



1st4sport Level 1 Award for Activators  
(Wheelchair Rugby)  
Technical Resource







# Foreword

Welcome to the 1st4sport Level 1 Award for Activators (Wheelchair Rugby) Technical Resource from Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby (GBWR).

This handbook has been designed for you, the activator, and to support the 1st4sport Level 1 Certificate for Activators. It provides a comprehensive entry point into facilitating wheelchair rugby and has a wealth of helpful information designed to support your learning. Most importantly, it focuses on the fundamental safety elements of wheelchair rugby. As with any sport, if a player gets the basics right then they will quickly improve and increase their enjoyment of the game, as well as become an asset to their team.

To be an activator is an enormous responsibility and equally a great privilege. Supporting the delivery of safe wheelchair rugby sessions will provide a positive experience for all involved, and in your hands is the future of the sport. Enjoy the challenge and know that you are not alone but that the GBWR coaching pathway is here to support you and help you develop.



**David Pond**  
**Chief Executive, Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby**







# Contents

## 1 Health and Safety/Safeguarding

## 2 Different Types of Chair and Chair Safety

- Defensive Chair
- Offensive Chair
- Chair Safety
- Getting the Group into Chairs
- Righting a Fallen Player
- Pushing Safety

## 3 Basic Skills

- Pushing Techniques
- Passing the Ball
- Picking the Ball Up Off the Floor

## 4 Basic Drills

- Pushing Drills 20
- Slalom Drills 21
- Passing Drills 22
- Chair Contact Drills 24

## 5 Restricted Basic Game

- 7
- 8
- 10
- 11 Build a Relationship with Participants 30
- 12 Communication 30
- 18 Example of a Youth Session 31

## 6 Youth Sessions



# 1 Health and Safety/ Safeguarding





Before starting any wheelchair rugby activity, the lead coach should undertake a risk assessment for the session. The lead coach should share the risk assessment with the activator. Below are some of the points that should be considered for a wheelchair rugby session:

## Venue

- Is there safe level access to the venue?
- Is there appropriate disabled changing and toilet facilities?
- What is the appropriateness and condition of the playing surface?
- Is there enough run-off area?
- Is there enough space for safe location of equipment?
- Is the lighting adequate?
- Is there a designated spectator area?

## Session

- Do we have a first aid kit or do we know where one is located?
- Is there a qualified first-aider covering the session?
- Do we have enough staff and volunteers (one coach to every eight players when working with those under 18 years old)? There always needs to be two staff members regardless of participant numbers to avoid lone working.
- Do we have the appropriate insurance?
- Confirm which volunteers are allowed to enter the court when a player needs assistance.
- Inform spectators they are not to enter the court unless invited to do so by the coach.
- Do you have a safeguarding policy and an understanding of its implementation?
- Have the coaching staff got a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate?

## Participants

- Do we know if players have any medical issues that could be affected by exercise or sudden impact?
- Are junior players accompanied by a parent or guardian, who will be present throughout the session? Has written consent been provided (for players between the ages of 8 and 16 years old)?
- Do we know who is attending the session and whether they are wheelchair users?
- If a wheelchair user needs assistance transferring, do they have their own support, parent/carer/friend, hoist and trained support staff?

### Please note:

- Coaches or activators are not expected to assist players to transfer.
- Coaches or activators are not required to administer medication.
- Coaches or activators must be aware of safeguarding considerations throughout the session:
  - Appropriate language by coaches, players and volunteers
  - Appropriate contact when providing support
  - Not putting volunteers or coaches in an inappropriate or vulnerable position
  - Always consider players' safety throughout the session and make the activity appropriate for the level of the players.

Coaches and activators must be aware of the GBWR safeguarding policy on the website:

**[gbwr.org.uk/home/about-us/about-gbwr/governance/safeguarding/](https://gbwr.org.uk/home/about-us/about-gbwr/governance/safeguarding/)**





# 2 Different Types of Chair and Chair Safety



## Types of Chair

This section will introduce the two different types of chair used in wheelchair rugby, as well as looking at some specifics around chair safety. It then explores the issues around safely supporting a group of players into the correct chair; this is framed from a community session perspective. The final part looks at the techniques used to assist a player who has fallen over on the court and how to right the chair in a safe manner.

### Defensive Chair



Defensive chairs are used by the players with higher levels of impairment and are the least mobile on court; the focus is on a more defensive role on court. One of the most significant features of the defensive chair is the pick basket on the front of the chair. This is used to physically hold or stop an opponent's chair. The pick basket can lock into the opponent's chair, stopping them from moving and picking them out of the game or restricting their movement. Unlike multi-sport or basketball chairs, these chairs are built to be as strong as possible, while not being overly heavy. This allows the chairs to be able to absorb the impact and contact that is allowed in the game.

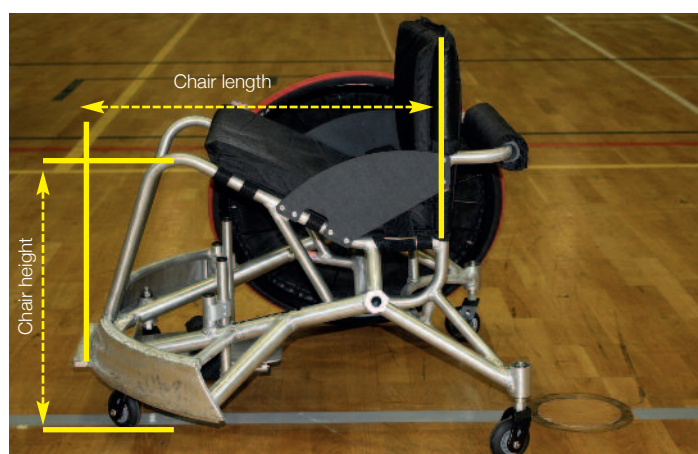
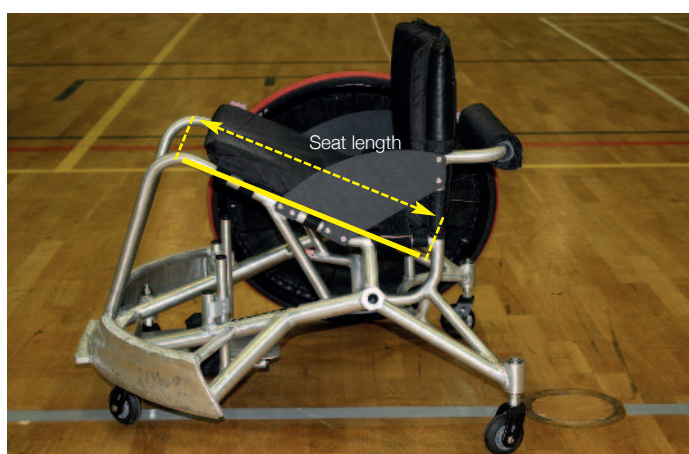
### Offensive Chair



The players who have more function use offensive chairs; they tend to have more balance and are stronger, and will also be faster and more mobile. The main visual difference is at the front of the chair and the curved bash guards. These are used in a game to help push players out of the way, glance off defending players and get through gaps at speed. The small wire ring on the front of the chair allows the defensive player something to hook their pick basket onto and to have a chance of restricting the movement of the offensive player. These chairs are all about speed and manoeuvrability.

When choosing a chair, players and coaches will need to consider the following points:

- seat angle (bucket)
- backrest height
- seat length
- chair length and height
- wheel camber angles
- wheel size.



