

Backfield cutting

Skill description

Backfield cutting (or handler cutting) is important in order to reset the stall count. When we are backfield cutting we aim to receive an easy pass in an advantageous position for our team. Backfield cutting can be initiated from either the open side or break side of the disc.

From break

When you are cutting from the break side of the disc, you want to position horizontally from the disc about 8-12 metres from the thrower. This gives you enough space so that we can cut either upline or to the backfield.

Once in position, and the thrower indicates for you to cut, you can cut upline. Receiving upline is the best outcome for you, because it puts you in a power position to be able to look downfield.

If we drive upline, and get cut off by a defender we can plant and change direction that will create a reset option in the backfield, that will allow us to swing the disc.

We could make an easy cut behind the disc but that doesn't get us closer to scoring a goal. It just gets us one easy pass - so this doesn't create an advantage for our team.

From open

Cutting from the open side of the disc is a little bit trickier, we need to think about what the defence is able to do. If we position ourselves perfectly horizontal, that allows your defender to sneak into the lane and cut off throws downfield, while also defending you at the same time. You need to position yourself in a way that takes that defender out of the open side lane. So we recommend moving yourself back behind the thrower just a few metres. This makes your defender choose either to stop the handler space or the cutter space - because they can't stop both.

Now you find yourself in a read and react situation. If the handler defender stops the upfield space, you can cut directly behind the disc, for an easy cut to the break side, creating an advantage.

If the defender chooses to overplay the backfield space (behind the thrower), you can jab one way then move upfield to receive a pass in power position, looking downfield at the cutters.

If the defender chooses to face guard you can go in either direction, but you will need to jab one way, then go the other.

One common mistake is handler cutters don't know when to cut. As a team - you need to decide whether the time to cut it is based on the handler looking, or based on the stall count.

Video

[Ultimate 101: Cutting](#)

[Rise Up: Handler Cutting](#)

Step	Description	Cues	Common errors
Pre-action - From Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position yourself horizontal and 8-12 metres from the thrower 	"Horizontal"	The cutter positions too far forward or behind, and the defender can overplay one side effectively
Action - From Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the thrower squares up, drive upline If you don't get open, plant and change direction 	"Drive upline" "Plant and change direction" "Create an advantage" "Square up" (thrower)	The cutter doesn't drive far enough upline to get the defender to commit their hips The cutter angles the cut to receive the disc behind/near to the thrower, losing any advantage The cutter cuts before the thrower has squared up to face them
Pre-action - From Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position yourself on a 45 degree angle, behind the thrower Keep your defender out of the open side cutting lane 	"Keep defender out of play"	The cutter positions horizontally from the thrower, allowing the defender to effectively cover both the open side lane as well as the cutter
Action - From Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and react to the defender 	"Create an advantage" "Square up" (thrower)	The cutter cuts before the thrower has squared up to face them

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If defender overplays the upfield space, cut directly behind the disc ● If defender overplays the backfield space (behind the thrower), you can jab step then cut upfield ● If defender face guards you can go either direction after a jab step 	<p>“Read and react”</p>	
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Practice

- Practice cutting in groups of four with one cutter, one guarder, one thrower and one marker. Practice setting up on the break side and delivering a cut. The thrower will pass to the cutter if they are open. Rotate positions after each attempt. Then practice setting up on the open side and delivering a cut.