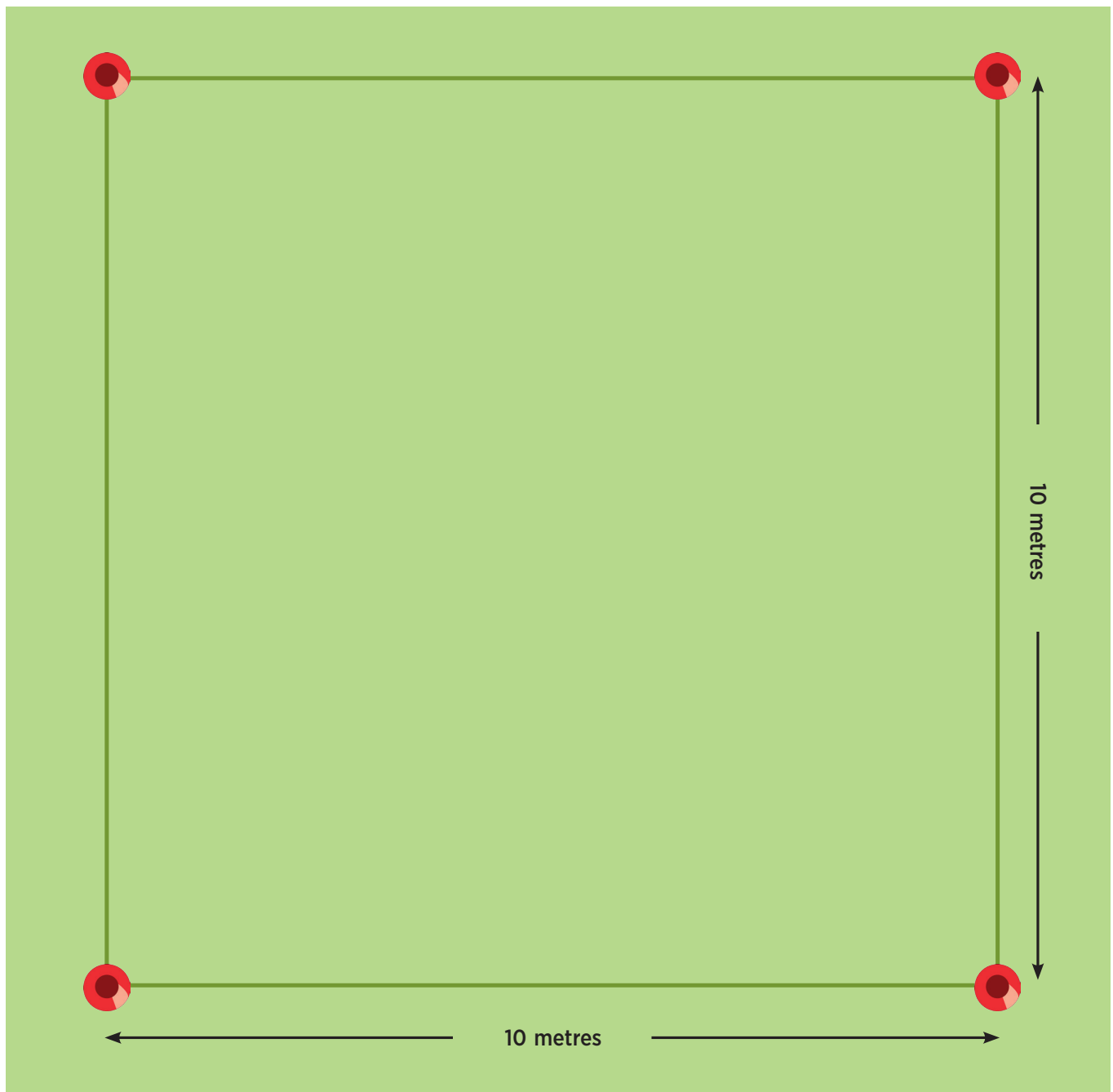
## You will need



1 ball per cone  
(4 minimum)



4 cones minimum, but you can add in extra cones in the middle of each side if you have more players