It is important that players have a chair that fits; the initial area to look at is whether the chair is the correct width. Players will have different levels of balance, which can be aided by having the correct backrest height and seat angle. Players with less balance will tend to have chairs with a higher backrest and steeper seat angle. The chairs have castors, both on the back and front of the chair for stability, which is also aided by the camber of the larger wheels. This camber also allows the chair to turn and pivot more easily, with the wheel size being dependent on the height of the player.



## Chair Safety

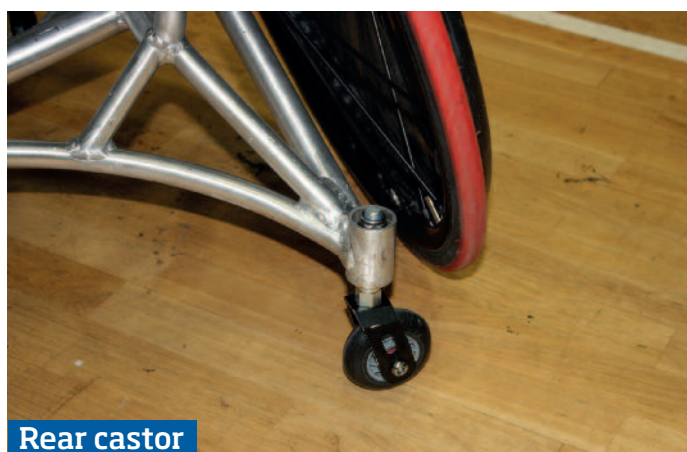
The lead coach and activator are responsible for checking that the chairs are safe to use before the session starts. Chair checks should be completed before players get into their rugby chairs. For sessions where players bring their own chairs, it is still the responsibility of the coaches to make sure they are safe to use.

All chairs need to be checked over before use, paying particular attention that:

- the castors and castor forks are moving freely
- the wheels are not rubbing anywhere
- nothing appears to be loose on the chair
- foot plates are secure
- all upholstery is secure and not ripped
- on a visual inspection, there are **no** weld cracks or broken parts
- each chair has a lap/waist strap and foot strap.



Front castor



Rear castor



Lap strap



Foot plate and foot strap

**All checks must be done before using the chairs in the session.**

## Getting the Group into Chairs

The following guidance is based on a community session that may include both disabled and non-disabled players.

The activator needs to consider the group that will be using the chairs. If the group has a wheelchair user among them, then priority must be given to choosing the correct chair for this player. The activator is not going to be an expert on different players' impairments, so consider asking the player how much balance they have and have a look at the day chair they are using.

Choose a chair based on:

- the correct width
- the fact the backrest height is similar to, or slightly higher than, their day chair
- whether a player is able to bend their legs very easily or not
- the height of the player.

Also note that:

- offensive chairs are easier to transfer into independently
- offensive chairs are more suitable for players with good balance and lower limb impairments
- offensive chairs are more compact
- defensive chairs are more suitable for players with poor balance and both lower and upper limb impairments
- defensive chairs tend to have more leg room.

If the player is unable to transfer into the chair independently, it is **not** the activator's responsibility to assist with lifting the player. The player should either have his or her own hoist or a carer/friend/family member who is prepared to assist. Once the wheelchair users have the correct chairs, the activator will then need to look at the needs of the rest of the group.

To choose appropriate chairs for the other players, things to consider are:

- any balance issues
- the width of the chair

- the backrest height
- the height of the player and the position of the foot plate.

Once the players are in the correct chair, they all need to have a lap/waist strap done up correctly and their feet strapped onto the foot plate. Please note that players who have use of their legs will often try and use them to balance and control the chair and will risk putting their feet outside the safety of the chair frame. It is very important that they strap their feet in to avoid injury.

The next stage is to make sure that every player has a pair of gloves and that these gloves are taped on. Tape the gloves around the wrist, tight enough to stop the gloves moving up and down, but not so tight that they stop circulation. Highlight to the players that this will make it easier to push the chair and will help prevent blisters. Please note that it can take up to 30 minutes to get a group of eight players correctly and safety into the chairs, particularly if there is more than one wheelchair user.

Particular attention needs to be paid to the lap/waist straps and the foot straps. Players need to be strapped into the chairs, as they may leave the ground when involved in contact. If players are not strapped in, they will risk parting company with the chair on impact and causing injuries from falling out. The players' feet **must** also be strapped in, to avoid people putting their feet outside of the chair frame and risking broken toes/feet from impact between chairs. As the chairs don't have brakes, all transfers in and out should be done either with someone holding the chair or with the chair backed up against the wall. Walking players must not stand directly on the foot plate when getting in and out of the chair. Please note that players must remove anything from their pockets before getting into a chair:

- phones
- money
- wallets
- keys etc.

Any jewellery must be taken off, particularly dangling earrings and necklaces. Do not let the players push off around the hall until they have been given the pushing safety instruction.



## Righting a Fallen Player

Actions that may cause a player to tip over are not encouraged, but if it does happen and the player is unable to unstrap him/herself and stand up, the support staff need to know how to safely recover the chair and player.

The following is the method of righting a fallen chair:

- If the chair is on its side, firstly talk to the player and tell them what you are doing, and leave the player strapped into the chair.
- Turn the chair over on to the backrest and large wheels.
- Recovery is to be performed by two assistants, or three assistants for larger players.
- Make sure the player is still pushed back into the seat of the chair.
- Make sure the player is still strapped in.
- One assistant needs to bend down and hold the backrest. It may be necessary to hold the player if the backrest cannot be reached. Hold the player under the arms.
- Ask the player to reach up and hold on to the front chair frame rails, if they can.
- The second assistant will be at the front of the chair, placing their foot on the chair frame/camber bar, with both hands on the front of the chair.
- The assistant at the front of the chair needs to control the direction/travel of the chair.
- Both assistants should then pull and lift at the same time, returning the chair to the upright position.
- The coach at the front of the chair needs to pull their leg back to avoid it getting in the way.









## Pushing Safety

With new players, activators need to explain the safety aspects of pushing the chair and the potential for impact while playing before allowing the players to push away. The activator needs to explain the specifics with regard to their hand and finger position, being aware of the gap between the side guards and the wheel and between the wheel and bash plates on an offensive chair. Pushing the chair around will also introduce the idea of chair impacts/hitting. The activator will need to explain where it is permitted to hit the chair, which is in front of the wheel spindle.

This is because there is a risk of spinning the chair and causing neck injuries if a hit is taken behind the wheel spindle. Injury can also be caused by hitting a chair directly from behind. All participants also need to be aware of players reaching down for the ball, to avoid hitting anyone's fingers and again causing injury.

It is important to highlight the following issues:

- Players should not put their fingers between the side guards and the wheel.
- Players should not put their fingers between the wheel and bash plates on an offensive chair.
- Chair hits are only permitted in front of the wheel spindle.
- Chair hits are **not** permitted behind the wheel spindle.
- Chair hits are **not** permitted directly into the rear of a chair.
- Avoid impacts when players are reaching down for the ball.
- Players with long arms need to be careful not to run over their own fingers.
- If a player's fingers get trapped, do not move the chair, but remove the wheel rather than trying to pull their fingers out.

