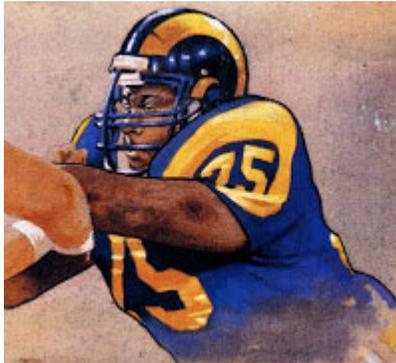


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# CHAPTER 19



## Chutes & Footwork

I think the Wing-T offensive line play is about the building blocks and progression of fundamentals. It's hard to get up there day one in the Wing-T in our system and say I need you to down block. You got to develop a great base for shoulder skills first, then you've got to develop the foot work that allows our shoulder skills to be incorporated and when you do those things, the third building block, the final part of the pyramid is putting it all together in a play type spot.

Once our players start mastering shoulder skills and are looking good on the sled, we move from the sled to the chutes. We also have boards inside our Chutes. The boards ensure we're not crossing our feet over and we want to have that little bit of inversion of our knees. Press the inside of our feet no wider than shoulder width apart and have great power steps. Once again, no typewriter. Our Chute progression is very similar to the sled but now we are hitting a live body instead of a sled.

**Shute Progression**

- Fit
- Fit Drive
- 2 pt. Fit
- 2 pt. Drive
- 3 pt. Drive
- Fire Step
- Fire Step LB
- Trap

A photograph showing two football players in black uniforms practicing on a chute. They are positioned on a wooden platform, with one player on the left and one on the right, both facing each other. They are wearing yellow helmets and are in a ready stance, appearing to be in the middle of a drill. The background shows a grassy field and a building.

### FIT POSITION

Just like when we were on the sled, we're going to start in the perfect fit once again. The bag holder has to be holding a shield so that our blockers can understand how it feels to FIT on a live defender instead of a sled bag. We want our blockers to **“Squeeze the Defender”**



The flipper and shoulder are at hip level. The off hand is placed on the hip of the defender and we're going to apply head pressure to the dummy. We want to "SQUEEZE" the defender with the head pushing on one side and the flipper pushing on the other side. I think this is the key. They have to know what it feels like to block correctly.

We try to grab the hip pad with our off hand. We've got great surface area, we're going to be pinching our head, and now we're placing it tight with that off hand locked into that hex pad of that girdle.

We tell them this: let your hands, head, and hips do the work and allow your feet to catch ya. We've got lean, surface area up, head squeezed in, and we've got our off hand on that hip, and now we are moving defenders.



**Fit Drive**

- Perfect Fit Position
- On Whistle drive with good base (Feet no closer than shoulder width apart) and great power steps (Short choppy steps 3-6 inches apart)
- No Typewriter

A video player showing a Fit Drive drill. The video shows two players in a blocking stance on a field, with a third player in the background. The video player has a play button and a progress bar.

Once players have mastered the perfect fit position, we start them in the fit position, feet are in the spots after they have taken the first two steps after the ball is snapped. On command, blockers drive their man out of the chute, keeping their feet wide as the board is laid between their feet. Short choppy steps, no typewriter.

Kids will tend to rise from a fit position, they're going to want to run their feet up under their body. The key is making sure the bag holder is holding the bag correctly, which is a hard thing to do, almost as hard as teaching running backs how to block. Teaching a bag holder, the right thing is key.

Another coaching point is when you see the chest go down and that butt rises, and when that butt rises, it makes his feet right up underneath him too much. Have a little bit of progressive lean so we can block on our rise. Squeeze with that off hand. You must coach great off hand placement.



