



AFL CANADA'S RETURN TO PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Everyone is looking forward to the return of Australian Football! And while it is imperative to do so in a controlled manner to avoid any further risk of outbreaks, we can still run effective and fun training sessions in small groups.

This guide aims to provide you with some considerations required for returning to practice and with some examples of activities that can be run in small groups.

In some instances, based on provincial recommendations, equipment sharing will be limited (ie, not recommended to kick a footy between two people). In those cases AFL Canada recommends using the **Learn Footy @ Home Series** developed for individual skill and fitness drills.

The following guide has been created with recommendations from the Australian Football League & the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) 'Rebooting Sport Framework', in relation to the return of Australian football at a community level. Sport Canada has yet to release a framework for Canadian community sport, however these considerations from the AFL and AIS are relevant to Australian Football in Canada. As information comes to light from Sport Canada, AFL Canada will continue to update their recommendations.

The health and safety of officials, players and the wider community is paramount, therefore AFL Canada continues to recommend you follow guidelines set out by local authorities, provincial and federal governments when planning any training sessions.

This resource is intended as a guide only. Where information or protocol differs from your local & provincial health authorities advice, please follow the recommendations from your local health authorities.

Relevant Resources:

- [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport](#)
- [AFL Canada's Learn Footy @ Home Series](#)
- [AFL Return to Community Football Guidelines](#)
- For hundreds of resources relating to coaching and training sessions, sign up to coach.afl. **Free for AFL Canada members** - email development@afllcanada.com to register.

Contained in this guide:

- Considerations for returning to practice: Page 2
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CONSIDERATIONS FOR SMALL GROUP AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PRACTICE
Up to 10 persons and Outdoors.

In the AIS Framework for rebooting sport, the following considerations are recommended for Australian Football practice sessions whilst following restricted gathering guidelines (Phase B):

Training Recommendations	Hygiene Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>If any players show any sign of illness - do not come to training/leave immediately.</i>• <i>Individuals considered vulnerable should consult a healthcare professional before returning to practice.</i>• Get in, practice, and get out. No mingling.• No more than 10 people - avoid car pooling with teammates where possible• Not more than 1 person per 4sqm.• Non-contact skills training.• No deliberate contact, tackling or wrestling.• Use own weights or conditioning equipment if applicable.• Controlled kicking & handballing drills.• Can use skipping ropes, weights, mats.• Commercial gyms/facilities may be used (subject to meeting venue approvals and adhering to protocols).• Stagger training groups.• Arrive dressed to train.• Log attendance - will help trace back those at risk if there is an outbreak.• Briefings in advance if required (Email, group messages/video, etc).• Maintain social distance between activities.• Each player brings their own water bottle, towel, etc - strictly no sharing.• Check with the local municipality on rules regarding parks and facilities before arranging practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alcohol based hand sanitisers must be available.• All players must sit/stand 1.5 metres apart.• Mouthguards are not to be removed during training and must be sealed away when not in use.• Disinfect mouth guards after each session and ensure they are appropriately stored.• Spitting and clearing of nasal/respiratory secretions on fields or other sport settings not permitted.• All playing kits and equipment to be cleaned and disinfected between training sessions and matches.• Avoid high fives, handshakes or other physical contact.• Club provided footballs to be wiped with antibacterial wipes or alcohol-based sanitizer prior to and after each use (Do not immerse footballs in water).• At water breaks, encourage players to use alcohol-based sanitizer on their hands.