Gap between wheel and side guard



Gap between wheel and bash plate



Avoid chair contact when players are reaching down for the ball



# 3 Basic Skills





## Pushing Techniques

It is important to run through the basic pushing techniques, particularly for players who are not regular wheelchair users. The way a player pushes the chair will affect the ability to be in control as well as the amount of effort required to get around the court.

The basic pushing techniques are:

- moving both arms together and not trying to push one side at a time
- using a full range of movement to push and not short push strokes
- turning by holding the wheel on one side and pushing the other wheel
- turning by putting more pressure on one wheel, while continuing to push with both hands
- pulling the wheels backwards to move backwards.

Demonstrate the different options for pushing – flat hand pushing, push rim and tyre pushing, and back of the hand pushing (for higher levels of impairment). Highlight again the thumb position and the safety elements.

A lot of people when first getting into a chair will push one side at a time; this is not a very efficient way of pushing. It takes up more energy and is slower than using both arms together, which also gives the player more control.

Explain why players should use a full range of movement to push and not short push strokes. Using short, small pushes is not very efficient, takes more energy and is slower. Using a full range of movement with each pushing stroke is faster and gives the player more control. The stroke should go from the 12 o'clock position to the quarter past three position on the wheel.



**Starting position**



**Finishing position**

The following are different techniques for pushing a chair:

- flat hand pushing
- push rim and tyre pushing
- back of the hand pushing (for higher levels of impairment).

The flat hand push is putting your hand flat on the push disc of the wheel and using the grip of the disc. The push rim and tyre technique is done by positioning your hand on the pushing disc, with the thumb on top of the tyre, being careful not to roll the thumb over the top of the tyre. Many players who have very limited dexterity will use the back of their hands pushed against the pushing disc, as they don't have the ability to grip the wheel.





The ball used in wheelchair rugby is specific to the sport, but is very similar to a volleyball. In a community setting it is perfectly acceptable to use a volleyball. The ball is very light and is easy to hold and grip, which allows players with limited dexterity more of a chance to control the ball. During a game situation, a player is allowed to have control of the ball for 10 seconds before being required to either bounce or pass the ball.

## Passing the Ball

The different basic passing techniques are as follows:

- chest pass
- bounce pass
- punt pass
- flick pass
- hook pass.

### Chest Pass

Position the ball in front of the chest, with hands on the back of the ball and push the arms forward, pushing the hands, fingers and arms through the ball, to propel it forward. Finish the movement with your fingers pointing forwards. Aim the ball at the chest of the person receiving the ball. Always look at where you are trying to pass to, and never pass to someone who isn't looking at you or doesn't know the ball is coming.

### Bounce Pass

The bounce pass uses the same hand position on the ball as the chest pass. For this pass, you use the same technique but aim the ball to bounce a metre in front of the chair of the player you are passing to. It is important to look at the point on the floor where you want the ball to bounce. A successful bounce pass will have the ball arriving on the player's lap.



Chest pass 1



Chest pass 2

## Punt Pass

The punt pass tends to be used by players with limited hand function. The ball is flicked up off the player's lap by one hand. Make a fist with the other hand and strike the ball with the fist in the direction you want it to go.



## Flick Pass

Again, players with limited hand function use this pass. The ball is picked up using the backs of the player's hands; the hands are then flicked forward to push the ball.





## Hook Pass

The hook pass is used to pass the ball sideways. Place the ball in one hand, extending the arm out and then bringing it over your head. This pass will loop the ball up in the air, but again make sure you are looking at the intended target.









## Picking the Ball Up Off the Floor

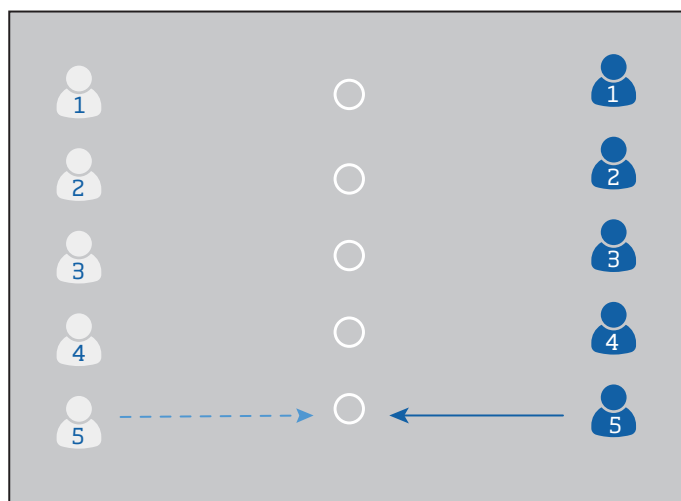
One of the basic fundamental skills is picking a ball up off the floor.

The basic technique is as follows:

- Place the ball on the floor next to the wheel of the chair.
- Push the ball so it rolls away from the chair, but be careful not to push it too hard initially.
- Push the chair towards the ball. As the ball comes alongside the wheel of the chair, reach down and push the ball into the wheel, allowing the movement of the wheel to bring it up to the player's lap. As the player gets used to the technique, they can push the ball faster and try picking it up on both their left-hand and right-hand sides.

Not all players will be able to do this; it will depend on their level of dexterity and balance. Even if a player can grip the ball enough to pick it up, this is still a useful skill to have as it allows you to pick the ball up off the floor at speed.

Line the players up along the sideline on one side of the court. With all players facing the opposite sideline, get the players to perform the drill going across the court. Place a ball for each player on the floor in the middle of the court. First, ask the players to push towards the ball. As they pass the ball, ask them to reach down and touch it. The players should now line up on the other side of the court, again facing the ball. The players again push towards the ball. This time, they reach down and push the ball into the wheel, allowing the movement of the wheel to bring it up to their lap. Place the balls back in the middle and repeat until players are happy picking up a stationary ball. Not all players will be able to do this; it will depend on their level of dexterity and balance.



### Progression

Pick up a moving ball. Line the players up with a ball each. The players push the ball so it rolls away from them, they don't need to push it too hard. The players push their chair towards the ball. As the ball comes alongside the wheel of their chair, they reach down and push the ball into the wheel, again allowing the movement of the wheel to bring it up to their lap.

### Coaching Points

- Focus on chair control.
- Focus on timing.
- Reparative practice.



