

# How to Teach Flag Football Plays

By Aaron Reynolds, eHow Contributor

In flag [football](#), the players wear light belts around their waists and on those belts are two long flags, one covering each hip. In order to get an opponent down, you simply remove one of the flags from their hips. Any form of tackling or heavy physical contact is against the rules. Drawing plays up for flag football is much different than for regular tackle football. Since all the defenders have to do is rip a flag off, you want to design plays that keep ball carriers as far away from defenders as possible. Most games are 5 on 5.

## Instructions

1. To teach a pitch run, follow these steps. A running back stands to the left, right or behind the quarterback. Pitches give the runner a further distance from the defenders. On a pitch right the quarterback hikes the football and turns to his right. The running back cuts to his right at an angle. The quarterback floats the ball in the runner's direction and rolls out in front of the back and readies himself to block the oncoming defenders. The center, who snapped ball, will run to his right and also block anyone downfield. Pitching to the left is an exact mirror of pitching right.
2. In order to teach a counter run, this is what you must know. They are usually handoffs, but you can have the quarterback pitch the ball also. Assuming you want to hand the ball off on this particular play and you are going right, then the quarterback hikes the ball and turns to his right holding the football out. She makes a few steps back toward the runner. Before the runner retrieves the ball, she makes a short cut to her left. She does this to fake out the defenders. She simply fakes like she is running left with a quick jab step and then goes to her right to get the football from the quarterback.

Those are the most effective run plays. You can do simple handoffs to the right and left, but those will most likely get you nowhere, as the defense will see it coming fast and get to the runner before she crosses the line of scrimmage, which is the line where you start the play from.



## Run QB, run

Mohammed Alo: 12/30/2006

One of the biggest threats in flag football is the running quarterback. Whether you play flag football in a fun league or in competitive college leagues, you will want to use the running quarterback. The running quarterback is the ultimate weapon. Knowing when and how to use this weapon is the key to flag football.

We've all seen them. We've all dreaded playing against them. We've all stayed up nights trying to scheme against them. Whether it's in flag football or in the NFL, a running quarterback is a deadly weapon.

When choosing who will be the quarterback of your flag football team, you have to be very careful. Yes, having a good arm and being an accurate thrower is a bonus, but it's not necessary. We've all been on flag football teams with the great high school quarterback, or the division three quarterback. How did those teams do? Usually not very well.

If you just chose your quarterback based on arm strength and accuracy, you may end up with great athletes at each position, but not a great team. Why? It all comes down to the quarterback play. If your quarterback can't run, you can not succeed at flag football.

When you are playing flag football, you have to decide who will play what position. Among the most important positions is the quarterback position. The quarterback has to be able to run. There is no greater offensive weapon than a quarterback that can pass as well as take off running.

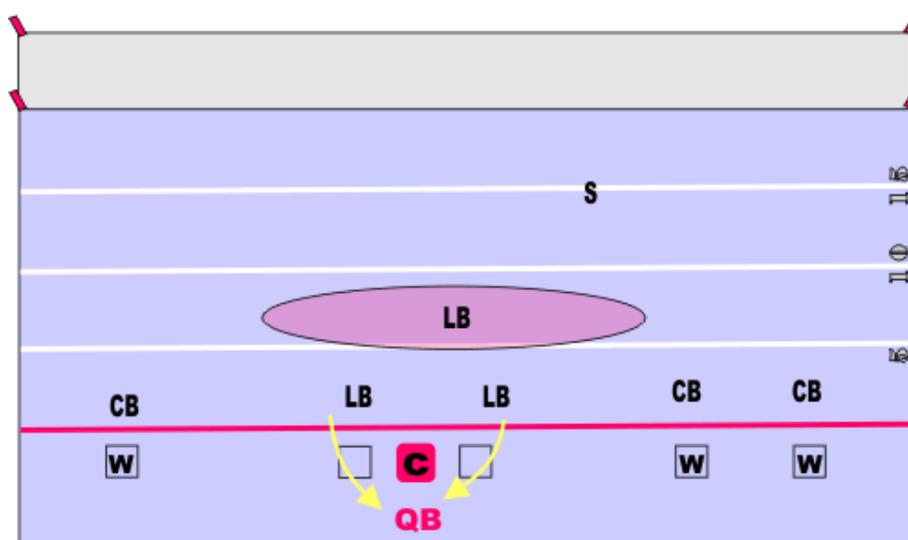
Of course, you always have the quarterback that doesn't want to run. This is a huge mental error. Sometimes you get these former high school quarterbacks that feel that their talent is being wasted, so they would rather stay in the pocket and pass. While you can try to convince these guys to change their ways, you may not be able to. You may be stuck. But if your team is winning, you should stick around.

