

Double Wing Playbook

Understanding the Double Wing Playbook

Double wing playbook is a strategic approach in football that emphasizes versatility, misdirection, and balanced offensive formations. It is a popular choice among coaches who want to create multiple options for their running and passing games while maintaining a balanced attack. The double wing formation involves lining up two wingbacks on either side of a tight end or split end, creating a symmetrical setup that can be adapted for various plays. This playbook is especially favored in youth, high school, and even some college programs due to its simplicity, effectiveness, and ability to teach fundamental blocking and running techniques.

Historical Background of the Double Wing Formation

Origins and Evolution

The double wing formation dates back to the early 20th century, evolving from earlier single-wing formations developed by coaches like Pop Warner. The idea was to create a balanced, multi-purpose offense that could be adapted for both running and passing. Over the decades, the double wing has been refined to include various shifts, motions, and misdirection plays, making it a flexible and challenging formation for defenses to predict and stop.

Popularity and Adoption

Throughout the years, many successful teams have employed the double wing, appreciating its simplicity and power. Coaches value its ease of teaching, quick execution, and the ability to generate consistent yardage. Its popularity persists especially at levels where developing fundamental skills and maintaining a straightforward offensive scheme are priorities.

Fundamental Concepts of the Double Wing Playbook

Formation Structure

1. Two wingbacks aligned on each side of the formation, typically just outside the tackles.
2. A tight end or split end positioned on the line, depending on the specific play design.
3. The quarterback under center, responsible for handing off, bootlegging, or passing.
4. Fullback and halfback aligned behind the quarterback, often in a stacked or offset position.

Core Principles

1. **Balance:** The formation provides equal threat on both sides, allowing for balanced running and passing options.
2. **Misdirection:** Motion and shifts are used to confuse the defense and create running lanes.
3. **Power Running:** Emphasizes blocking schemes that open lanes for the running backs.
4. **Versatility:** Plays are designed to be adaptable for different situations, including traps, counters, and passes.

Common Plays in the Double Wing Playbook

Running Plays

1. **Power Sweep:** A sweep play where the offensive line blocks outward, and the back runs laterally before turning upfield.
2. **Counter Trap:** A misdirection play where the back initially moves in one direction, then cuts back against the flow.
3. **Off-Tackle Run:** A straightforward run between the tackle and tight end, utilizing pulling guards for additional blocking.
4. **Lead Draw:** A delayed handoff designed to exploit gaps created by pulling linemen.

Passing Plays

1. **Play-Action Pass:** Fake a run to draw linebackers in, then pass to an open receiver.
2. **Quick Slant or Bubble Screen:** Short passes to the wings or backs to gain quick yardage.
3. **Bootleg:** Quarterback fakes a handoff and rolls out to pass or run.

Blocking Schemes in the Double Wing

Inside Blocking

1. Combination blocks involving the offensive line and wingbacks to create running lanes.
2. Pulling guards to lead block for sweeps and counter plays.

Outside Blocking

1. Wingbacks and wide receivers block downfield or at the point of attack for sweeps.
2. Edge blocks designed to seal the outside and prevent defenders from turning the play inside.

Variations of the Double Wing Formation

Single Wing vs. Double Wing

The traditional single wing involves a single back behind the quarterback, whereas the double wing splits the backs and wings on either side, offering more flexibility and misdirection options.

Shifted and Motion Variations

1. Shifting the entire formation to one side to create overloads.

2. Using motion to swap players and confuse the defense about the play's direction.

Wildcat and Misdirection Plays

Some teams incorporate wildcat elements by snapping directly to a wingback, adding an element of surprise and speed to the offense.

Advantages of the Double Wing Playbook

Ease of Teaching and Learning

The formation's straightforward setup makes it accessible for young and inexperienced players. Basic blocking and running techniques are emphasized, allowing players to quickly grasp their roles.

Versatility and Adaptability

The double wing can be adjusted to suit the team's strengths, whether emphasizing a powerful running game or utilizing play-action passes to keep defenses honest.

Power and Misdirection

Combining power running schemes with deceptive motions confuses defenses, creating opportunities for big plays.

Control of the Game

The offense can sustain long drives with consistent yardage, controlling the tempo and wearing down opponents.

Challenges and Limitations

Predictability

If overused without variation, the offense can become predictable, allowing defenses to adjust and stop the run or pass effectively.

Limited Passing Options

While passing can be incorporated, the formation is primarily designed for power running, which may limit the effectiveness of passing games against aggressive defenses.

Requires Discipline

Successful execution relies heavily on precise blocking, timing, and understanding of the plays, which can be challenging for less disciplined teams.