# 4 Basic Drills

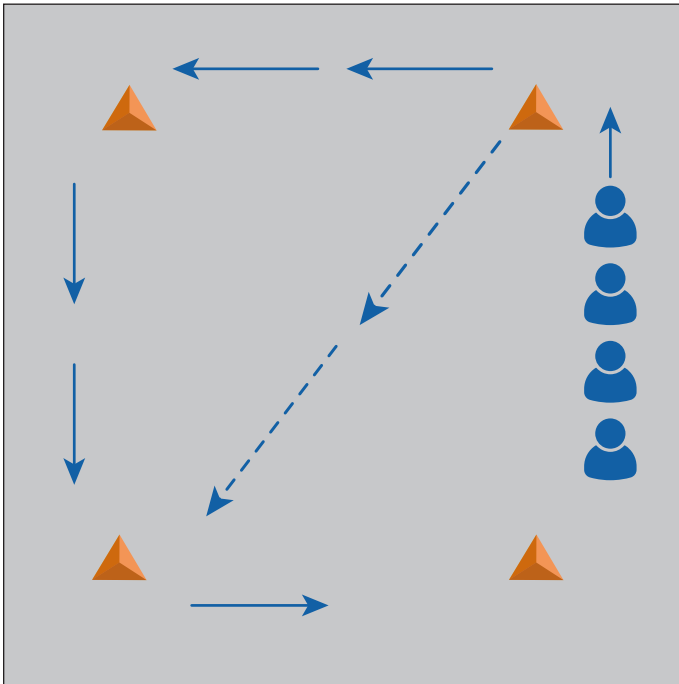




## Pushing Drills

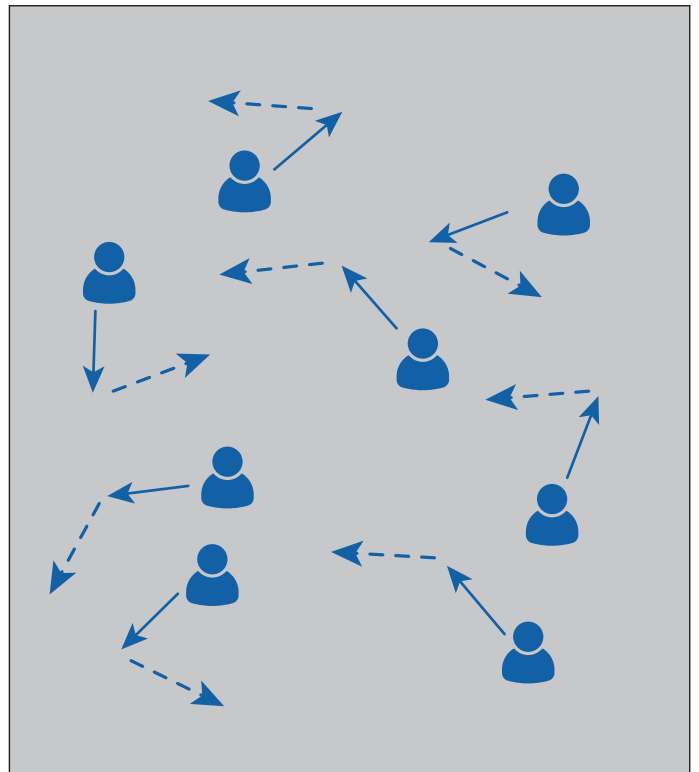
### Square Drill

Set a square out with four cones, using the space of two badminton courts. Get the players to push following each other, firstly pushing around the outside of the square, then change it so they can also go diagonal from corner to corner. The lead player can decide at which corner to turn and when to use the straight sides of the square. You can also get the players to change direction, so the last player then becomes the leader. The focus of this drill is to get the players used to pushing the chairs and developing their chair skills.



### Badminton Court Pushing Drill

Using a badminton court, get the players pushing around, changing direction in a small space. Ask them to constantly look to push into space, and as they pass another player, do a high five. As a progression, replace the high five with a small chair hit, one on one; after the hit each player acknowledges one another.

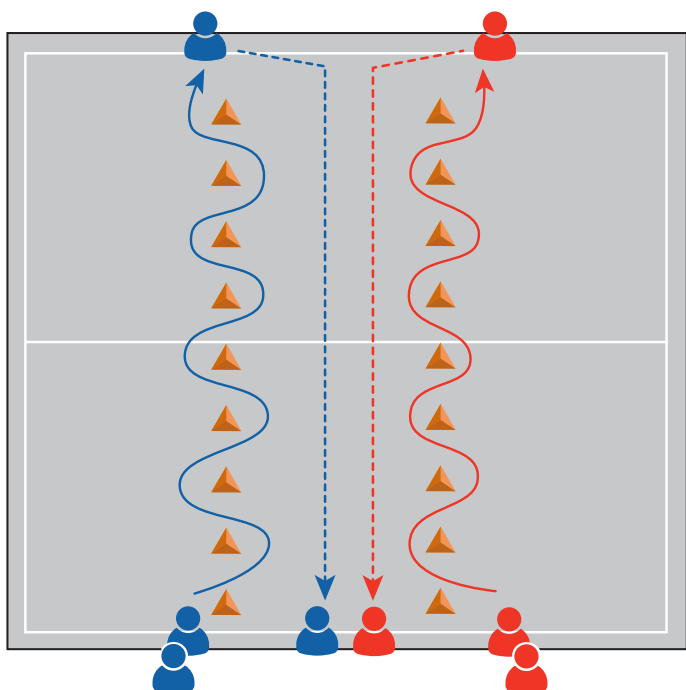


## Slalom Drills

The following drills are aimed at developing players' chair skills; developing coordination, balance, turning ability and directional control. They also introduce the use of the ball while being in control of the chair.

Split the players into two groups and set up, using cones, two slalom courses from one end of the court to the other. Make sure you leave enough space to turn at the end. You can also run this as a race between the two groups.

### Slalom Drill 1



This is a basic slalom relay race to the end and back. Push up the course going in between the cones, turn around the last cone and push straight down the middle back to the start. High five the player waiting to go next.

### Slalom Drill 2

Add a ball on the floor halfway up the slalom course. Again, push up the course going between the cones. When you get to the ball at the halfway point, pick the ball up, put it on your lap and continue to push up the course. Turn at the top of the course and push straight back, not through the cones, but on your way back replace the ball at the halfway point. Again, high five the next player before they set off up the course.

### Slalom Drill 3

Move the ball to the start. The first player does the slalom with the ball on their lap, going up the course. On their return, they just push straight back, but as they approach the start, they pass the ball to the next player. The next player then goes up the course and repeats the drill.

#### Progression

- Using Slalom Drill 1 as the base set-up, position the cones randomly and further apart so players are weaving from side to side to get up the court.
- Introduce a ball and enforce the 10-second rule.

#### Coaching Points

- Focus on pushing techniques.
- Chair skills and control.
- Turning out from the cones (hard initial push).
- High point player using their core trunk and balance.
- Sharp turning around the cones.
- Focus on recovery.
- Communication.



# Passing Drills

## Pepper Pot Drill

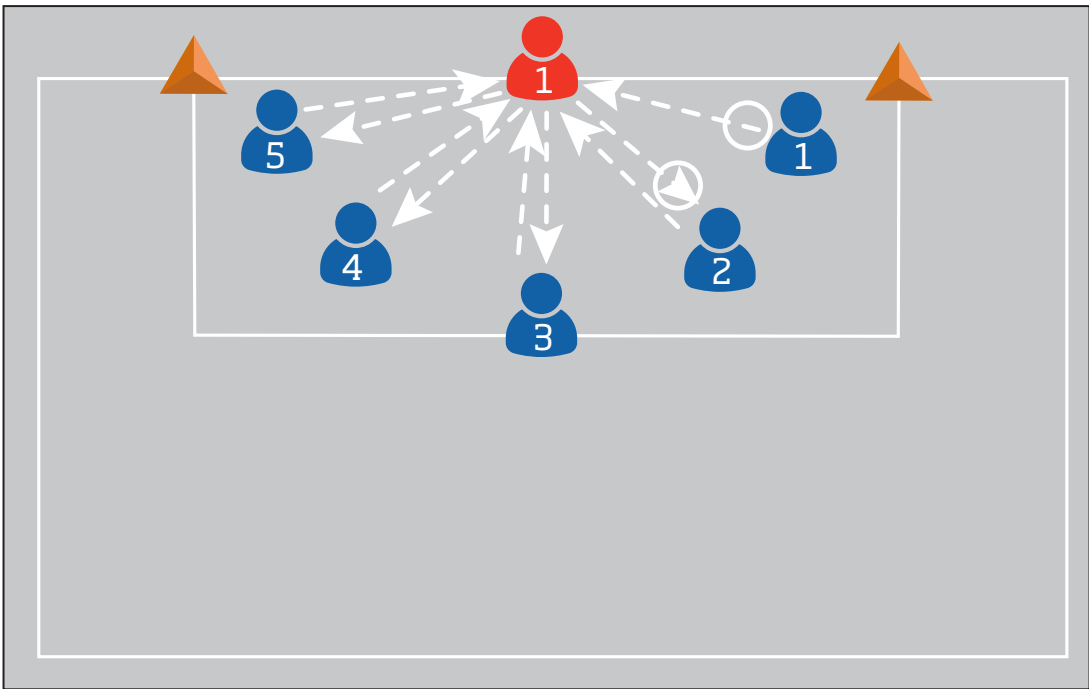
Player 1 is positioned with their back to the wall with the other five players positioned in a semicircle in front of them. The first player in the semicircle starts with the ball and passes it to the single player against the wall. The single player then passes the ball back to the next player in the semicircle. This is then repeated so the ball is passed and received around the semicircle by the single player. When the ball gets to player 5 in the semicircle, continue passing the ball so it goes around the semicircle again in the reverse direction.

