

Coaching Ultimate

Sections

- Throwing:
 - Backhand
 - Forehand
 - Hammer
 - Catching

- Drills

- Rules
 - Quick guide
 - More rules
 - Spirit of the game

- Strategy
 - Offense
 - The Stack, cutting, clearing out
 - Defense
 - Guarding cutters, marking (forcing), zone

Teaching Throws

Backhand

There are two popular grips for the backhand. The first is the **standard grip** (a). The index finger is along the outside of the disc and the other three fingers are curled inside the rim. The other grip is the **power grip** (b). All four fingers are curled inside the disc.



a)



b)

1. Aligning the body. The thrower should be standing **sideways, with his shoulder** facing the target
2. Try **not** to curl your arm in, but instead try to keep the arm straighter and **pull** the disc across your body
3. Be sure to **snap** your wrist on release.
4. If using the standard grip, point to your target after releasing the disc.

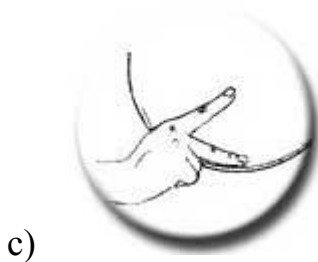
So ***Grip, Turn body, Pull disc across body, Snap wrist***

Common Mistakes

1. Does not snap wrist and tries to throw with his arm: show how to throw with a wrist snap
2. Throws “the dad”: get thrower to throw from the correct side of his body
3. Curls arm in and loses power and accuracy: encourage to throw with a straighter arm

Forehand

There are two popular grips for the forehand. The first is the **peace-sign grip** (c). It has the index and middle fingers split to form a peace sign. The second is the **power grip** (d). The index and middle fingers are held together. In both cases the middle finger is against the inside rim of the disc, the other two fingers are on the outside and the thumb is on top of the disc.



1. The thrower needs to align her body so that her **toes point** to the receiver.
2. Adjust the angle of the disc in her hand. The outside edge should be tilted downwards so that the **palm faces up** (e).
3. The throw is mainly a **snap** of the wrist. More power will be generated with a good snap than a large swing of the arm.



So ***Relaxed Grip, Point Toes, Palm up, Snap wrist***

Common Mistakes

1. Tries to throw with the arm and does not snap wrist: many throwers will try to power the

forehand when beginning by using their arm. Encourage little to no wind-up and go straight through instead of a looping motion.

2. Disc blades: needs to lower outside edge of disc and make sure palm faces up ... may be turning wrist over during throw
3. Disc wobbles too much: Less of a wind up, snap faster or harder
4. Too little spin: Snap faster/harder, practice moving disc back-forth in hand (to simulate throw), think flicking off of a finger

Hammer

1. Use the same grip as the forehand
2. Put the opposite foot as your throwing arm forward. Righties, left foot... lefties right foot
3. Hold the disc at a 45 degree angle (between upside down and vertical) over top of your head, towards your opposite shoulder
4. Aim upwards when throwing and snap wrist.

So ***Grip, Opposite foot forward, Over your head, Aim up, Snap wrist***

Common Mistakes

1. Throws a blade (throw does not turn-over): Adjust angle of disc in hand, thrower may be throwing from directly overtop of his throwing arm shoulder instead of over top of his head
2. Throws a scoober (throw from below head at opposite shoulder): Explain that he is throwing a different throw and get to throw from above head
3. Doesn't go far enough: encourage to aim up higher (10 feet)... it is common to throw it straight into the ground, more arm and/or wrist snap may also be required

handed rim catch is more appropriate. This is where you try and catch the disc by having the rim caught between the fingers and thumb of the same hand.

Tips

- Watch the disc go all the way into your hands
- Make sure you have caught the disc before turning up field
- Practice making one-handed catches when throwing around, but try to always use two hands in a game
- Practice running catches (and not slowing down to make the catch)
- Whenever possible, keep your body behind the disc

General Throwing Tips

- Make sure you have your balance (do not rush throws)
- Practice using the correct pivot foot
- Practice a fake while throwing
- Practice throwing to a moving target... leading your receiver

Catching

The easiest way to catch a disc is with the pancake or alligator catch. This is the standard catch where one catches the disc between both hands in a "clapping" motion