## 2 pt. Fit

- First Power step has been taken (Feet will be staggered)
- Flipper arm is the arm of the back leg in the stance
- Knee bend, Eyes, Arm back
- At or before Contact
- “Off Hand” placed on hip of defender (Simulated on dummy) with pressure
- Head pressure to Dummy
- End in perfect form with great leverage



Player starts inside the chute in a 2-point stance with his power step forward. He has his flipper back, **“Grab The Dollar From Grandma.”** The ball has already been snapped and the blocker has already taken his first step (Power Step). A left shoulder block starts with the RIGHT foot out in front because the first step is always with the opposite foot of the shoulder you are blocking with.

The power step is called power for a reason. It’s not a regular step, it’s 6 inches. The big toe of the foot that hasn’t moved yet is even with the NIKE logo on the instep of the Power Foot. Now we are ready to be in a blocking posture.

We are teaching knee over toe, chest over knee, eyes up, our arm is back here. We’ve got a great bend, we’re flat back, arm up, and now we’re going to try to just get a perfect fit into this bag.



From this frozen position, the coach gives the “HIT” command, and the blocker takes two steps, freezing in the correct fit position on the hand shield. The bag holder has to offer some resistance back so the blocker can stay frozen with shoulder on the hip and off-hand on the opposite hip.

The flipper makes contact as the 2<sup>nd</sup> step is hitting the ground, that’s the key. The thing that comes right after contact is the third step which is going to close down on the hip of the defender. Our off hand is placed on the hip of the defender and we’re going to apply head pressure to the dummy. We want to “SQUEEZE” the defender with the head pushing on one side and the flipper pushing on the other side. I think this is the key. They have to know what it feels like to block correctly.

When we attack the hip, we’ve got great surface area and head pinch, you have to be violent with your off hand on the defender’s hip. We try to grab the hip pad with our off hand. We’ve got great surface area, we’re going to be pinching our head, and now we’re placing it tight with that off hand locked into that hex pad of that girdle.

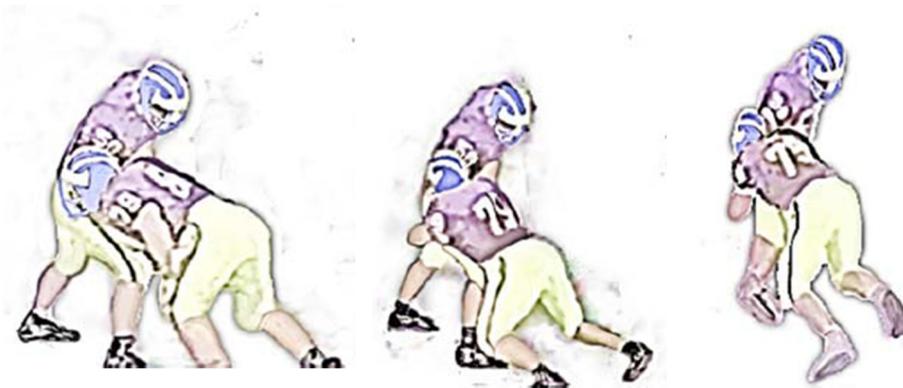


We're going fit, strike, and settle. Shoulder blocking is about leaning on the midsoles of your feet. We tell them this: let your hands, head, and hips do the work and allow your feet to catch ya. We've got lean, surface area up, head squeezed in, and we've got our off hand on that hip, and now we are moving defenders.

Power step, throw, and that third step catches. We want to hammer home the third step. If we're not coaching a third step, then that knee is going to tuck and drag and we're not going to have that power with our off hand in the hip. That is going to allow the defenders to cross our helmet and face. What you have to do is hammer the third step as a shoulder blocker.

Quick Review. Start in 2-point stance. Simulate that they have already taken the power step, so their feet are staggered, and flipper arm is back & cocked. Remember, we're on the Nike check and taking the dollar bill from grandma's house. Knee over toe, chest over knee, eyes up. Flipper makes contact as 2<sup>nd</sup> foot hits the ground. Off hand on the hip, head pressure, and we're going to end in perfect form with great leverage. They do NOT drive the bag in this drill.