SMALL GROUP HANDBALLING DRILLS

1. ENVELOPE DRILL

SKILL PRACTICED = Handballing (sending and receiving on the move)

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 5

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

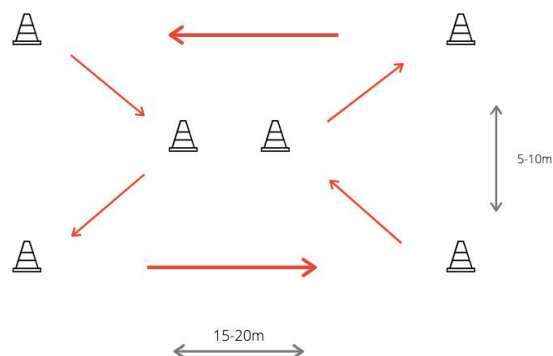
- 6 x cones or markers
- 2 x Footy

ACTIVITY:

1. Setup a rectangle of cones with the long side 10-15m apart and the shorter side 5m. Add two cones in the middle of the rectangle.
2. Footy starts on the top right cone, player runs and handpasses down the long side of the rectangle to top left pylon. Run to the pylon you send the footy to.
3. Once the player on the top left pylon receives, the player on the closest centre cone is front and centre to receive a handpass, and sends to the player on the move on the bottom left cone
4. Repeat on the bottom side of the rectangle.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Introduce another footy and have two going around the rectangle at a time.
2. Take one of the cones out of the centre and have the person on that pylon service both ends.
3. Extend the rectangle out and run the same drill with kicking.





2. FOUR CORNERS

SKILL PRACTICED = Handballing under pressure

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 4

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 4 (per group)

EQUIPMENT:

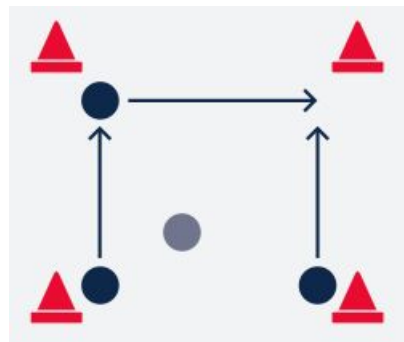
- 1 x Footy
- 4 x Cones

ACTIVITY:

1. Three attackers start on a cone each - one is vacant. One defender in the middle.
2. The aim is for the three attackers to keep the ball off the defender, who attempts to cut off the pass (Defender must maintain 2m distance from outside players and may only block and intercept the footy).
3. The ball cannot be passed diagonally. After each pass, an attacker should run to the vacant corner, giving the passer two options.
4. The ball is passed to the cone, not in between.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Introduce another cone for outside players to run to and a second defender.





3. FIVE POINT HANDBALL

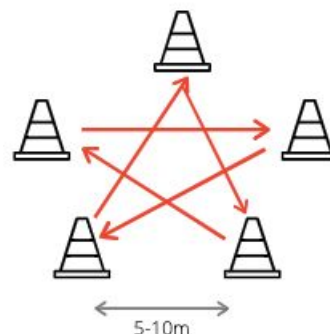
SKILL PRACTICED = Handballing - sending and receiving on the move (with limited time),

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 5

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

- 5 x cones or markers
- 2 x Footys



ACTIVITY:

1. Set up cones in a star formation 5-10 metres away from each other.
2. Any cone/player can start with the footy, run and handpass to the player standing on the pylon two to your right (ie, skip the pylon directly next to you in the star shape). Run to the pylon you send the ball too.
3. The player then receives on the run and handpasses to the player on the pylon two to their right.
4. Repeat the process on each cone.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Introduce two footys and have two going around the star at once
2. Extend the cones out to 15-20 metres and introduce kicking.



4. CHALLENGE HANDBALL

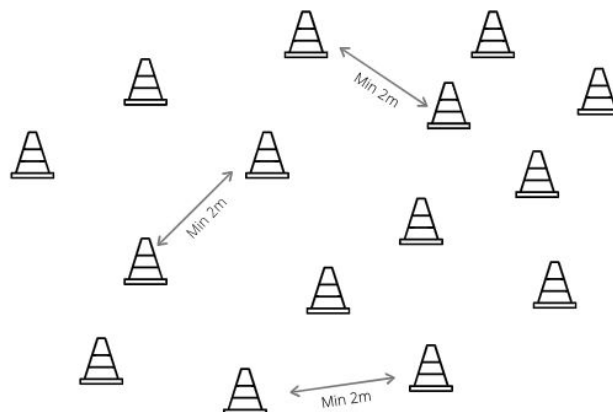
SKILL PRACTICED = Handballing - finding and creating space

