

[LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/CONTACTCONFIDENT](http://LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/CONTACTCONFIDENT)

# CONTACT CONFIDENT

Build Safety, Skill, and Confidence  
Through 3 Stages of  
Rugby Contact Curriculum



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF SPORT



THE RUGBY TRAINER



# WELCOME TO CONTACT CONFIDENT

## WHO WE ARE

At Leeds Beckett University, we're focused on helping coaches develop confident, effective rugby players - through smarter, safer contact skills.

Contact Confident takes judo-inspired falling and landing principles and adapts them for rugby. Working alongside coaches, athletes and partners including The Rugby Trainer and World Rugby, we've developed short, practical sessions that build safer habits and support performance.

## OUR MISSION

Our goal is simple: reduce injury risk while improving confidence in rugby contact. These sessions are designed to make good technique easy to coach, adapt, and progress – so safer tackling practices become habits.

Together, we can build a more confident, positive contact culture, one session at a time.



## THE IMPACT

By developing evidence-informed techniques and equipping coaches with effective tools and strategies, we're supporting long-term cultural change around contact training and contributing to a global shift towards safer and more positive rugby environments.

The resource is themed around three different ways of landing, with each theme including four short sessions covering:

1. Falling and Landing,
2. Mobility and Co-ordination,
3. Tackle Technique.

They're designed to be dropped straight into your day-to-day rugby sessions, and progressed or adapted to players' needs. You can explore all twelve Contact Confident videos in the playlist, and on the following pages you'll find examples with direct links to each session.

**We'd love to know what you think to help us keep progressing these resources!**

[PLEASE HELP US BY PROVIDING FEEDBACK HERE](#)



## CONTACT CONFIDENT CURRICULUM

### UNDERSTANDING THE 4 PROGRESSIVE STAGES OF CONTACT CONFIDENT CURRICULUM



Stage	Focus	Outcome
<b>Manage Yourself</b>	Personal control & safer movement to the ground	Individual technique to fall, land, & recover
<b>Manage Others</b>	Work with others to apply individual learnt skills	Safer shared body management technique
<b>Manage Competition</b>	Competitive environment to apply reactions & decision-making	Application of skills into rugby specific scenarios
<b>Bring It All Together</b>	Reinforcement & application	Contact confidence



# CONTACT CONFIDENT CURRICULUM

## ACTIVITY LIBRARY: BACKWARDS LANDING

	<b>Activity 1 – Falling &amp; Landing</b>	<b>Activity 2 – Mobility &amp; Coordination</b>	<b>Activity 3 – Tackle Technique</b>
<b>Session 1 Manage Yourself</b>	Backwards Landing Principles	Backwards Roll	Arrowhead & Wrap (Bag)
<b>Session 2 Manage Others</b>	Backwards Landing (with Partner)	Animal Movements	Arrowhead with Player
<b>Session 3 Manage Competition</b>	Backwards Landing (from Person)	Partner Carries	Split Stance Dip & Explode (Squeeze)
<b>Session 4 Bring It All Together</b>	Competitive Falling Games	Drop Height & Fight	Tackle Reading 1v2

# BACKWARDS LANDING EXAMPLE: FALLING WITH A PARTNER

Katrina breaks down the key principles of backwards landing under partner-pressure. This is shown using a partner-initiated crouch-to-floor fall – teaching the athlete how to accept force safely, absorb it, and roll out with intent.

Ideal for mastering safer, efficient backwards landings and fast recovery back to feet.

## EQUIPMENT:

- A partner

## KEY COACHING TIP:

Protect the head, make a large surface area, roll to dissipate the energy  
= safe landing + quick reset.

## KEY POINTS:

- Start crouching with a balanced stance, weight evenly through feet.
- Partner takes gentle counterbalance hold – you resist, then accept the fall.
- Roll to the floor – don't "drop", guide the landing by bracing your core + glutes.
- Create a large landing surface area + keep chin tucked – don't let your head hit the ground / never whiplash.



[WATCH THE SESSION HERE](#)

[SEE MORE VIDEOS HERE](#)

# CONTACT CONFIDENT CURRICULUM

## ACTIVITY LIBRARY: SIDEWAYS LANDING

	<b>Activity 1 - Falling &amp; Landing</b>	<b>Activity 2 - Mobility &amp; Coordination</b>	<b>Activity 3 - Tackle Technique</b>
<b>Session 1 Manage Yourself</b>	Sideways Landing Principles (Crouched → fall circle)	Teddy Bear Roll (individual & pairs) Triangle Forward Roll Triangle Backwards Roll	Tackle, Shift & Hit (Static D)
<b>Session 2 Manage Others</b>	Sideways Table Roll	Lever Pull Tug of War – Short Arm	Tackle, Shift, Hit & Chase
<b>Session 3 Manage Competition</b>	Lateral Roll with Ball (Table Roll with Ball)	Lever Pull Tug of War – Long Arm	Tap Tackle – Side Tackle 1v1 (with Ball Present)
<b>Session 4 Bring It All Together</b>	Table Fall with Ball + Defender	Lever Pull Tug of War (Full Arm, Holding Ball)	Tap Tackle - Side Tackle 1v1 Games (Pop Pass)

# SIDEWAYS LANDING EXAMPLE: TABLE ROLL

Develop control, confidence, and teamwork with sideways rolls.

This variation focuses on managing a partner during the landing. The key aim is to control force through coordinated movement - one partner assists, the other practices a safe roll. Emphasis is placed on communication, correct grip, and safer landing posture.