## 2 POINT FIT & DRIVE



- Right or left shoulder block will be called
- First Power step has been taken (Feet will be staggered)
- Flipper arm is the arm of the back leg in the stance
- Knee bend, Eyes, Arm back
- At or before Contact Good Drive Base
- "Off Hand" placed on hip of defender (Simulated on dummy) with pressure
- Head pressure to Dummy
- "hitting on the rise"
- Aggression, Grit, Determination

Everything starts out the same as the previous drill but now we will drive the bag on contact. Start off in staggered stance because we have already taken our initial power step and have flipper arm back to take the dollar from grandma. On coach command contact the bag with shoulder, flipper, & off hand at the same time that the the foot hits the ground. On the next step we have got to drive and press hitting on the rise.

It is very important that you use boards. They make sure that the footwork is going to give a power position to move people. The boards ensure that the fee at shoulder width apart. Very, very important.



### 3 pt. Drive

- Perfect 3 pt. stance
- Right or left shoulder block will be called
- Player will step through his Shoulder block progression and drive the sled in as close to a vertical fashion as possible maintaining a good base "hitting on the rise"
- Aggression, Grit, Determination
- Everything on the whistle



Now we're going to put it all together, driving a man from the 3-point stance. Once again, we're trying to transition from a stationary shoulder skill set to moving in a football environment making sure that our posture and body is in the correct angle along with our shoulder skills.

COACHING POINTS: Keep off hand down and on defender's hip. Eyes down means to much lean and loss of surface area. What we love about driving in the chutes is it teaches our linemen to have a little shit in their pants, to push off defenders, be the baddest dude on the road, once again be a Cadillac in everything that you do.

### Fire Step



- This Drill uses a lateral step to put blocker on proper blocking track and give linemen proper body position for execution
- Used by our "Post Blocker" during double teams which will be explained later
- Give a simple Fire Step Right/Left Command
- Player will take the outside of their PS foot and place it on the inside edge of their Shute Board and then line down in a great stance.
- Player will take a short lateral step across their board with their playside foot, and then take a forward step with their backside foot.
- Players are then in drive blocking position and firing through the defender with the proper shoulder with their feet never crossing the board.

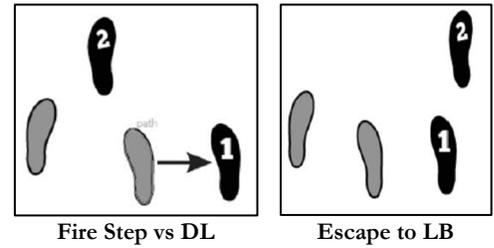
Our fire step is our universal step. We use it for so many things. Fire step is a release to linebacker step anytime we are evading defenders, it is used on our reach blocks, and it is used by our post blocker during double teams. Our fire step is our universal step.

This drill teaches a lateral step to put the blocker on a proper blocking track and give offensive linemen proper body position for execution. This is a simple fire left, fire right command. Some coaching points are to keep the toes pointing straight ahead on the step and **"Lean On The Thigh"**, in other words, your chest is over that thigh.



We've talked about all shoulder blocking being on a 2-step progression, at times we have to vary this to a 3 step on our fire step. Our fire step is a short lateral step and then try to post through the crotch of the defender on our second step.

On the crossover step the offensive lineman reaches down and "GRABS GRASS" with the same arm as the foot that is crossing over. Right foot crossover means grab grass with the right hand if escaping to the left. Left foot crossover means grab grass with the left hand. This forces the OL to get low on the crossover step and does not provide any surface area for the D-Lineman to put his hands on.



The fire step allows us to be able to get our angle right on the defender. For example, on our post-lead stuff, this allows us to square body our defender and lift his pads so that our double teaming and lead blocker gets the movement.

COACHING POINT is to not rise up too much, which is very easy to do on a fire step. Chest over knee, knee over toe. Make sure we have the leverage we need and finish defenders the right way.



