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THE OFFENSIVE LINEMAN'S STANCE

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The most basic thing, and often overlooked weapon in our arsenal, is the stance. We have practiced it since we were infants playing with our parents. Yet, I see linemen using bad form all the time. A proper stance is one of the most important things for an offensive linemen and can be the difference between victory and defeat.

Key Points To Remember

- The feet should be about arm pit width, no wider than your shoulders. (Avoid the SUMO or SPRINTER style stances)
- The toes should point straight ahead, we don't want to point the defender in the right direction. (Trick) Test the defender across from you. Point one of your feet in a direction opposite the play. Then see if he goes with your bluff. If he does, you will need to make sure your stance is text book perfect from now on. If he doesn't bite for your lure, you maybe able to get away with a little cheating (this is something I do early in the game.)
- Once your feet are set, drop into a squatting position and extend the down hand slightly inside the near foot, forming a tripod. Use the hand closest to the ball as your down hand.
- The weight should be distributed between the ball of the feet and the down hand in a 60-40 ratio.
- The off hand needs to be ready for quick use (I prefer to have the off hand resting above my knee between my wrist and elbow).
- Your shoulders should be square to the line of scrimmage and parallel to the ground. The back flat with the shoulders elevated slightly.
- KEEP YOUR HEAD UP! It is hard to see the blitz if you are looking at the ground. Adjust your stance so that you can see what is going on without any neck strain. Neck rolls and xxx shoulders pads may reduce your ability to lift your head. If this is the case, drop your butt to the ground and rotate your hips forward.

The stance is the basic key to all good things on the offensive line. If you start having problems with a defender, go back to the basics and see if you are

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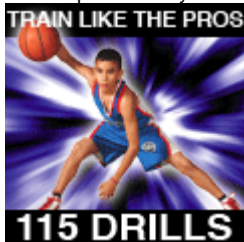
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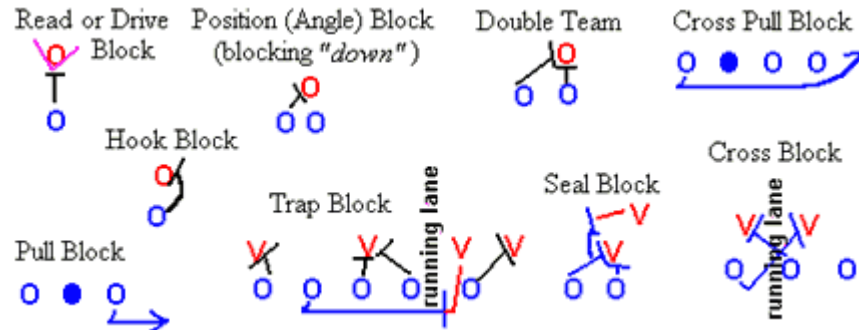
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slacking off with your stance. Brock Hartman HOGS: Semi-Pro Linemen
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Blocking Techniques



There are ten basic types of block an offensive lineman uses. There are three Golden Rules of Blocking. First, the blocker must keep his head between the defender and the play, maintaining proper position. Second, the feet never stop moving. And third, blocks are maintained until the whistle.

The Drive Block calls for the blocker to fire out low and hard on the defender hitting him squarely between the numbers, pumping the legs vigorously and driving the defender from a specified area. During the driving motion the open hands extend and the elbows lock.

The Read Block calls for the blocker to make contact with the defender in the middle of the torso and "read" the defender. The idea is the defender will choose a shoulder to attempt to go around, and the blocker then proceeds to assist the defender in that direction.

The Position Block has the blocker position himself between the play and the defender. If the defender to be blocked is already lined up in such a manner, this block might be referred to as an Angle Block. If the defender has the superior angle on the blocker, then the blocker will attempt to "Hook" the defender. This is accomplished by making contact with and sliding the head to the outside of the defender. The blocker turns his behind to the running lane fully placing himself between the defender and the play. The hands are extended.

The Double Team Block is when two blockers block the same man usually to expose an area or isolate a defensive back with a running back.

The Trap Block is when a blocker (usually a Guard) pivots the foot furthest from the direction he is going, driving of that foot and coming down the line of scrimmage in order to trap or kick out a defender left unblocked for this very purpose. More times than not the unblocked defender will penetrate into the back field making the trap block both highly visible and effective.

The Cross Pull Block has the pulling blocker coming from his own side of the

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line across the Center position to the other side. The Pull Block occurs when the pulling player pulls to the same side of the line he is on, going even wider toward the side line.

The Seal Block occurs when a blocker's main objective is to seal off defensive pursuit from one side of the line of scrimmage to the other.

The Cross Block attempts to take advantage or pre existing angles at the point of attack. Which blocker "goes first" is determined by the running lane and defensive alignments and tendencies. Good communication between the offensive linemen is a must in order to properly execute a good cross block.