### Progression

- Alter the type of pass; try a bounce pass as well as chest passing.
- Move the semicircle players either nearer or further away from the single player.
- Add a second ball in the drill.

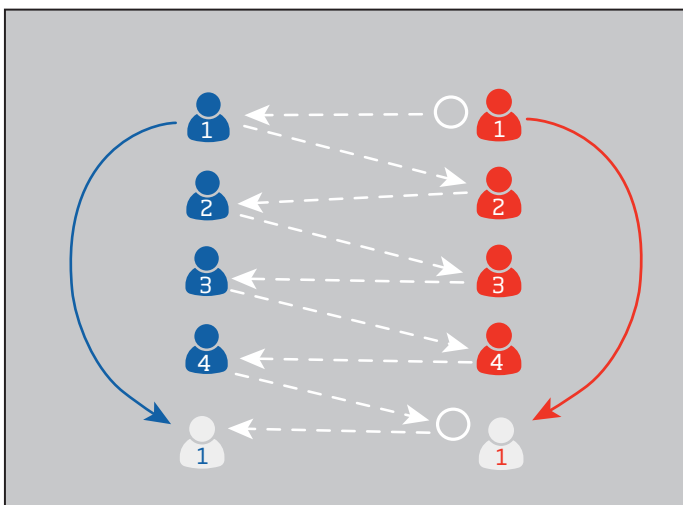
### Coaching Points

- Be aware of the player being passed to, being sympathetic to different abilities and different levels of function.
- Focus on communication; encourage players to call out names as they pass and receive the ball.
- Focus on ball skills, passing and fitness.

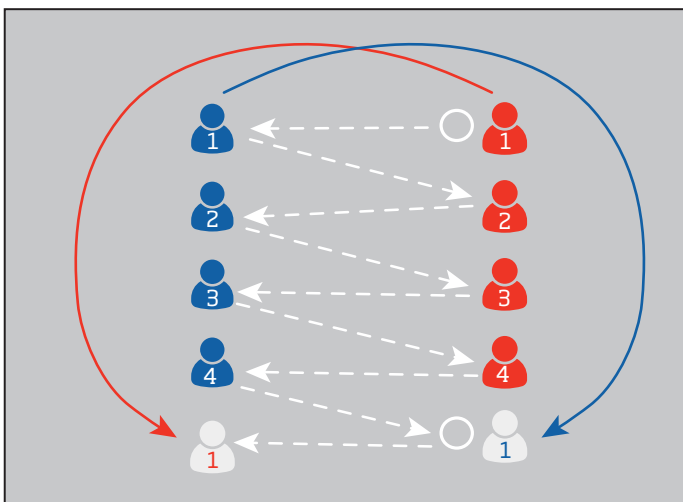


## Caterpillar Drill

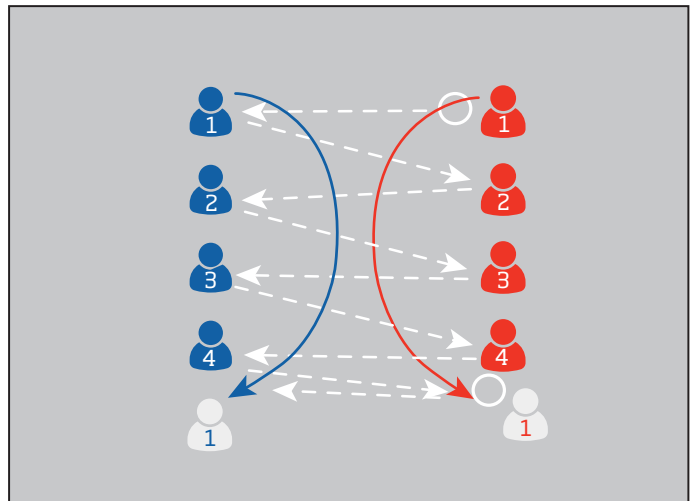
Line the players up opposite each other with the ball at one end of the line. The red player with the ball passes across to the blue player on the opposite line. As soon as the player has passed the ball, the player pulls back, turns and pushes up the back of the line. The player then posts at the end of the line. The blue player passes the ball to the next red player and also pulls back and pushes up behind the blue line. The players continue to pass the ball and move, allowing the line to progress down the court.



Set up as with the first caterpillar drill, again with the ball being passed from the red line to the blue line. This time, the players push forward and away and go up behind the opposite line to join the end of the opposite line. Again, players move as soon as they have passed the ball.



The third alternative caterpillar drill is to again set up in two lines, with the ball being passed between the two lines. This time, the players turn in and push up the middle, between the two lines, and take their place at the end of their own line again.



### Progression

- Start by using half the length of the court and progress to use the full court.
- Introduce another ball for each caterpillar drill.
- Use different types of passes – chest pass, bounce pass, loop pass and one-handed pass.
- Also change the distances for the passes, closer together or further away.
- Look at using a smaller ball or different types of balls.
- Split the players into two teams and run the drill as a race.

### Coaching Points

- Focus on recovery and recycling to the top.
- Focus on turning out and pushing hard.
- Be aware of the player being passed to.
- Focus on awareness and timing.
- Communication.