Defenses struggle to defend against an athlete that can stay in the pocket and pass, or roll out and pass, or scramble for yards. Who do you guard? Who guards the middle of the field? Who gets the outside and flats? What do you do if the quarterback is rolling to one side and looks like he may pass to the receiver you are covering? What if he pump fakes to him, then takes off running? A huge dilemma.

Having a quarterback that can run is of the utmost importance in flag football.

## 7 on 7 Man Defense

Mohammed Alo: 09/21/2005



INTRO: Defense is the best part about football. Everyone loves offense and wants to be a "star", but it's defense that wins championships, and defense that wins flag football tournaments. If you don't love defense, please [EXIT](#) now!

In reality, man coverage is not the best defense for flag football, unless the QB you

are playing against can not run. If the QB is immobile, then man coverage is perfect! Once the QB starts running, switch to the zone defense to contain him.

In flag football, it is extremely crucial that everyone swarms to the ball. Why? If the first person misses or doesn't pull the flag, the others have to pull it. Defense in flag football is very tight and exact. There is a lot of room to screw up. Make sure you have everyone pulling the flag. Don't assume that the first guy there will always get the flag.

Defense:

In this scheme, the cornerbacks (CB) are playing man to man coverage. While the safety (S) and linebacker (LB) are playing in a modified zone. The defensive line (LB) is rushing the QB.

In this scheme, the linebacker and safety are the key players, make sure they are the smartest most experienced, savvy football players on your team. Especially in flag football. It's not about size and strength, it's about speed and intelligence. Do they know who to cover and when? Read to find out.

Corners:

Guard you receivers man to man. Stick on them. Call help if you man gets loose. It's a very basic position.

D-Line:

Rush the QB like mad. The linebacker (LB) may also line up with you and pretend to rush, but will ultimately drop back to cover the QB. The linebacker may blitz, consult with safety. Switch the D-line players often if you have subs. Their job is tiring, and having fresh legs is wonderful. Every two downs, is optimal for subbing D-line players. Being fast and fresh is the key. No O-line or QB will be able to take this type of punishing pressure down after down. Let them get tired, not you.

Defense:

In this scheme, the cornerbacks (CB) are playing short zone coverage. While the safeties (S) are playing deep zone. The linebacker (LB) in this situation is extremely crucial and is playing a modified zone. Two of the LBs have to rush the QB (see the arrows). Rush like mad!

In this scheme, everyone's role is as important as everyone else's. Everyone has to know what to do in each situation. Especially in flag football. It's not about size and strength, it's about speed and intelligence. Do they know who to cover and when? A detailed description of each role is explained below.

Corners:

Corners have to guard the short zone. That means if the wide receiver is in the zone, cover him. If a motion comes to your side, cover it. If the quarterback decides to sneak to your side, cover him. Your job is to contain the QB if he likes to take off running. It's a very difficult job, but stay short and stay on your side. If a player you are covering goes to the middle, leave him for the linebacker. If your player goes deep, let the safeties deal with him.

D-Line:

Rush the QB like mad. The linebacker (LB) may also line up with you and pretend to rush, but will ultimately drop back to cover the QB or any lineman that release for a pass. The linebacker may blitz, consult with safety. Switch the D-line players often if you have subs. Their job is tiring, and having fresh legs is wonderful. Every two downs, is optimal for subbing D-line players. Being fast and fresh is the key. No O-line or QB will be able to take this type of punishing pressure down after down. Let them get tired,

not you. Also, you can alternate which two LBs rush. You can both line up on one side or the other, or pretend not to rush at all. Use all the tricks you can think of. If you sub a lot of guys in as LBs to rush, the better you will be at sacking the QB.