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 4

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

- 15-20 x cones/markers
- 1 x footy per pair



ACTIVITY:

1. Activity is performed in pairs - make sure there is enough pylons for 1 per person
2. Both members of the pair pick a cone to start on.
3. Partner #1 has the footy, partner # 2 starts running toward another cone, partner #1 handpasses then they run to another cone.
4. Continue handpassing to each other, but when you don't have the footy you need to find another cone, avoiding the other pairs.
5. 1 person at a cone at a time.



5. KING BALL

SKILL PRACTICED = Handballing & spacial awareness

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 6

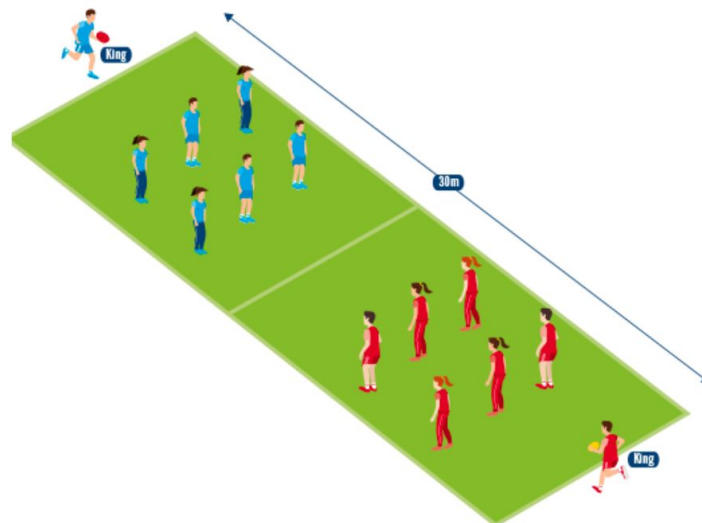
MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

- 2 x Footys

ACTIVITY:

1. Place one team in each half with one player from each team to stand behind the opposition (the 'kings').
2. Each king has a ball. Kings attempt to hit the opposition players on the full with a handball.
3. If hit on the full, players move out of their half and stand on one of the 3 lines surrounding the opposition half, from where they can handball at the opposition.
4. A caught ball is not out but a dropped catch is out.
5. Any handball which hits the ground can be picked up and handballed at the opposition.
6. Players can run with the ball but they must stay in their half or their side/back areas.
7. The winner is the first team to eliminate all opponents.





6. RANDOM GROUND BALLS

SKILL PRACTICED = Handballing & ground balls under pressure

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 4

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

- 2 x Footys

ACTIVITY:

1. Players form a circle around one other participant, making sure to be at least 5 metres from the player in the middle of the circle and 2-3 metres from each other.
2. 2 outside players start with a footy, first player sends a ground ball into the player in the middle (must hit the ground).
3. Once the player in the middle recovers the footy he can handball back to any player on the outside.
4. Once they have handpassed the ball out, the next outside player with the footy sends in a ground ball.
5. Rotate centre players after a minute.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Add in a third footy.
2. Add in a points system for successful/unsuccessful handballs so all players can compete.



SMALL GROUP KICKING ACTIVITIES

1. LIMITED TIME KICKING

SKILL PRACTICED = Kicking with limited time.