## EQUIPMENT:

- A partner
- Floor space
- Rugby ball

## KEY COACHING TIP:

Chin tuck & use momentum to roll, protecting body and ball

## KEY POINTS:

- Reach under tummy and give partner your wrist.
- Partner pulls arm through to guide the roll.
- Roll from the pull, landing on your back.
- Upper arm hits floor at 45° to spread impact.
- Tuck chin to brace for safety.



[WATCH THE SESSION HERE](#)

[SEE MORE VIDEOS HERE](#)

# CONTACT CONFIDENT CURRICULUM

## ACTIVITY LIBRARY: FORWARDS LANDING

	<b>Activity 1 - Falling &amp; Landing</b>	<b>Activity 2 - Mobility &amp; Coordination</b>	<b>Activity 3 - Tackle Tech</b>
<b>Session 1 Manage Yourself</b>	Forwards Landing Principles	Animal Movements	Tackle - Tennis Ball Reaction 1v1
<b>Session 2 Manage Others</b>	Front Landing (rugby specific) (e.g. Front Fall from Knees/Partner)	Wheelbarrow Walk & Triangle Rolls	Tackle - Tennis Ball Reaction & Hit
<b>Session 3 Manage Competition</b>	Waterfall – Competitive Front Landing	Balance & Reactions, One-Leg Balance, Eyes-Closed Balance & Bodyweight Flag Exercise	Tackle Reading 1v2 Drill
<b>Session 4 Bring It All Together</b>	'Score the Try' Partner Race	Bounce-Out Carry	Tackle - 1v1 into 3-Level Tackle

# FORWARDS LANDING EXAMPLE: TENNIS BALL TRIGGER

Learn to enter the tackle fast, low, and safe.

Ben applies the three key principles of forward landing in a reactive tackle scenario. This is shown using the tennis-ball reaction into a 1v1 tackle finish - teaching the athlete to orient their body correctly at speed, maintain safe head position, and commit fully through the pad even if the catch is missed.

## EQUIPMENT:

- A partner
- Tennis ball
- Tackle Pad

## KEY COACHING TIP:

Head on correct side – safety + direction of force.

## KEY POINTS:

- React + shift to catch the tennis ball.
- Turn immediately into tackle entry stance: hips low, chest forward.
- Attack the pad with correct head position + tight arms.
- Chase forwards through the pad - don't stop on contact!



[WATCH THE SESSION HERE](#)

[SEE MORE VIDEOS HERE](#)

## KEY TERMINOLOGY

Focus	Key Cues	Purpose
<b>Head Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Protect the head”</li> <li>• “Cheek to pad”</li> <li>• “Head to the side”</li> <li>• “Chin tuck”</li> </ul>	Keep head safe and out of contact with the ground.
<b>Surface Area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Big surface”</li> <li>• “Flat body”</li> <li>• “No hands out”</li> <li>• “Soft landing”</li> </ul>	Spread force, control impact.
<b>Body Shape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Plank”</li> <li>• “Stay low”</li> <li>• “Arrowhead”</li> <li>• “Strong &amp; balanced”</li> </ul>	Maintain core control and stability.
<b>Rolling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Over shoulder, not head”</li> <li>• “Back to feet”</li> <li>• “Rotate &amp; recover”</li> </ul>	Safer, smooth ground movements.
<b>Contact / Wrap</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Wrap, lock, squeeze”</li> <li>• “Drive legs”</li> <li>• “Explode on go”</li> </ul>	Build powerful tackle mechanics.
<b>Balance / Mobility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Stay balanced”</li> <li>• “Reload”</li> <li>• “Stay hunting”</li> </ul>	Move with control and readiness.
<b>Progression</b>	“Floor → height → partner → ball”	Gradual task difficulty build-up
<b>Ball Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Be snappy”</li> <li>• “Present ball”</li> <li>• “Pop ball off”</li> </ul>	Quicker, clean ball presentation
<b>Competition / Reaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “React &amp; shift”</li> <li>• “Stay in fight”</li> <li>• “Read play”</li> </ul>	Game awareness and intensity.



# GIVE IT A GO AND GET CONTACT CONFIDENT

GET THE MOST FROM THESE ACTIVITIES BY:

- Planning them into your session and revisiting them regularly - consistency builds confidence
- Reviewing and reflecting after each session: what felt better / what needs attention or adapting?
- Keeping sessions short + frequent - small reps = faster progress

READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT?

The Contact Confident programme gives you a clear pathway to build safe, effective contact skills step-by-step.

IF YOU WANT TO KEEP PROGRESSING WITH STRUCTURE, CONTINUE YOUR [JOURNEY HERE](#).

INSIDE YOU'LL FIND:

- ✓ Bite-sized (1 minute long) videos you can revisit and repeat
- ✓ Simple coaching cues to self-check technique
- ✓ Progressions & regressions to adapt to your level
- ✓ Ideas to help you build playing and coaching confidence

[LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/CONTACTCONFIDENT](https://leedsbeckett.ac.uk/contactconfident)

# CONTACT CONFIDENT



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF SPORT



**THE RUGBY TRAINER**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This resource was developed through collaboration with Dr Anna Stodter, Dr Katrina McDonald, and The Rugby Trainer.

We'd like to thank Leeds Beckett University, LBUWRFC, Anglia Ruskin University, and World Rugby for their support on this and related projects.

© Leeds Beckett University, 2025