#### Linebacker:

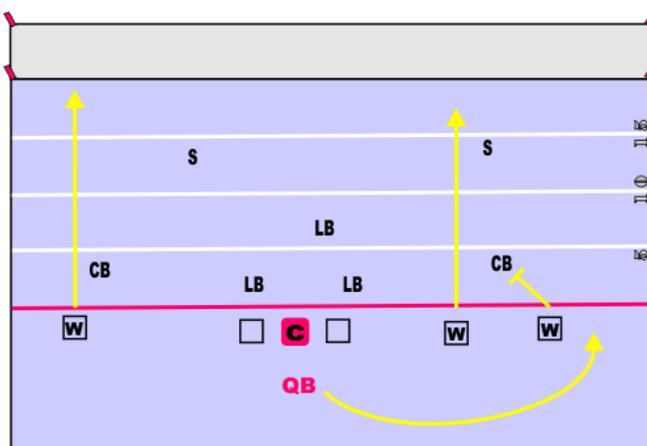
Watch the QB and don't let him run. Roll to the right when he does, and cut off all running lanes. In flag football, QBs love running, and if no one is watching, the QB will get a lot of yards on you. The Linebacker will also have to pick up offensive linemen that go out for a pass. Danger: The QB may fake a run out to one side, drawing the linebacker with him, and then an offensive lineman releases for a pass on the other side. The safety will have to be watching this, and run up to make the play. Linebackers and safeties have to know their positions, coordinate and talk to each other. The game will be won or lost by the play of the Linebackers and Safety.

#### Safety:

The Safeties in this coverage have to cover deep routes. The CBs will cover short routes out in the flats, while the linebacker covers short middle. The safeties have to cover deep. If a wide receiver is getting open deep, the safety on that side covers. Never let a player get behind you. Keep them all in front of you. Watch the QB's eyes to know where he is looking. If the QB goes for a run, don't bite hard until he crosses the line of scrimmage and is committed to running. Then go after him. If an offensive lineman goes out, the linebacker will cover him short, while the safety picks him up deep. If the linebacker sees a nice blitz opportunity, he can tell a cornerback to blitz, while he picks up the slack. If a corner blitzes, the linebacker covers the now open wide receiver short, and safety covers him deep. Can a safety blitz? Sure, because he is the extra guy, but be careful in zone. Let the other safety know, so he can watch both sides.

## QB Sweep

Staff: 05/05/2005

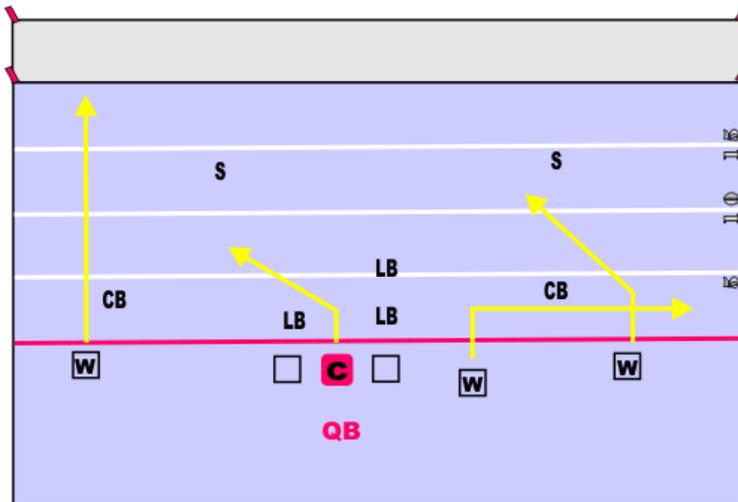


Running plays rarely work in flag football. So there is no point to line up with a running back. As soon as you lineup with a running back, teams will know and key in on the running action and not bother covering the pass. With so few players in flag football, especially 7 on 7, putting a man in the backfield is wasting a player and allowing one more LB to rush in and not worry about a pass play.