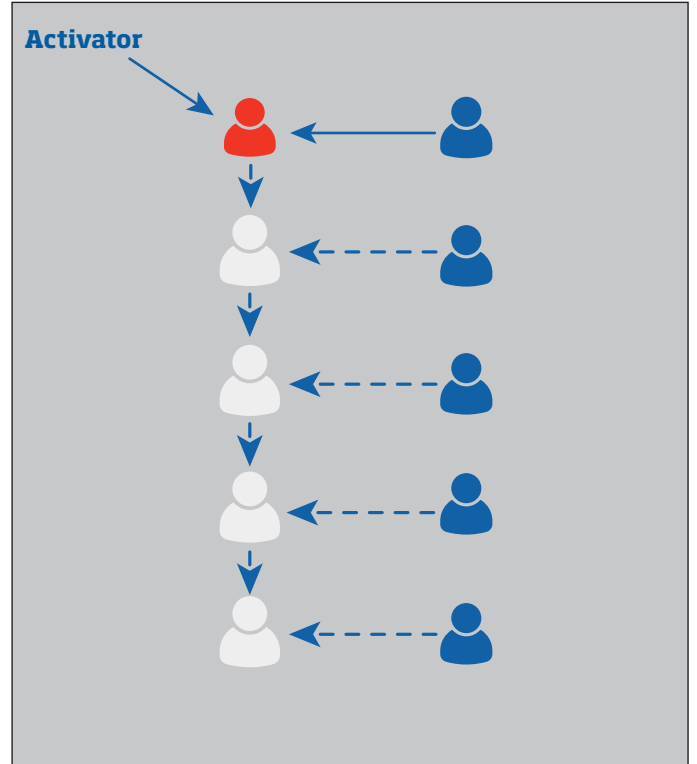


## Chair Contact Drills

Before doing these drills, please consider your group and the appropriateness of chair contact. Consider if there are any medical grounds for players not to have contact, consider the behaviour of the group, consider the age of the group and consider whether it will have a negative impact on particular individuals in the group.

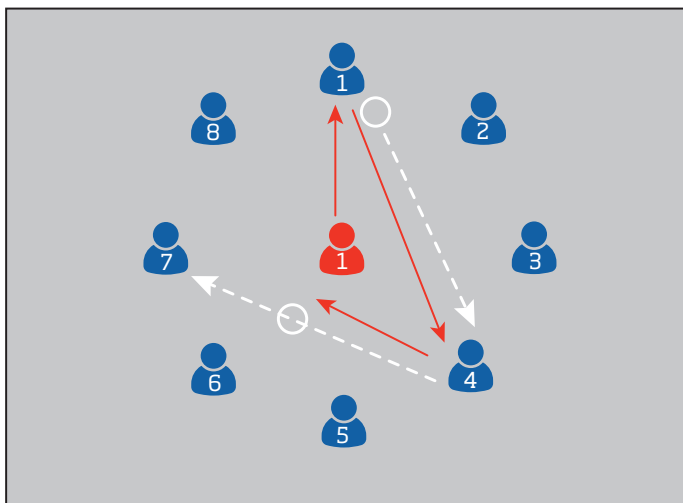
### Hit the Coach Drill

With players lined up, the activator moves down the line in a rugby chair and invites each individual to push forward and crash into the activator. This will allow the coach to see who is unsure in the idea of chairs hitting each other and those players who are enthusiastic about chair contact. It also allows the player to experience hitting someone without peer pressure.



## Circle Hitting Drill

The players form a circle, with one player with the ball and one player in the middle of the circle. The player in the middle pushes towards the player with the ball. Just before the chairs hit, the player with the ball passes it off to another player in the circle. The chairs will clash, the player in the middle now pushes towards the new ball handler and crashes chairs as the ball is passed. This continues until everyone has had the ball, then someone else becomes the player in the middle.



## Progression

- Increase the speed of passing and pushing.
- Change the size of the circle.
- Add two or three players in the centre. This increases the pressure on the passing players and communicates the concept of one player pressing the ball and another player covering the passing options.

## Coaching Points

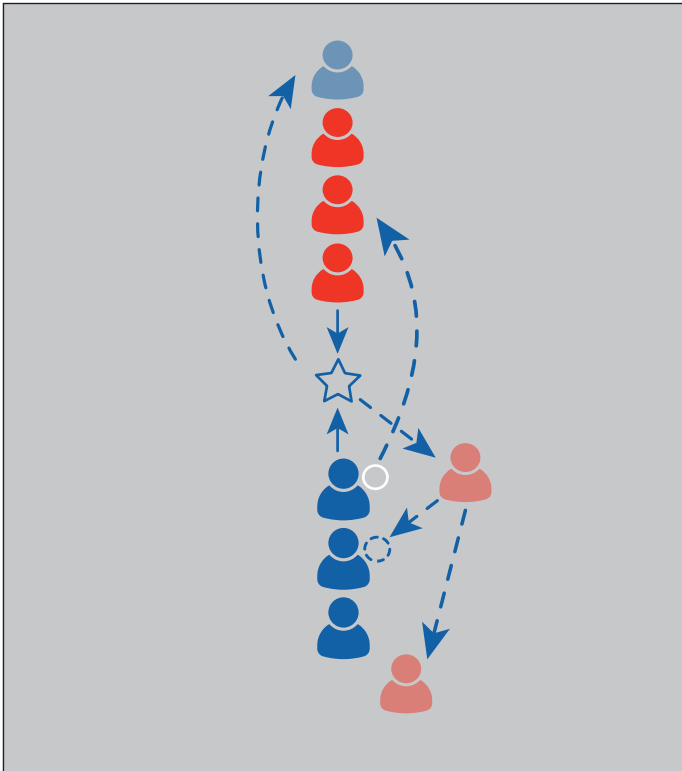
- Communication.
- Focus on chair positioning.
- Focus on pushing through the hit and recovering.
- Focus on players' work rates.





