

Place Kicking

Goal Kicking - Rationale

Like other position specific skills, goal kicking technique will vary from player to player depending upon a players physical attributes. Regardless of these variants, in order to succeed, all kickers must be able to adhere to the following disciplines:

- Hours of meaningful practice – working to targets and specific technical aspects. The player should practice when possible in game like scenarios (e.g. whilst under fatigue)
- The ability and knowledge to self-evaluate – evaluate the process of the kick (kicking action) not the outcome
- Focused approach to additional/extra training

Goal Kicking - Set Up

- Ball Alignment – Use the seam of the ball to line up kick with the centre of the posts
- Tilt – The ball may be tilted forward to expose the sweet spot. How far forward is dependant upon personal style



Step 1 - The Approach

Setting up – the approach – This is very much up to the individual – it can be long or short, in line with the posts or at an angle – it depends on what feels comfortable. Players should experiment with different styles in order to find the most comfortable.

Key points:

- Focus on the sweet spot and don't take eyes off the ball until kick is complete
- Run up should be smooth and controlled, speeding up into the ball
- The instep of the non-kicking foot should be positioned level with the ball, roughly 6-8 inches to the side.
- The final stride of the approach should be long in order to propel the hips and body, as well as the kicking leg, toward the ball



Step 2 – The Strike

Key Points:

- Strike ball with boot laces
- Chest forward and stay tall (avoid bending at the hips)
- Non kicking side closed – (look how the player activates his left arm)
- Hips and kicking leg point towards target
- Keep head down throughout the strike



Step 3 - Follow Through

Key Points:

- Drive kicking leg and hips towards the target
- Finish beyond the position where the ball was kicked, and in line with the target
- Lift head at the very end of the action



Goal Kick - Evaluation

It is vital in goal kicking that players engage in meaningful practice i.e. build a thorough understanding of their technique through repetition and experience.

It is therefore imperative that player and coach have the ability to evaluate each kick, even if the desired outcome is achieved.

Handy Tools - Video Analysis - A picture paints a 1000 words so to speak so having visual evidence of the technique will help the player to understand areas for improvement. There are a number of great apps and software packages that can help with this

Common Fault - 'Windmilling'

'Windmilling' - Occurs when the kicking leg swings around rather than finishing toward the target. Happens when non-kicking side of the body isn't engaged or plant foot is too far from the ball



Common Fault - Hinging

Hinging - Occurs when player doesn't have the sufficient core strength to keep chest forward throughout kicking motion.



Common Fault - Leaning Back

Players should focus on following through once they've kicked the ball. Leaning back (like in the picture) will lead to inaccuracy.



Common Fault - Foot Placement

Inconsistent foot placement will lead to poor accuracy and lead to some other faults developing, such as 'windmilling'.

Too close

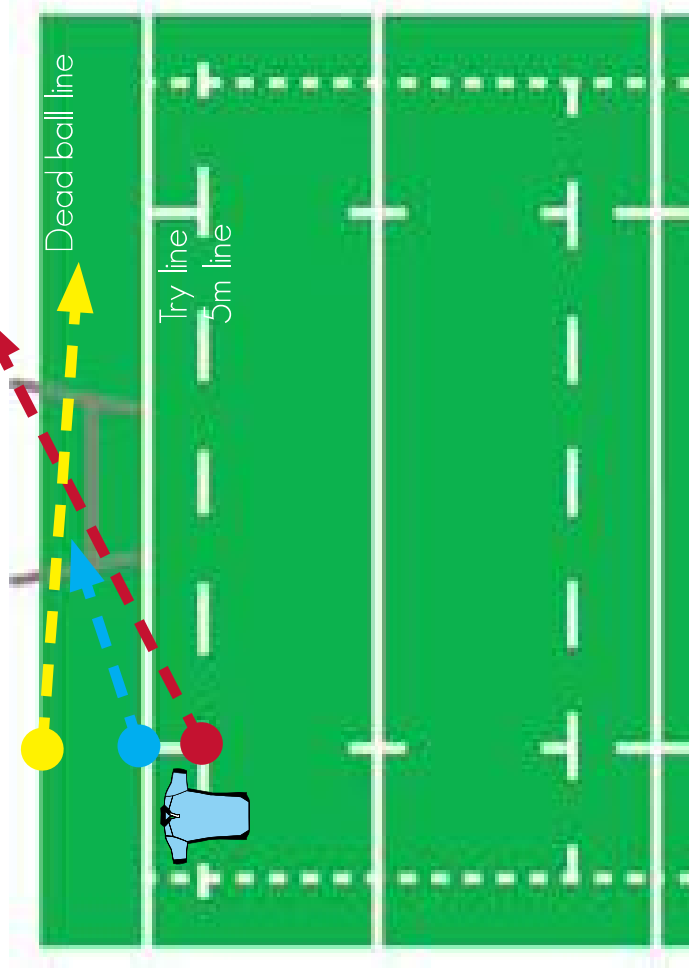


Too far away



Kicking Challenge

- Blue cone; 5 kicks aimed at hitting the post. Concentrate on technique. Small target - good way to focus
- Red cone; 5 kicks aimed to go through goal. Slight increase in angle
- Yellow Cone; 5 kick aimed to go through goal. Larger angle increase
- Practice both sides of the pitch
- Dashed lines represents direction of kick



Goal Kicking Test

- Number 1 is in line with right post, number 2 with left
- Number 7 and 8 are 3 strides from 15m and 10m lines
- Number 9 42m and number 10 35m out, straight in front
- Kick goals in order of 1-10 and record score
- Doing this repeatedly helps identify strengths and weaknesses