## Fire Step LB

- This Drill uses a lateral step to put blocker on proper blocking track and give linemen proper body position for execution
- Used by our "Post Blocker" during double teams which will be explained later
- Give a simple Fire Step Right/Left Command
- Player will take the outside of their PS foot and place it on the inside edge of their Shute Board and then line down in a great stance.
- Player will take a short lateral step across their board with their playside foot, and then take a forward step with their backside foot.
- Players will then work down the board in an athletic position and fire through the defender at the end of the board with great hat and hand placement.



Now we're fire stepping to a linebacker, which means having to evade the D-Lineman. Just like before the player is going to take the same foot and put it on the inside edge, he's going to be lateral and drive. Although we are a shoulder blocking team, we use our hands on second level players because of their flow. We're not taking on second level players in a square body fashion like a trap or a base block. Linebackers will be flowing and scraping, so we want to be able to shoot our hands and throw at second level defenders.



We tell our blockers to throw their hands and run their feet up to them. We want to body up second level defenders with our hands and our feet, so that our backs who we feel like are the best players on the field, can make the cut they need to be successful.

COACHING POINTS: The key to blocking second level defenders is understanding that they want space, so the reason we try to run our feet up and block with our hands on second level defenders, is to take away space. Most high school Linebackers want to dip & rip thru blockers so our goal is make them take us on as blockers and try to shed us, which should be hard if we are stronger than them.

We also want to over exaggerate the “waddle” and make sure we’re not crossing over. That’s the key to the board for me on this drill with the fire step. The fire step gets us on the angle to block. Now, it’s about not being on a tightrope so the boards make sure our feet are not narrow, because that will cause us to rise. If we rise, then we have to sink again just before contact with the LB which is wasted kinetic energy and my energy is directed downward instead of into the defender. Throw the hips, hands, and hat at the defender.

## Trap



- Shute board needs to be turned at a 45° angle
- Player will take the outside of their PS foot and place it on the inside edge of their Shute Board and then line down in a great stance.
- Player will take a short step gaining ground across their board at a 45° angle with their playside foot, and then take a step with their backside foot to place the blocker on the right path.
- The path of the blocker will be full speed until contact with the defender. The Flipper strike of the lineman will be with his PS Shoulder (Simulating the players head being between the ball carrier and the defender.)

The Wing-T linemen pull a lot, so it is important to understand the premise of trap blocking: **“Hat between defender and ball carrier”**. If our hat maintains a position between our defender and ball carrier that means we have a run lane to attack. The second step is important as it places you on the correct path to the defender and helps ensure that the helmet stays.

We tell our Guard to step on the Center’s heel when they trap. You need to be aggressive and attack inside out for a squeezing 3-tech. It’s got to be into the line of scrimmage.



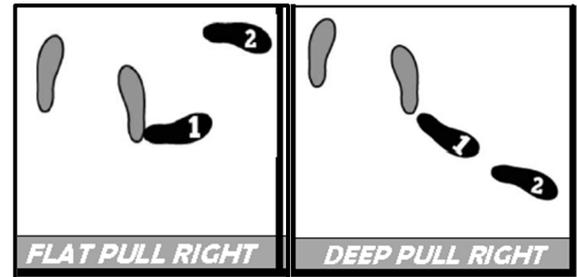
We start the teaching of the trap by doing our bird dog drill to teach our players the first step. We aren't going to be stepping on kids' heels on the Bird Dog Drill. In theory, we used a line as the Center's heel. When we work on the bird dog trap, we're actually going to be across the line. It's going to be progressive with our elbow.

We're going to crank that lawn mower hard with the arm and step into the line of scrimmage. We're going to end in proper posture. Knee over toe, chest over knee, eyes up, and we're going to be ready to go and be ready to roll.

First step is into the line and it's going to be that pop. In bird dog, we hold it until the command is given. Pad level is the key. We're attacking the hip.



After bird dogging the trap, we get the players in the chute and they pull the length of the board and trap a player with a hand shield who is standing at the end of the board.