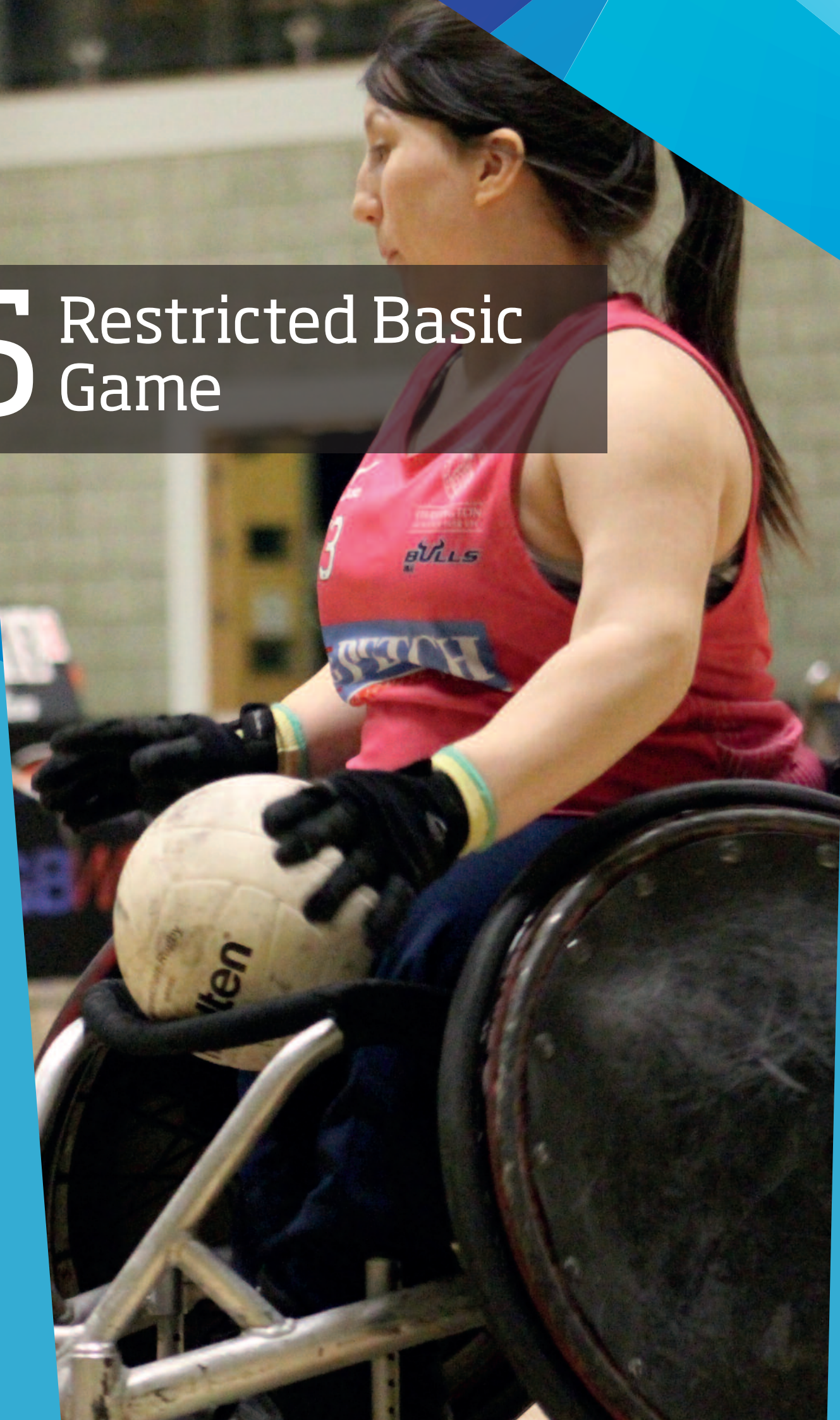
### Opposing Line Drill

Split the players into two groups. Line them up one behind each other, with the first two players facing each other. Have a four metre gap between the front two players. One player has the ball and they push towards each other. As they approach each other the ball is passed and they hit each other head on. They then push to the end of the other line of players; the player with the ball passes it to the next waiting player at the front of the line.





# 5 Restricted Basic Game





Set the group up to play a game, with four players on each side. Reduce the area to make things more contained, starting with half a court sized area. Run a game without any time restrictions on keeping the ball or scoring. Use a reduced size key area, but still have throw-ins and corners. Encourage the players to look for each other, protect the ball and block the ball handler. Players should utilise the available space, pass and move, and not just follow the ball. Restrict players from reaching in to hit the ball off a player's lap and remind them that there is no contact between

players, only between chairs. Initially, you can run the game with no chair contact allowed and introduce it later if it is appropriate. Remind the players of the safety issues around chair contact and be strict on these issues. Slowly introduce more of the rules of the game as the players improve and move to using the full size court.

**For full rules of the game visit the IWRG website: [www.iwrf.com](http://www.iwrf.com)**





# 6 Youth Sessions





When coaching wheelchair rugby in a youth or Rugby Wheels session you may be working with children and adults who have different impairments, physical and intellectual or behavioural issues. It is important that coaches can adapt for the different groups that you'll be working with. Sessions should be fun and safe with extra time taken to explain skills. Each player should receive the same amount of engagement, no matter the player's level of ability or understanding. The following section focuses on working with children, but is of equal value when working on Rugby Wheels sessions with adults with learning disabilities.

## Build a Relationship with Participants

In order to be best able to engage with the participants you need to build a good relationship from the beginning:

- Before the day of the session ask parents/guardians/group leaders/teachers to give you as much information about the children as possible (type of disability, do they engage well with others, any issues they may have etc).
- Greet the children on entry to the sports hall.
- Learn and use their names as quickly as possible. If you struggle with names you may want to use name tags.
- Do not rush through the gloving up process; use it as a chance to continue to get to know the children.

## Communication

- Do as many activity demonstrations as possible.
- Use hand signals alongside words.
- Avoid using complicated or wheelchair rugby terminology without explaining.
- Take time to answer questions.
- Be positive and patient.
- If you feel a child's behaviour is unacceptable, ask the parent/guardian/teacher to speak to the child away from the group.

## Example of a Youth Session

### Gloving Up

- If possible, get the group to sit side-by-side on the side of the court.
- Explain why we use gloves in wheelchair rugby.
- Give each child a set of gloves.
- If possible, assist them with putting them on and putting tape around the wrists.
- Make sure that the tape isn't too tight.

### Safety

- Demonstrate how to get into a chair safely (do not stand in the chair first).
- Go through each point of "pushing safely" using demonstrations where possible.
- When you've finished going through each point, ask the children questions to check for understanding. Repeat demonstrations if you feel the group do not understand points.
- Ask the children to slowly walk or push over and get into the chairs.
- As they are getting into the chairs continue to check for understanding.
- Assist children with straps if needed.
- Position yourself so that you can see the entire group, as you do not want a child to start pushing off before you are ready.
- Once all the children are in their chairs and strapped in, you can begin.

### Introducing Pushing

- Demonstrate how to push.
- Get the children to push around a marked area.
- Make sure they know not to bump into each other.
- Emphasise the length of push, position of hands and staying within the marked area.

### Progression

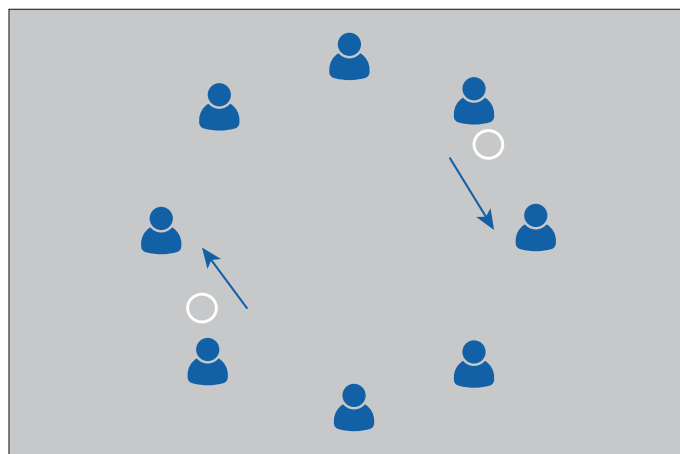
- Introduce balls and get the group to pass as they move around.

### Introducing Passing

- Get the group to form a tight circle.
- Demonstrate how to pass – call the name of the person you are passing to, make sure they are ready and gently pass to them.
- Demonstrate and get the group to show you the position of their hands when waiting for a pass.
- Get the children to pass the ball to the person to their left.
- Emphasis should be on communication – wait until the catcher is ready and gently pass to them.
- If the group is ready, increase the gap between the children.
- Introduce extra balls.

### Progression

- Pepper pot.





## Introducing Contact

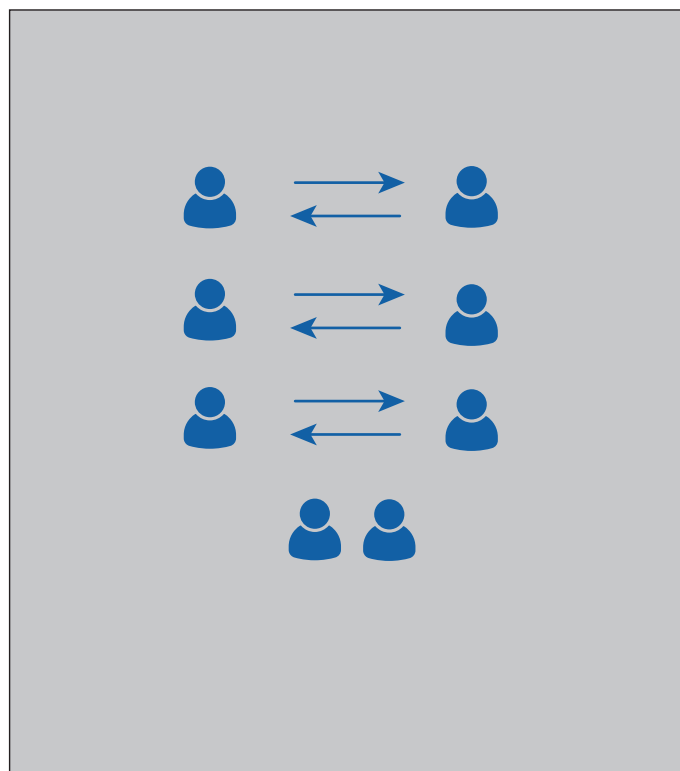
Be mindful that this is the area of the sport that can be quite scary for some children. Do not dismiss their concerns. Allow them to take part on their terms.