Implementing the Double Wing Playbook

Practice Drills

1. Blocking techniques for linemen and wingbacks.
2. Running back footwork for inside and outside runs.
3. Quarterback pitch and fake handoff timing.
4. Passing routes from the double wing formation.

Game Strategy Tips

1. Mix run and pass plays to keep defenses guessing.
2. Use motion and shifts to create mismatches and open running lanes.
3. Identify and exploit defensive weaknesses, such as over-pursuit or flat coverage.

Conclusion

The **double wing playbook** is a timeless, effective offensive strategy that emphasizes versatility, power, and misdirection. Its straightforward setup makes it accessible for players at all levels, and its ability to adapt to various game situations ensures its continued relevance. Successful implementation depends on disciplined execution, creative play-calling, and a thorough understanding of the formation's principles. Whether used as a primary offense or as a complementary scheme, the double wing provides a solid foundation for teams seeking a balanced and dynamic approach to football.

Double Wing Playbook: Unlocking Versatility and Power in Football Offense

In the landscape of football coaching, offensive strategies continually evolve to maximize yardage, control the clock, and keep defenses guessing. Among the various formations that have persisted and adapted over decades, the double wing stands out as a versatile, balanced, and dynamic setup. The double wing playbook is a comprehensive collection of plays that leverage the alignment of two tight formations—each resembling a wing—creating numerous options for running, passing, and misdirection. This article delves into the fundamentals, formations, plays, and strategic advantages of the double wing offense, providing coaches, players, and football enthusiasts with a detailed understanding of this classic yet adaptable approach.

What Is the Double Wing Formation?

The double wing formation is an offensive alignment featuring two tight ends or wingbacks positioned on each side of the line of scrimmage, with a fullback and a tailback behind the quarterback. Unlike the traditional single wing or I-formation, the double wing emphasizes symmetry, balance, and multiple blocking options, allowing for a variety of plays that can exploit defenses' weaknesses.

Key Components of the Double Wing Formation:

1. Two Wingbacks: Positioned just outside the tight ends, typically in a stance ready to block, run, or receive.
2. Fullback and Tailback: Often aligned directly behind the quarterback, providing power running options and pass protection.
3. Quarterback: Under center in most setups, facilitating quick handoffs, play-action passes, or keepers.
4. Line of Scrimmage: Usually consists of a balanced line with tight ends on each side, making the formation compact yet flexible.

Advantages of the Double Wing Formation:

1. Creates multiple blocking angles for running plays.
2. Facilitates misdirection and deceptive plays.
3. Provides options for both power and quick strikes.
4. Enhances the ability to control the clock and wear down defenses.

Strategic Principles Behind the Double Wing Playbook

The strength of the double wing offense lies in its adaptability. Coaches use the playbook to develop a variety of strategies rooted in fundamental principles:

1. Power Running Game:

The formation naturally lends itself to strong inside runs, such as dives, counters, and traps. The tight alignment and multiple blockers create running lanes and allow for effective pick and block schemes.

1. Misdirection and Deception:

With multiple pre-snap shifts, motion, and fake handoffs, the double wing can confuse defenses, opening up big plays on misdirection runs or play-action passes.

1. Versatility:

The formation supports a balanced attack—running, passing, or a combination—making it difficult for defenses to predict the play.

1. Ball Control:

By emphasizing time-consuming drives, the double wing helps teams maintain possession and keep potent offenses off the field.

Core Plays in the Double Wing Playbook

A well-rounded double wing playbook includes a mix of running and passing plays. Here are some of the most fundamental and effective options:

Running Plays

a. Power Dive:

A straightforward inside run where the fullback leads the way, blocking the middle linebacker, while the tailback follows the fullback through the hole.

b. Counter Trap:

A misdirection play where the ball is handed off to the tailback, who initially moves in one direction before cutting back against the grain, exploiting over-pursuit.

c. Sweep:

The wingbacks lead block on the outside, allowing the tailback or quarterback to sweep around the end for perimeter gains.

d. Trap:

A quick-hitting inside run where linemen and wingbacks trap the defensive lineman, creating a large hole for the ball carrier.

Passing Plays

a. Play-Action Pass:

Fake a power or counter run, then throw a quick pass to a receiver, exploiting the defense's bite on the run fake.

b. Bootleg:

The quarterback fakes a handoff and rolls out, with receivers crossing the field for open passes.

c. Screen Pass:

Set up a screen to the wingback or running back, taking advantage of aggressive pass rushes.