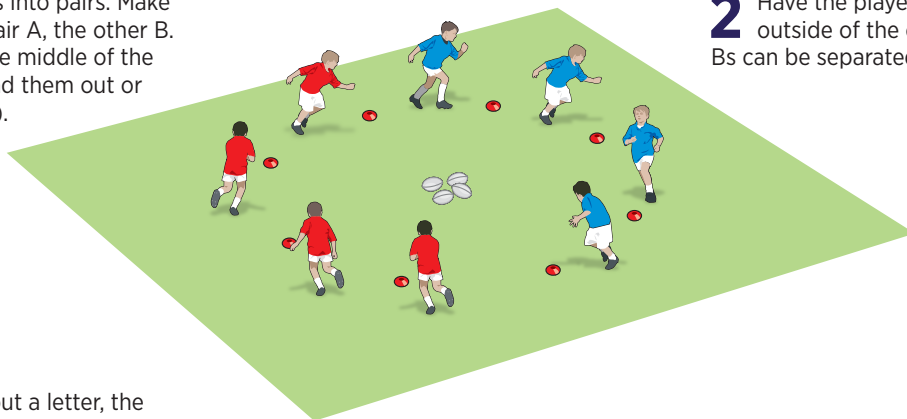
# Run to a ball and pick it up

ACTIVITY: PICK UP AND PASS RACE



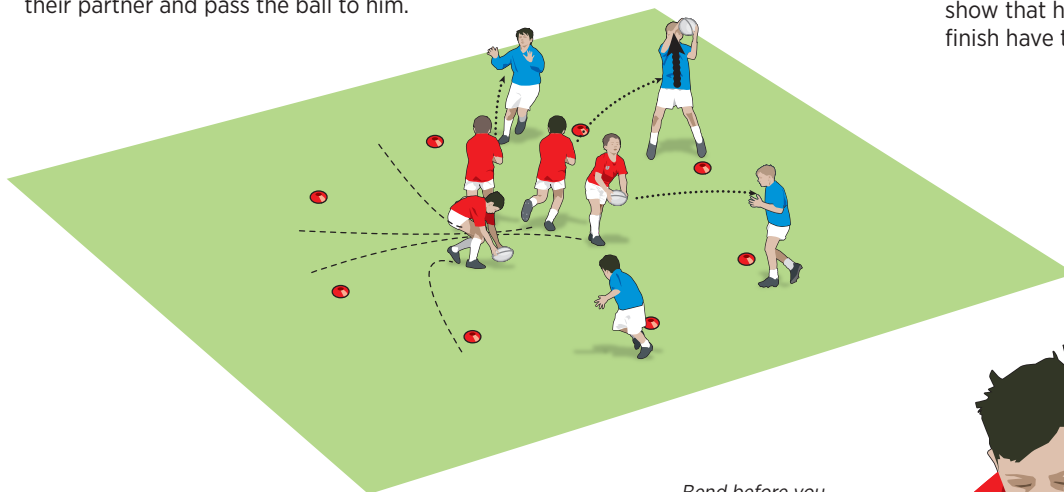
“Bend before you get to the ball” • “Put your foot by the ball” •  
“Put one hand in front and one hand behind the ball”

**1** Split your players into pairs. Make one from each pair A, the other B. Put all the balls in the middle of the circle (you can spread them out or keep them bunched).



**2** Have the players run around the outside of the circle. The As and the Bs can be separated or mixed in together.

**3** When you call out a letter, the players with that letter run into the circle, pick up a ball, run back out towards their partner and pass the ball to him.



**4** When the outside player receives the ball he should hold it in the air to show that he has finished. The last pair to finish have to do two star jumps.

**5** Develop by having the collecting player put the ball at the feet of his team mate so that he has to pick it up and raise it above his head. Further develop by having a “golden ball”, which means the pair who get that ball first can choose a coach to do two star jumps.

✓ Picking a ball up



## How many players do I need?

This game works well with eight players, but you could add more pairs and make the circle larger.