- Get the group to form two even lines facing each other approximately one metre apart.
- Pair up the players by size or ability.
- Use the lines on the court as markers for the children.
- Repeat safety points about contact.
- Demonstrate the amount of contact you want them to apply by holding two chairs and gently bumping them together, or if not possible then gently bump into one of the children in your rugby chair.
- One line should stay still and on your whistle the other line will bump into the child in front of them.
- Switch roles.
- The amount of contact should be increased gradually.
- Emphasis should be on front-on-front bumping.

## Progression

- Introduce games such as “Bulldog”.

## Chair Contact/Bumping



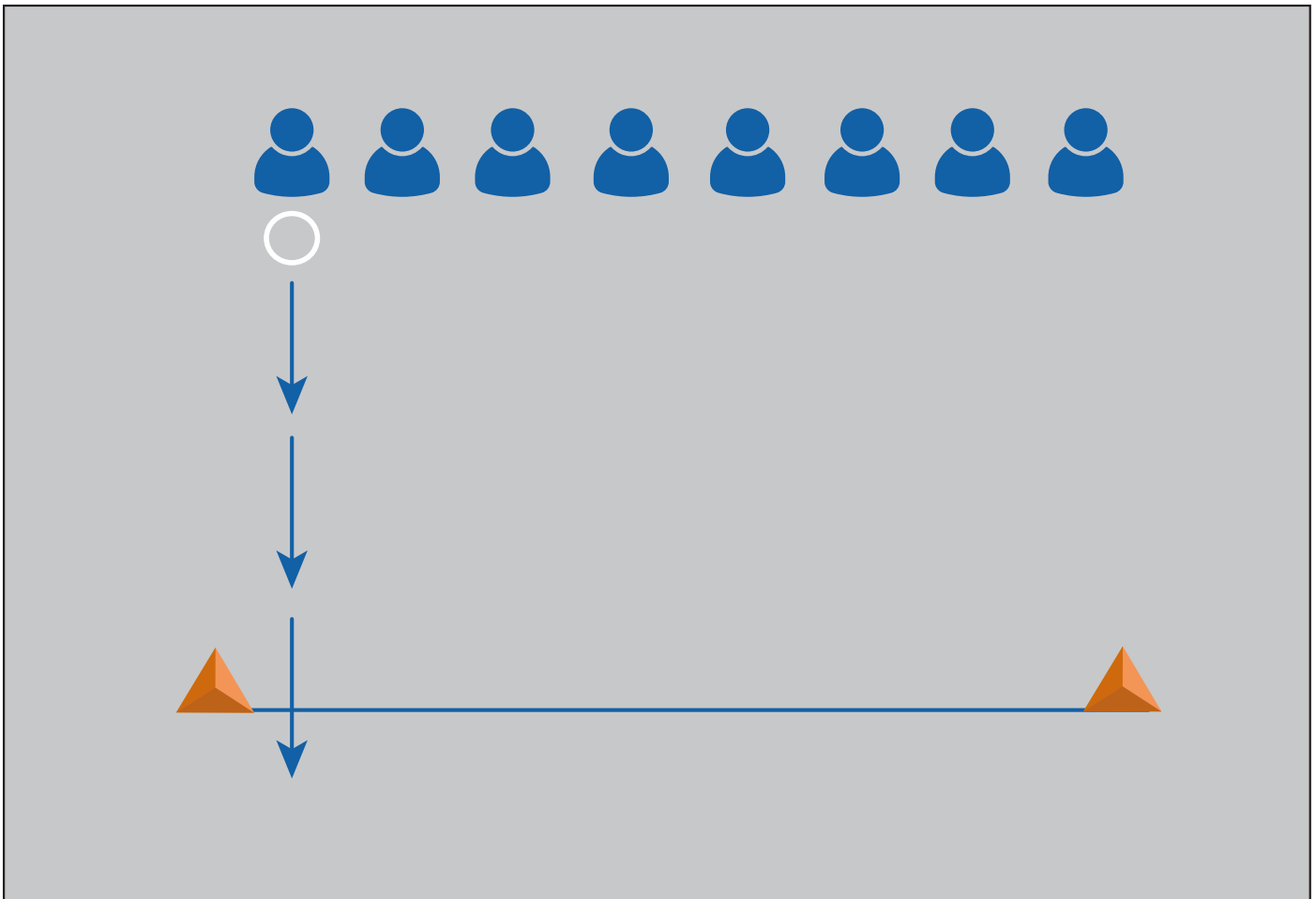
## Scoring a Try

- We use the term “try” rather than goal to help the children with the association with rugby.
- Line the children up side-by-side approximately three metres from the try line.
- Demonstrate how to score a try; use a volunteer if needs be.
- Emphasis should be on having the ball on their lap and crossing the try line between the cones. The whistle means you’ve scored a try.
- Each child should have a go at scoring a try.
- Encourage the rest of the group to celebrate when a try is scored.

- Explain that the scorer of the try should only celebrate when they are back on the court, as we do not want children with their hands in the air rolling into the wall.
- Some children may throw the ball over the try line or put it on the ground as in able-bodied rugby. If this happens, repeat the demonstration of how to score a try.

## Progression

- Scoring a try with a defender between child and try line.





## Game

Before starting a game repeat all safety points and explain the rules of the game. The rules you decide to use in the first session will depend on the ability of the group. You may decide not to include 10 seconds to bounce the ball or not to be too strict on where inbounds take place. The rules of the youth game have some differences from the adult game. The majority were made to limit the chance of physical contact between the children and because of the potential larger functional differences between the children.

Differences between youth and adult rules:

- Five a side.
- No tip off, the game starts with an inbound for the home team from the halfway line.

- No taking the ball from an opponent's lap or from their hands.
- No swiping the ball from an opponent.
- No over and back rule.
- No 12-second to get out of half rule.
- No key, cones are placed one metre from the corner of the try line.
- No timeouts.
- Game stopped immediately if there is a fallen player.

For the start of all sessions repeat all safety advice and be prepared to repeat many of the basic session steps each week. Groups will progress at different speeds, so it is important to adapt the session based on the speed of this learning.



# Acknowledgements

GBWR would like to thank the following for their contributions, which helped in the development of this resource:

- Paul Arnold
- Stuart McLindon
- Nathaniel Holland.



Rugby House  
Twickenham Stadium  
200 Whitton Road  
Twickenham, Middlesex  
TW2 7BA

© Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby, 2018

[gbwr.org.uk](http://gbwr.org.uk)