### Coaching Points

- Pull steps can't lose ground.
- Pull steps are short drop steps and must open the hips up as fast as possible.
- Pick the right foot up and put it down pointing their toe to the sidelines. "PICK IT UP PUT IT DOWN"
- Your left toe will pivot until your left foot is also pointing to the sidelines.

We use the following buzzwords to teach pulling::

- 1st) "GAIN GROUND": 1<sup>st</sup> step is outside the shoulder & towards the sideline. Back foot must pivot
- 2nd) "HIT THE MIDGET": "Rip" the corresponding elbow through the near hip.
- 3rd) "BACK-BACK-FLAT" are the first 3 steps taken on a Deep Pull.
- 4th) "DIP & RIP": The moment before impact, sink the hips and "rip" the forearm up & thru the defender
- 5th) "PULL RIGHT HIT RIGHT": Use right shoulder on pull right; left shoulder on pulls to the left

Trapping is about being a runner and a hitter. Everything with a trap is not always going to time up perfectly, but you must always be low, be a runner, and time that throw of your elbow where you are striker. Runners and hitters play.

An important coaching point is not dragging the 2<sup>nd</sup> step after ripping the elbow on the first step. We teach to rip the elbow on the first step to open the hips, but the blocker can't drag step two. When I drag step two, it's going to put my feet under my hips and I'm in no way to move a defender. I want to be step one, step two, to put me on that angle.



Another coaching point on all trap blocks is what we call our banana track. I've also heard it called a j-track. As I come into contact, head between the defender and ball carrier, a little bit of hip swing, banana track, so that we can clear the hole. We want separation of their pelvis and the defender because that means the blocker is lower than his man. The banana track is the single most underutilized coaching point of trap blocking in Wing-T. Time it up, run and hit, use the banana track to seal the trap angle of the play.

Remember, you got to get it right or left call because we teach a pair and a spare here. We don't flip our offensive line. We got guys who can do it all, so every kid is taught down block, right or left, rock step, right or left, trap block, right or left, and that's how we do things.

## Down Block

- Players will stand with toes on the line in an athletic position
- On command players will snap down in an urgent fashion
- On command with either a right or left call, player will step flat down the line with their playside foot being parallel to the line that their toes were lined on.
- The players backside foot will pivot and place the blocker on the proper down block track
- Knee over toe, Chest over knee, Eyes up
- Player will hold stance until command is given to stand up



The Down block is the most uniform block for our Tackles and Tight Ends and Centers in this offense. On the command, we'll say "down block right, down block left." We're going to step flat down the line. Don't ever cross over. If I've got an imaginary line and my toes are on it and I'm down blocking to the right, I'm going to take this flat step, and this is going to be parallel to the ground.

So, the first step is flat down the line. The back foot rotates during the 1<sup>st</sup> step so that it is easier to drive the second step on the down block. I think that's the key that we teach here that not a lot of people teach. A lot of people teach that the back foot as a post. They teach that back foot as a post where I take the step and then they try to push off of this foot. When I push off of the back foot, the back leg swings, and you cannot adjust to a PENETRATOR versus a READER. When you push off the back foot, you get smoked on gap blocks.

<b>TECHNIQUE</b>	<p><i>Pivot with right heel so that toe is pointing to the sideline.</i></p> <p><i>Left fist is under DL. Right armpit and right fist is under DL left chest.</i></p>
	
<b>PENETRATOR Technique – Left Shoulder</b>	



With being a shoulder blocking team, driving the second step goes back to shoulder skills immediately. In theory, being a shoulder blocker, the blocker has to throw the second step into the flipper so that I'm in a great blocking posture. That rotation of my heel is what allows me to drive, and a lot of guys feel like that push is where it's at. But on a Down Block, that push is what swings the leg and opens the gate for gap players.

We're going to exaggerate the flipper part of the block because we try to chase perfection. We try to coach every day the perfection part of the offensive line. As Vince Lombardi said when you chase perfection, you get excellence. That's what it's about. Chase the perfection of the block. Chest down, knee over toe, chest over knee, arm back, and that is our down block part of the original step to be able to get back to our shoulder block skills.