## Key

Ground covered

Pass



# Run to a ball and pick it up

ACTIVITY: PICK UP AND PASS RACE

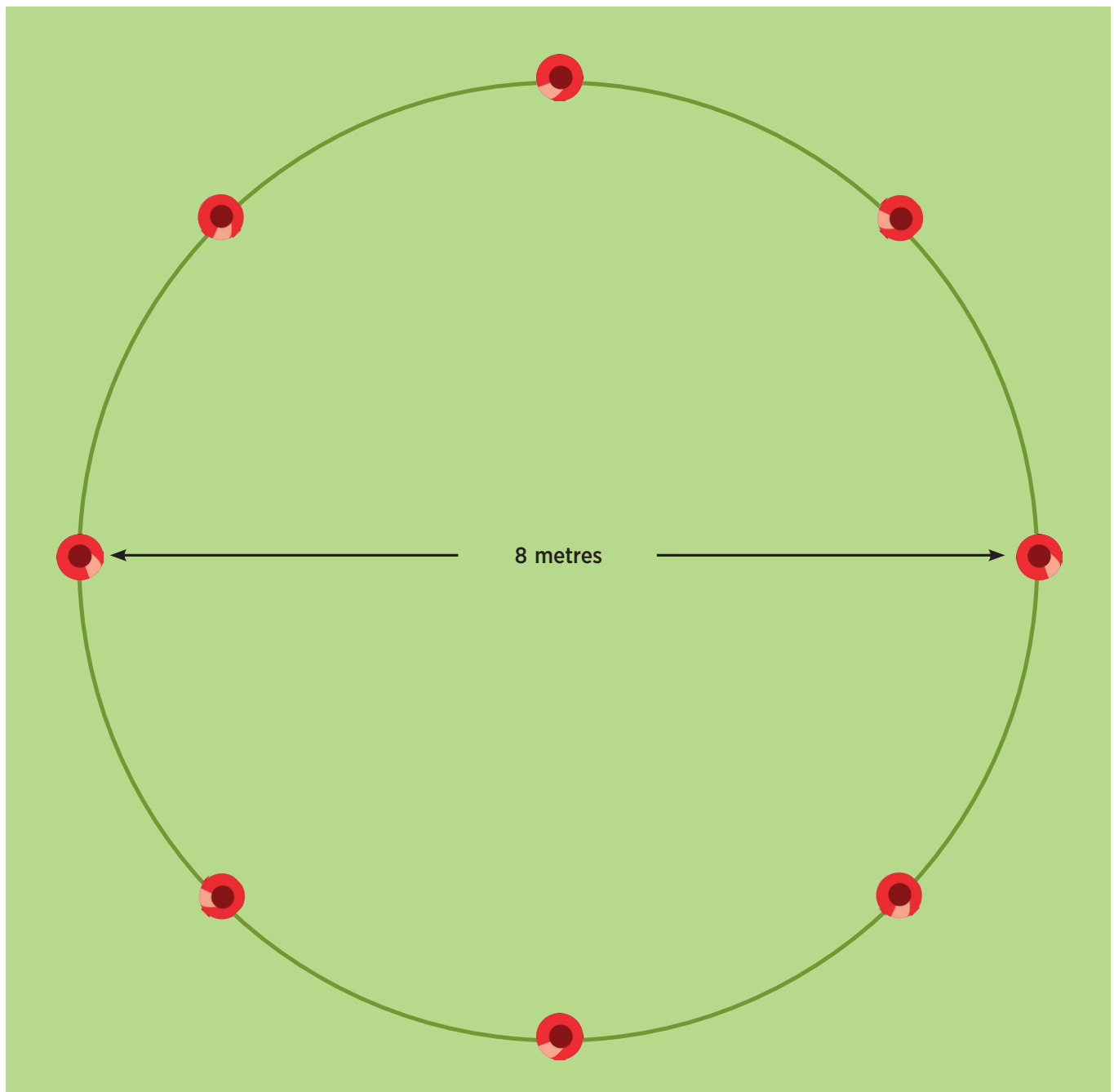
## You will need



1 ball per pair



8 cones minimum



## Andrew Griffiths

Starting with limited rugby knowledge, Andrew coached his son's team for four years, gaining his Level 1 RFU coaching award, and learning the hard way about grassroots coaching. The experience of managing training for 25 boys and their parents prompted the creation of the EasiCoach Rugby Curriculum. Andrew is the editor of many rugby and soccer coaching manuals, and the managing director of Green Star Media Ltd.