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 2

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 4

EQUIPMENT:

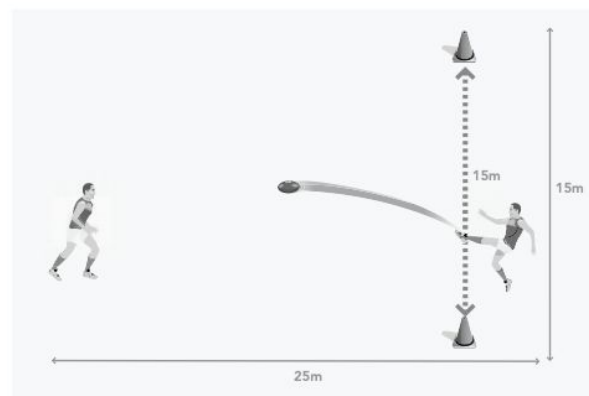
- 2 x cones or markers
- Footy

ACTIVITY:

1. The kicker runs up and back between two cones, spaced around 10-15m apart.
2. The receiver is around 20m away, to the side of the cones.
3. On the call of the receiving player or a whistle, the kicker balances and kicks the ball to the receiver as quickly as possible.
4. Rotate roles after six to eight repetitions.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Have the receiving player continually change their position.
2. Add a defender against the receiver.
3. Add another receiver and a defender. The kicker will have to make a decision on who to kick to while still kicking quickly.





2. FOOTY VOLLEYBALL

SKILL PRACTICED = Kicking, Handpassing & Marking

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 4

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

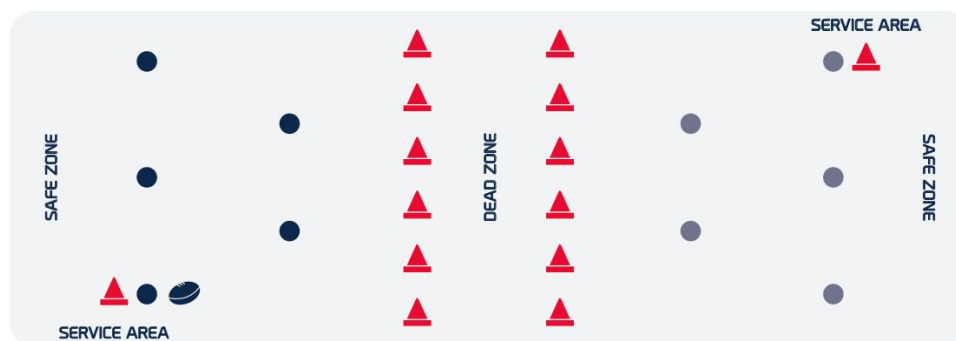
- 12-15 x cones or markers
- 1 x Footy

ACTIVITY:

1. Players can stand anywhere they like inside the boundary on their side. No players can stand in the dead zone.
2. A player kicks from the serve area. The ball must go past the dead zone and land in the opposition's zone.
3. Any kick that fails to land in the opposition area results in a point to the opposition. If the ball lands in the opposition zone they must mark the ball to keep it alive.
4. If no players successfully mark the ball or it lands untouched in the safe zone then the serving team wins a point.
5. If marked the receiving team must handball at least 2 times and no more than 4 times before the ball is kicked back to the opposition's zone.
6. If when handballing, the ball is dropped or the player misses the target leading to the ball hitting the ground, the opposition team wins a point.
7. Team that wins the point serves next.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Decrease the size of the safe zones for each team and make players freeze.
2. Increase the size of each safe zone.
3. Add in two footys if numbers permit.





3. DIAMOND DRILL

SKILL PRACTICED = Kicking, handpassing and timing of your leads.