Submitted by: Coach Hutchison

Pass Blocking

use a "two point stance." when beginning with a "three point stance," the lineman pushes up with the down hand to get into a "two point stance" position.
 feet - take a small step toward the center with the inside foot...
 knees - knees flex to lower the hips...
 hips - parallel to the line...
 elbows - close to the body, bent...
 hands - a few inches from and even with the lineman's numbers, thumbs touching, fingers point up, palms facing the defender...
 shoulders - parallel with the line. the offensive linemen "stiff arm" the defenders with locked elbows and open hands. the offensive linemen then recoil, and deliver another blow. this sequence is repeated until the pass has been thrown.

offensive linemen do not block in pass protection until a certain count, rather they maintain their blocks for several reasons. the pocket is designed to***the pass rush to the outside edges of the pocket. for this reason, the outer edges of the pocket are usually the first to break down. when and if the quarterback feels pressure form the outside, he steps forward. when the qb steps up, the linemen are given new angles to resume their pass blocking.

for short, quick passes, offensive linemen do not recoil or step back. instead they fire off aggressively hitting the defender to the mid section. this "fence blocking technique" serves two purposes. first, it tends to keep the defender's hands down so as not to allow the defender to reach out and bat down or tip a passed ball. second, it keeps the offensive linemen from stepping back and getting in either the quarterback's way or the passing lane.

Submitted by: Coach Hutchison

STANCES FOR OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

There are three basic stances for offensive linemen, the 2-point stance, the 3-point stance, and the 4-point stance.

The two point stance has the lineman in a stance where the fingers are not touching the ground. Neither are the player's hands to rest on the knees as this is often an indication of fatigue. The hands should be slightly extended in front of the body, palms down, fingers flexing, elbows tight to the body, knees bent, and slightly bent over at the waist. Weight should be centered on the whole of the foot or slightly shifted toward the balls of the feet, but never on the heels. Feet are shoulder width apart, toes directly ahead. Many coaches allow the offensive line to use the two point stance in obvious passing situations.

The three point stance continues from the two point stance. The player bends over at the waist and places the three forward fingers of the strong hand to the ground. The rear end drops parallel to the ground as the knees bend. The head is up and looking straight ahead. The strong side foot (the same as the hand) is one foot behind the other foot with the ball of the foot touching the ground. The player drives off with the up foot first. A good way to test the player's stance is to quickly remove the hand from its anchor to the ground. If the player falls forward, too much weight was supported on the hand. A player should be able to drop his hand to the ground, and pick it back up without obvious torso movement.

In the four point stance the player places the second hand to the ground as well. The weight ratio between the hands and feet in the four point stance is 1-1. This stance is often used by linemen in obvious running downs to keep the line low and firing out at the opponent. It is also used by many power running teams as they pass very infrequently. It is difficult to pass block from the four point stance. A player may have a natural affinity for a particular stance, or even have modified a stance to his liking, and a coach should be sure to use the one best for each specific instance.

Submitted by: Coach Hutchison

THREE PHASES OF BLOCKING

I support Doug Mallory's concept that offensive linemen must understand the three phases of blocking: the approach, contact, then follow through.

The approach begins with a good start. From a correct stance, linemen should be drilled in shifting their weight distribution from the back to the front foot.

One should be able to displace an offensive lineman's fingers from the ground without notice with the offensive player not falling forward. A good offensive lineman comes off the line of scrimmage low and mean. No upward movement (or raising) is tolerated. Linemen fire out, not pop up. A low trajectory can be perfected in practice through the use of drills. One such drill has a coach hold a blocking hand dummy two or three feet out in front of a lineman at or slightly above the upper level of the player's helmet. The player then comes off the ball head below the dummy and makes full scale contact with a

defender.

Some players have a natural affinity for contact. They just know how to explode through their opponent, springing from a coiled stance. Regardless of size they seem to possess a natural density that allows them to bring power with the punch. Unfortunately, these players are not made by the barrel. Fortunately, that is not necessary. Contact is very teachable. Keeping the head between the defender and the direction of the play the offensive lineman approaches his block at full speed never juking or faking steps. At the final step before contact with the defender the blocker constricts his closed hands and elbows tight into the torso and uncoils into the defender extending open hands to the point of locking the elbows. The arms and hands remain inside the opponents shoulders preferably to each outer side of the defenders jersey numbers, thumbs in or down. At the point of contact the feet never stop moving. The blocker leans into the defender and pumps his legs driving the defender back.

Offensive linemen perform many different types of drills utilizing the seven man sled. The sled teaches linemen to work together as a unit and serves as a good assessment tool for player stance, trajectory from the stance, and ability to drive an opponent from an area.

Submitted by: Coach Hutchison

PASS SET PUNCH

Often times the core fundamentals of execution are lost in everyday practice. Here is an overview of an offensive line tactic designed to reset the pass rusher, and fundamentally assist in protecting the quarterback.

1. Hands must come up from the ground not from the hips, on set. Get hands up to eye level with the thumbs up and elbows slightly bent and inside the frame work of the body.
2. Snap head and hands up and sit in a coiled position with a good wide base.
3. Bend at the knees not at the waist. Waist benders will give their shoulders up to pass rushers. Throw the chest out, work for an arched back and keep separation.
4. Keep thumbs up and palms open. Snap through the jab with elbow extension. Try to get the defender to reset his feet.
5. Punch out and up. Jam must be inside the framework of the body.
6. Focus on the target. Punch through it.
7. Do not wind up the punch. The punch is more of a 6" to 8" jab. Maintain contact with your feet on the ground.

8. If you miss on the jab, reset and jab again. Jab feels good if the defender has to reset himself.

Submitted by: Matt Anderson



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