## Dan Cottrell

Dan has spent most of his adult life collecting and absorbing the most useful rugby coaching secrets he can find. He is a practising RFU Level 3 Coach, a Welsh Rugby Union Course Leader, head coach for Swansea Schools U15s and a Level 2 referee. Dan played first class rugby at Bath and Bristol and later became Director of Rugby at Cranleigh School in Surrey. He is best known as the editor of the successful free rugby coaching email *Better Rugby Coaching*, which has been published since 2003 and has 80,000 subscribers worldwide.



### **How EasiCoach Was Created...**

EasiCoach Rugby Curriculum™ has been created by the people who publish Rugby Coach Weekly coaching magazine. We have been publishing sports coaching advice for grassroots coaches since 2003.

Covering the key core skills required for consistent player development across five age ranges from U7 to U16, EasiCoach follows the latest mini and youth guidelines on player development and has been approved by senior national coaching development officers.

As a coaching tool aimed at helping beginner coaches, volunteer assistants and helpers, EasiCoach offers a guaranteed programme of skills development activities every season.

EasiCoach is owned by Green Star Media Ltd, which provides informed, easy-to-follow advice for 450,000 rugby, football (soccer) and basketball coaches in more than 80 countries. For more information, please visit [www.greenstarmedia.net](http://www.greenstarmedia.net)



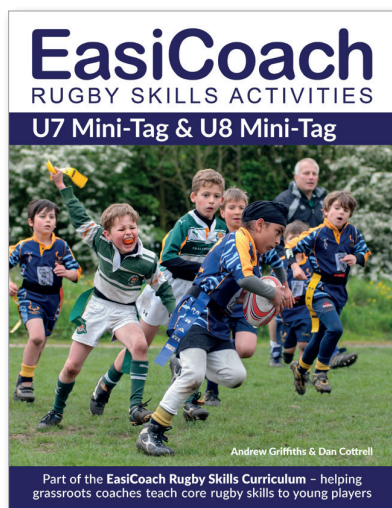
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## Praise for the EasiCoach Rugby Curriculum™ series



Between January and April 2014, five clubs – Cranleigh, Brighton, Swansea Uplands, Stowmarket and Hadleigh – trialed EasiCoach in a pilot scheme. This is their feedback:

*“The sheets were a good resource. The exercises were great, easy to understand and very useful over the weeks.”*

**Sheriff Dabiri, U6-U8 Mini Tag, Cranleigh RFC**

*“The kids enjoyed them and from a coach’s perspective it certainly eased the burden of having to come with ideas for each training session.”*

**Paddy Dangerfield, U6-U8 Mini Tag, Cranleigh RFC**

*“Very good coaching tool. Easy to understand, easy to implement, and relevant to age group – avoids having to trail through loads of exercises/drills that don’t apply to the age group.”*

**John Awdry, U11-U12, Brighton RFC**

*“I like the activities very much.”*

**Steve James, U10, Swansea Uplands RFC**

*“I am quite new to coaching and I found EasiCoach a valuable asset in preparing and running sessions. Players found the sessions enjoyable and importantly have improved their understanding of game play.”*

**Graham Allen, U13-16, Stowmarket RFC**

*“The players understood quite quickly what I was asking them to do without too much explanation. The content suited the age group that I am involved with and also assisted me in understanding different coaching methods. This was my first season as a coach (qualified) so your sheets gave me a lot of confidence working with my age group.”*

**Brian Anderson, U10, Stowmarket RFC**

*“The wording on the sheets was short and to the point and easy to set up. The boys really enjoyed all the drills, keeping the lads on their toes and thinking all the time. I’m going use the ideas again and again.”*

**Michael Fenner, U10, Hadleigh RFC**