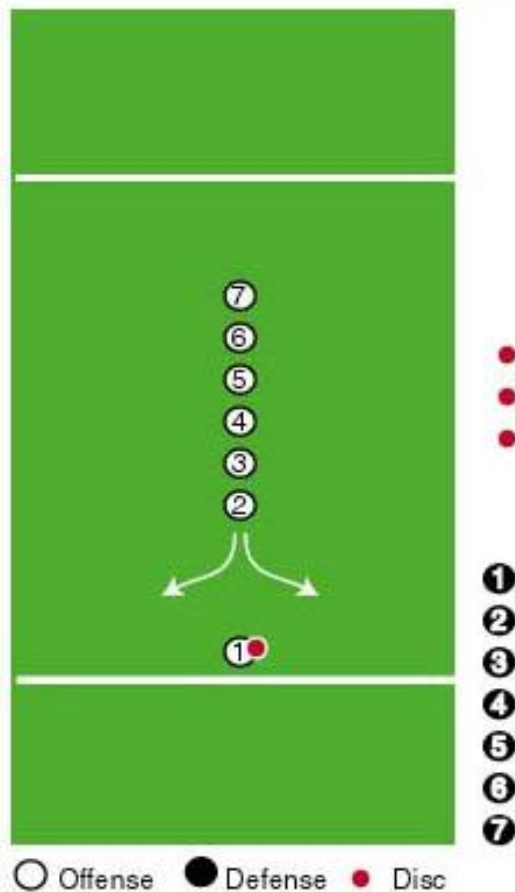
If the disc is above the shoulders or below the knees a one-handed or two

Strategy

Offense

Stacking

The main purposes of the stack are to: reduce clogging, create space and create order for cutting.



The stack is normally 15 + yards in front of the player with the disc (a). There is 5-10 yards between each player in the stack, going in a straight line away from the thrower. It is usually positioned in a straight line in the middle of the field, however, if the play is near the

sidelines it is often useful to have the stack at a 45 degree angle.

Some teams may have all 6 remaining players in the stack, while others will often have one player stand behind the thrower as a dump.

Cutting

Cutting has three major purposes: to **gain yardage**, **move the disc to a better position on the field** and **maintaining possession**.

Once players are arranged in a stack, the next thing they must do is cut to try and get open away from their defender.

There are many different ways to cut: run forward, then change directions in a 90 degree angle cut, fake one way then go the other, run away then back in, run towards then away, sprint in on a 45 degree angle, spin move cut etc.

While there are many different ways to cut, the **most effective** cuts usually have a fake. This can be a head fake, taking one or two steps one way then going the other way or stopping then starting. Everyone finds different methods of faking to be most useful.

Clearing out

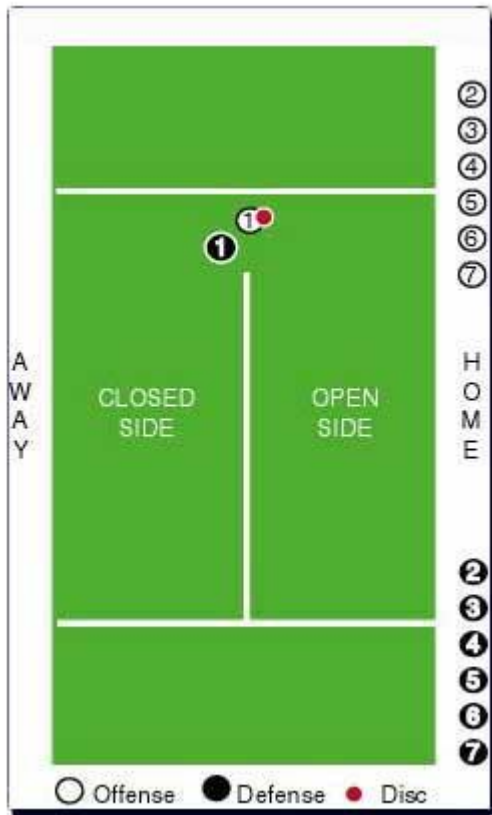
After a receiver has made her cut it is imperative that she **clears out**. That means running out wide and going to the back of the stack in order to create space for other players to cut.

Dumping

If the thrower is at a high stall count and has no up field cuts that are open/within the thrower's range, the thrower should dump the disc to a player who is beside or behind him. One of the easiest ways to get a dump pass off is to fake one way, then throw the other.

Defense

Marking



When playing defense, the defender is always at a disadvantage from the offense. It is basically a race between the cutter and the defender, but the defender gets to

decide where the finish line is and can change the destination at any time. In order to make life a little easier on the defenders, many teams will force the thrower to throw the disc to one half of the field only. This is called a **force**.

A force can be to **force forehands** (play all throwers as if right handed) **or backhand**. **Home** (where all your stuff is), **Away** or even back to the middle of the field. The idea behind all of these different forces is to limit the amount of the field that can be thrown to. Thus you are giving the thrower half of the field to throw with, and your defense a better chance of getting a block down field.

One small thing that will help your team out is that whenever the person throwing releases the disc, as a defender you should yell **UP**. This lets your team know the disc is in the air, and give them a greater chance of getting a defensive block.