This is your basic sweep play. Instead of pitching the ball to the RB to run the sweep, the QB just keeps it and runs it himself. Downfield blocking is crucial by the WRs. You have to block well. This play can produce a lot of yards and is the play most flag football teams use.

# Line Release

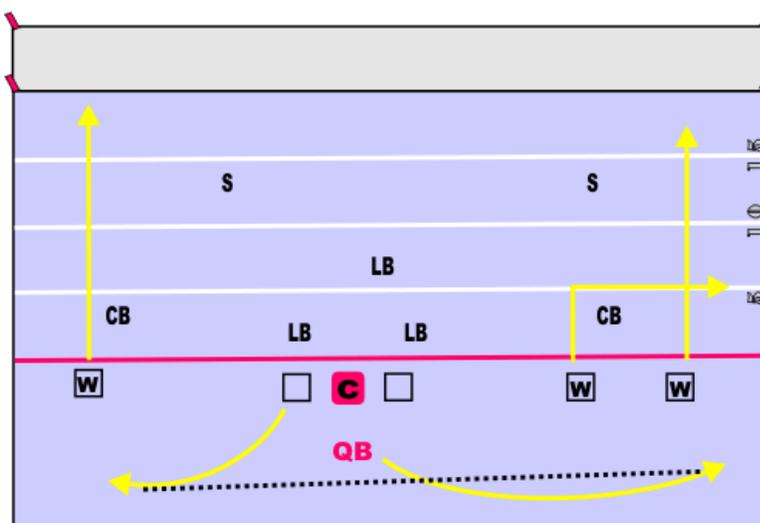
Staff: 11/26/2005



This play works very well and is not expected. The center snaps the ball, then goes out into a pattern. The QB dumps the ball to him over the incoming defensive rusher. Very quick, very effective. In flag football everyone on your team has to be fast, hence, this play does wonders. I have never seen lineman break a catch for 50 yards, except on plays like this. And for some reason the defense always has trouble pulling their flag.

# Double Pass

Staff: 06/05/2005

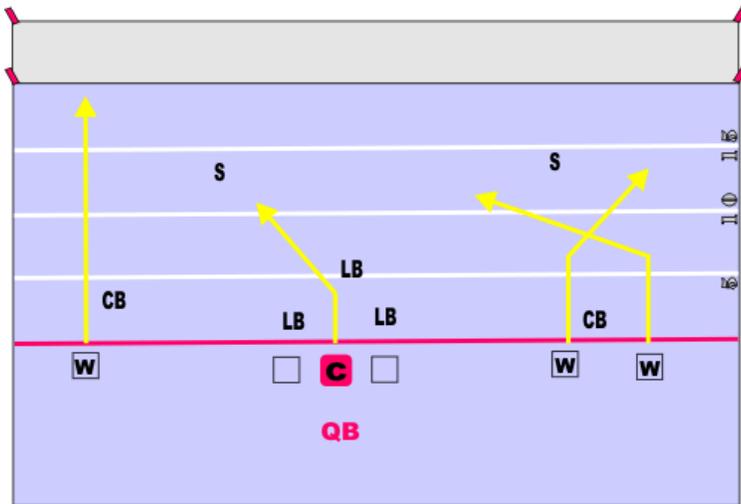


The Qb rolls out to the right. The WRs on that side run a short and deep route to occupy both defenders. The offensive lineman on the far left allows his man in to rush the QB. The QB pretends to be flushed out of the pocket. Meanwhile, the lineman drops back and waits for the pass. The QB throws the ball back to the lineman as the dotted black line shows. The lineman then finds the WR on that side going deep for a touchdown.

If the play breaks down and the QB can't throw it back, or the defense sniffs it out and covers that lineman, the QB can just tuck the ball and take off running, or pass it downfield to an open receiver. The defense may have bit and figured out the play, so there may be an open receiver downfield.