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 6

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

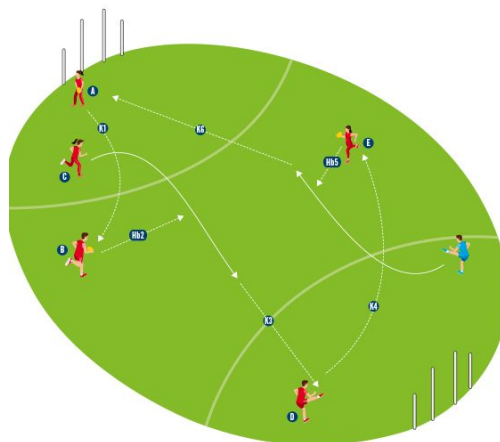
- 6 x cones or markers
- 2 x Footy

ACTIVITY:

1. Use as much space as you can, an entire field can be used if available. Setup cones at full back (FB), half back flank (HBF), back pocket (BP), forward pocket (FP), half forward flank (HFF) and wing (W).
2. FB kicks to a HBF who is leading across the ground.
3. The BP is running to receive a handpass in front of the HBF as soon as they mark.
4. BP runs down the wing (takes as many bounces as necessary) and kicks to a leading FP who is leading straight at them.
5. FP takes the mark, stops and back pedals, switches to a stationary HFF on the opposite side of the field.
6. HFF turns and kicks to a W leading straight across the ground.
7. W runs the ball inside 50 and either kicks a goal (if available) or kicks it to the FB.
8. Repeat. Players run to the cone they delivered the ball to.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Reverse the order of passes.
2. Add in two footys if numbers permit.





4. CONTINUOUS LEADING BOX DRILL

SKILL PRACTICED = Kicking to leads, marking, & leading

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 6

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

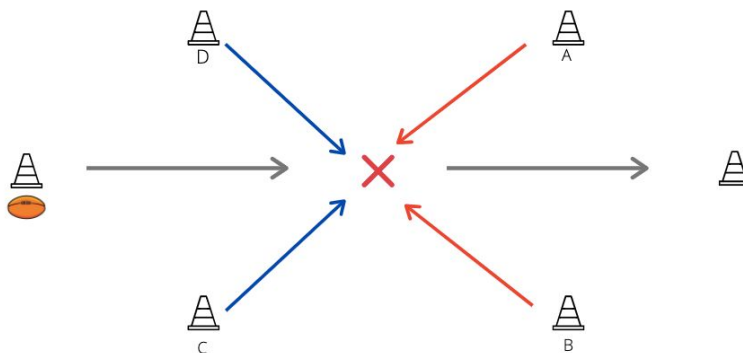
- 1 x Footy
- 6 x cones/markers

ACTIVITY:

1. A square of cones (A,B,C,D) are setup on what would be the points of a centre square on a footy field
2. A Full Back and Full Forward position are setup with cones - ball starts at full back.
3. Cones A & B lead toward the full back (red arrows), the full back kicks to the best lead.
4. Cones C & D are running to get front and centre to the player marking (blue arrows) to receive a handball. Marking player handpasses to player in best position.
5. Player receiving a handball runs through the square, takes a bounce if necessary and delivers the footy to the full forward by a kick.
6. Once the full forward has marked the ball and positions are set, reverse the drill and repeat again.

EXTENSIONS

1. Add in wings and a minimum number of passes before kicking to full forward.





5. LEADING/SWITCHING DRILL

SKILL PRACTICED = Kicking to leads, marking, & leading

MIN PARTICIPANTS = 6

MAX PARTICIPANTS = 10

EQUIPMENT:

- 1 x Footy

ACTIVITY:

1. 4-6 players are in the middle of the field half on the left side of the field, half on the right.
2. Ball starts with one player at full back (or in what would be defensive 50).
3. Centre players designated to the left side of field lead toward the left wing, the full back kicks to the best lead/loudest player.
4. Those who don't receive the ball are now defenders adding perceived pressure (maintain 2 metre distance)
5. Player who receives the ball then turns and delivers to a leading full forward.
6. Full forward marks the ball, pedals back and reverses the play, repeats down the right side of the field with those designated players.

EXTENSIONS:

1. If numbers permit, have 3 players on each side of the centre. Once the player marks the ball from the full back only 1 player becomes a perceived defender and the other two must get a number of passes in before delivering to the full forward.