Tips

1. Do not worry about getting a block on the mark, but concentrate on not getting broken (letting them throw to the side you don't want them to)
2. Try marking at different distances from the thrower
3. Stay on the balls of your feet
4. Keep your elbows bent, and lunge your arm out to stop a potential throw
5. Keep your weight low to the ground

Guarding Cutters

When playing man-to-man defense each defending player is guarding a cutter in the stack. There are three main options: standing in front of the cutter (also called fronting), standing beside a cutter or standing behind a cutter (back-siding).

Fronting: most useful against a cutter early in the stack. The defender stands about 3 meters in front of her mark and slightly on the forced (open) side. The defender should try and maintain a position between where the cutter is trying to cut and the thrower.

Side-marking: The defender stands slightly on the open side of their man. The thrower is on one side, and their man on the other side. This allows the defender to see the disc, their cutter and the play unfold.

Back-siding: The defender stands just behind the cutter on the open side. This is most useful against a cutter who tends to go long or if you are covering the last player in the stack. The cutter is given an easier in cut by this type of marking, but the deep cut is taken away.

Tips

1. Watch the cutters belly buttons NOT the fakes they do with their heads, arms or legs.
2. Try to anticipate where the cutter wants to go and get there first

Zone

Sometimes when playing in windy conditions or against a team with few good throwers a zone defense is used. The aim of this defense is to force the offense to make more throws (thus more likely to turn the disc over) and low percentage throws.

The basic zone (3-3-1) has three players creating a cup around the offensive player with the disc. The player marking the disc is forcing the thrower to throw the disc towards the other two players who are standing with their arms outstretched. Behind the cup are three mids one on each of the sides (wings) and the other in the middle. Their job is to cover receivers running in their areas. Finally there is a deep who stands far back in the play and is responsible for stopping all deep throws.

Zone offense

The most basic zone offense involves having three handlers back on the play. They will dump the disc back, then swing it across the field. This is intended to tire out the cup and create holes. The other players should “crash” the cup (run near or through it) and alternate between running deep, and cutting towards the handlers).

Quick Guide to Rules

Basics needed to know to start playing.

1. Played on a field with two endzones, with the goal being to catch the disc in an endzone for a score (like a touchdown in football)
2. Once you have the disc you CANNOT run with it, but you can pivot
3. Any time a pass is NOT completed it is a turnover (the other team gets it)... So:
 - a. If the disc is dropped = turnover
 - b. If the disc is thrown into the ground or out of bounds= turnover
 - c. If the other team intercepts= turnover
 - d. If the other team knock the disc down= turnover *Note: this is the rule that causes the most confusion as it is different than many sports (who touched the ball last?)
4. No contact and no double teaming
5. Game starts with a pull (“throw-off”), and you switch ends after every point

These are the basic rules that are needed to start playing with a group. Remember when you’re coaching a junior team to really emphasize ***SPIRIT***. Ultimate is a unique sport because it has the spirit of the game. Give players a good first impression of the game by encouraging good sportsmanship, camaraderie, and fair play.

Here’re more rules to teach a group once they have the basics of the game:

Stall Counts: A mark within 3 meters counts “stall 1, stall 2, etc..” up to stall ten. Once the “t” of ten is uttered the disc is down.

Middle and Brick Calls: When the disc is pulled out of bounds a team can take the disc to the middle of the field from parallel to where the disc went out of bounds. If there is a brick marker or a set brick mark (15 yards is standard), the receiving team can opt to take the disc from the brick marker.

Picks: Anytime a player on the field impedes a defender’s ability to stay with his check (contact or not) it is a pick as long as the defender is within 10 feet.

Double Team: There is no double teaming in Ultimate unless another offensive player is within 10 feet of the player with the disc

Strips: A defensive player may not knock the disc away from the hands of an offensive player... the disc goes back to the offense

Disc Space: A defender marking a player with the disc must keep her upper body one disc space from the thrower's. They also may not straddle the pivot foot of the thrower

Travel: When a player with the disc travels by not maintaining his pivot foot or takes excessive steps after a catch (or changes direction) to gain an advantage it is a travel. The player must return to the point from which he traveled and have the disc checked back in.

Fouls: Throwing fouls occur when the thrower is hit during the act of throwing. The thrower gets the disc back in this situation. A catching foul occurs anytime contact occurs that impedes a player from making a play on the disc (arm swatted, shoved out of the way, etc.). Some incidental contact is likely to occur and is not a foul.

Fouls can be contested (player who commits the foul does not believe he committed a foul). An uncontested catching foul goes to the player calling the foul, contested ones go back to thrower with stall count reverting to 5 if over 5 and stays as is if under 5. Throwing fouls always come back, if uncontested the stall count goes back to 0, if contested the same thing as the catching foul occurs.