## CHASE PERFECTION, YOU GET EXCELLENCE



Often times, Wing T defenses will tell their D-Linemen to not run up field. They stay on the LOS and read blockers. Whether thru film study or after the first offensive series, once we determine that their D-Line are "READERS", and are not going to run upfield, we will adjust the first step on our Down Blocks. The first step will be like a Trap step, which is 45-degrees directly at the D-Lineman.

TECHNIQUE	
	<p><i>Right toes pointing towards crotch of defender.</i></p>
	<p><i>Left fist on tailbone and right fist under DL Right nipple.</i></p>
<p><i>We call this a <b>WRONG SHOULDER</b> block.</i></p>	
<p><b>READER Technique – Right Shoulder</b></p>	

## ROCK STEP

- Players will stand with toes on the line in an athletic position
- On command players will snap down in an urgent fashion
- On command with either a right or left call, player will step back with their playside foot, followed by their backside foot. The players playside foot will then attack the line on a 45° angle towards the line with their playside foot being pointed towards the line that their toes were lined on.

- The players backside foot will pivot and place the blocker on the proper down trap track
- Knee over toe, Chest over knee, Eyes up
- Player will hold stance until command is given to stand up
- 1 and 2



Rock step for us is something that is unique to this system. In my belief a lot of people have gotten away from it for the Down play, which we call Belly. We want to take a step for depth and width. We say “guys, step straight back and then step as wide as you can, then aim your toe to the target.” Now, push off that big toe, knee inverted, push off that big toe back inside and now I’m on my g-trap path. For us, the Rock Step allows down blocks clear.

The rock step in theory, if I’m blocking the down play to the right, we teach it as 1 and 2. Here’s why we do that because I think 1, 2, 3 takes longer to do. We teach them urgency and quickness. When we run this play, the side foot is vertical back.



It goes 1 and 2 and I’m driving to the line of scrimmage. 1 and 2 will allow us clearance for down blocks, space to align on the clear, and it gives us a true vision and angle to kick out Defensive Ends. The key with the rock step is to make sure 1 you’re back, and 2 drives to the defender. When we talk about it, a lot of kids go 1 and 2. They just shift their feet. I want to see kids go 1 and drive back and let that weight shift forward.



Push 1, 2, 3, and drive back fully. This has been a very productive change for us to the Down play and the Belly. It also, in the way we run what a lot of people call the Weak Belly, but we call it Ride, it allows us to get clearance against odd fronts. Once again guys, this for us is our variation, player specific, and years specific. Our variation for kick outs on the Down play and what a lot of people are calling Weak Belly, what we call the Ride. This is an x-block type block and a play side end kick out on the Down for us.

### Bird Dog Drill

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stance</li><li>• Hand</li><li>• Down Block</li><li>• Rock Step</li><li>• Trap</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Drill Specifics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lines for the drill will be 3 yds. apart</li><li>• Players toes will all be on the lines they are assigned (Players work off line in the drill)</li><li>• Run Drill with urgency</li></ul>
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Experience is important in football. It's hard to get it without suffering.

The Bird Dog Drill is one of the best drills to teach footwork position specific drills. We do the Bird Dog drill every day, it is our every day disciplines. The Bird Dog Drill works on stance fundamentals and starts to introduce the intricacies of our footwork with our Wing-T system.

You need bird dog lines. The lines of our drill will be 3 yards apart and they will be long enough where we can fit 2 Tight Ends, 2 Tackles, 2 Guards, and a Center. We're going to have 4 to 5 lines and it is basically your "offensive line grid" that we work off of every day. Our players toes for teaching purposes will always be on the lines they are assigned, and players will work off the line. The biggest thing is run the drill with urgency. Be a master of the craft.

Experience is important in football and I believe it's hard to get experience without suffering. What we try to tell our kids everyday is this. If you want to win when it's cold, you better work when it's hot. You just got to be ready to work when it's hot and we're going to win when it's cold.