Blocking Schemes and Adjustments

Effective blocking is the backbone of the double wing offense. Coaches develop multiple schemes to adapt to different defensive alignments:

1. Down Blocks: Used by offensive linemen to seal off inside defenders.
2. Pulling Guards: Guards can pull around to lead outside runs like sweeps or counters.
3. Trap Blocks: Linemen quickly block defenders in the gap, creating lanes.
4. Wingback Blocks: Wingbacks serve as lead blockers on sweeps and outside runs, or as receivers on passes.
5. Double Teams: Linemen double-team defensive tackles to free up linebackers for pursuit.

Adjustments are often made based on the defensive front, such as shifting to a more power-oriented approach against a stacked line or emphasizing misdirection against a fast, aggressive defense.

Variations and Modern Adaptations

While the traditional double wing has been a staple in high school and college football, modern coaches have adapted the formation to fit contemporary offensive philosophies:

1. Spread Double Wing: Incorporating wider splits and shotgun snaps to facilitate faster reads and passes.
2. Wing-T Hybrid: Combining elements of the double wing with the wing-T offense for a more deceptive approach.
3. Motion and Shift: Using pre-snap motion to identify defensive coverage and create mismatches.

These variations keep the double wing relevant as a versatile tool that can be tailored to a team's personnel and philosophy.

Strategic Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:

1. Balanced Attack: Capable of running or passing effectively.
2. Multiple Blocking Options: Creates confusion and mismatches in the defensive front.
3. Control of the Game: Power running helps dominate time of possession.
4. Deceptive: Misdirection plays can lead to big gains and keep defenses off guard.

Disadvantages:

1. Requires Discipline: Precise blocking and timing are critical; mistakes can lead to turnovers.
2. Predictability: Overuse of certain plays can make the offense predictable if not mixed appropriately.
3. Limited Field Stretching: Less effective for long, vertical passing unless adapted with passing schemes.

Implementing the Double Wing Playbook

For coaches looking to incorporate the double wing offense, a phased approach is recommended:

1. Master Basic Formations:

Ensure players understand their alignment, responsibilities, and blocking schemes.

1. Develop Fundamental Plays:

Start with inside runs like power dives and traps, then progress to misdirection and outside options.

1. Incorporate Play-Action and Passing:

Add complexity gradually, teaching quarterback reads and receiver routes.

1. Emphasize Timing and Discipline:

Focus on synchronization, especially in blocking schemes and backfield motions.

1. Film Study and Drills:

Use film sessions to analyze execution and defensive tendencies, complemented by drills that reinforce blocking, ball security, and decision-making.

Conclusion

The double wing playbook remains a powerful, adaptable offensive strategy that combines the physicality of power running with the deception of misdirection plays. Its core strength lies in balancing multiple options, creating confusion for defenses, and controlling the tempo of the game. Whether used in high school, college, or beyond, the double wing offense offers coaches a rich set of tools to craft an unpredictable,

effective attack. As football continues to evolve, the principles embedded in the double wing—balance, discipline, and versatility—continue to make it a valuable component of any offensive repertoire.

Questions & Answers About double wing playbook

No	Question	Answer
1	What is the double wing playbook in football?	The double wing playbook is a football offensive strategy that utilizes two wingbacks positioned on either side of the formation, allowing for a variety of running, passing, and misdirection plays designed to exploit defensive gaps and create multiple offensive options.
2	How does the double wing formation benefit a team offensively?	The double wing formation provides a strong running game, creates multiple blocking angles, and allows for versatile playcalling such as misdirection, traps, and quick passes, making it difficult for defenses to predict and stop the offense.
3	What are some common plays found in a double wing playbook?	Common plays include the trap, sweep, counter, bootleg, and quick pitch. These plays take advantage of the formation's blocking angles and misdirection to gain yardage on the ground or through the air.
4	Is the double wing offense suitable for youth or high school teams?	Yes, the double wing offense is popular at youth and high school levels because it emphasizes blocking, running, and fundamental football skills, making it effective for developing players and controlling the game tempo.
5	What are key skills players need to excel in a double wing offense?	Players should have strong blocking skills, good ball-handling, agility for quick cuts, and the ability to execute misdirection plays effectively. Linebackers and backs also need good vision and decision-making skills.
6	How can a coach effectively teach the double wing playbook to players?	Coaches should focus on fundamental blocking techniques, practice multiple repetitions of key plays, emphasize timing and misdirection, and use video analysis to help players understand the roles and adjustments within the formation.
7	What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the double wing offense?	Advantages include a strong running game, multiple play options, and misdirection capabilities. Disadvantages involve potential predictability if overused and the need for disciplined blocking and execution, which can be challenging for less experienced teams.

double wing offense, football formations, wing T offense, running plays, blocking schemes, offensive strategies, football coaching, play design, offensive formation, wing T setup