# Crosses

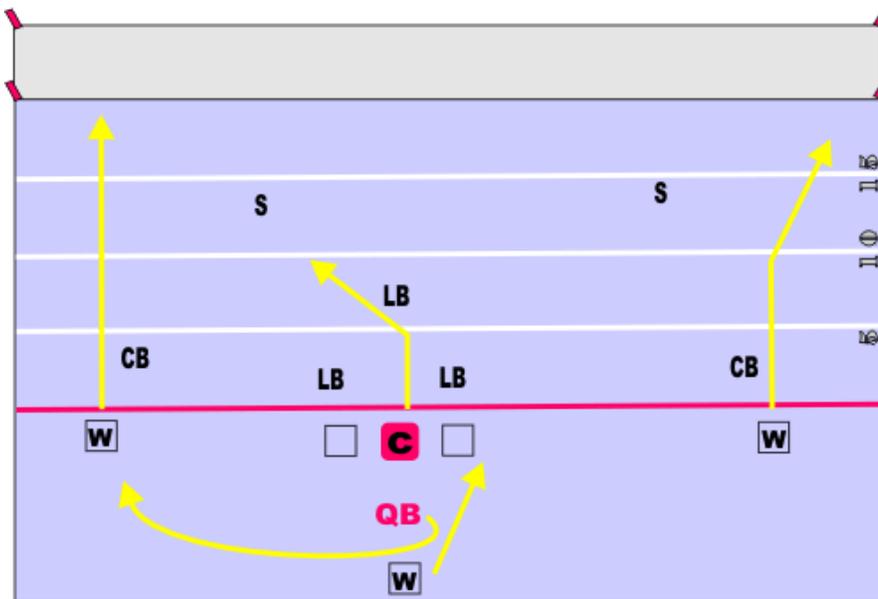
Staff: 06/05/2005



A real simple pass play that confuses the zone and man defense. If the defense is in man coverage, the cornerbacks will collide and be confused. If they are in zone coverage, they will hesitate long enough to allow the WRs to get open. The center also goes out on a pattern to confuse the other safety and not allow him to look to the other side. A very simple, yet effective pass play.

# Boot Blast

Staff: 10/09/2005

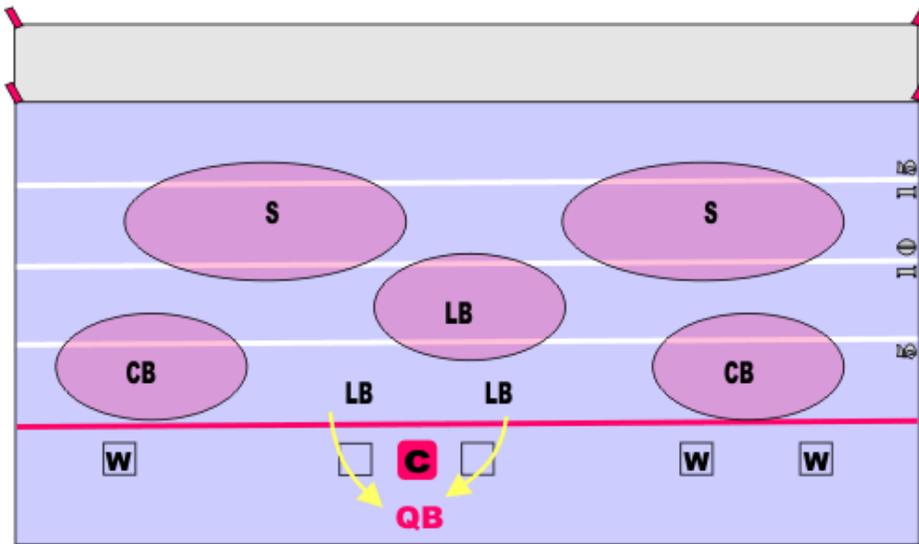


This play can be run as either a FB (W since it is flag) blast or a QB bootleg. In fact, you can lineup like this and run it a number of different ways consecutively to throw off the defense. The first few times you can keep handing off to the WR and follow through with the fake boot. Then you can fake the handoff and run the boot. A great play. Although very few running plays work in flag football, this is a nice run play to set up

the fake which can reap great rewards.

# 7 on 7 Zone Defense

Mohammed Alo: 11/20/2005



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