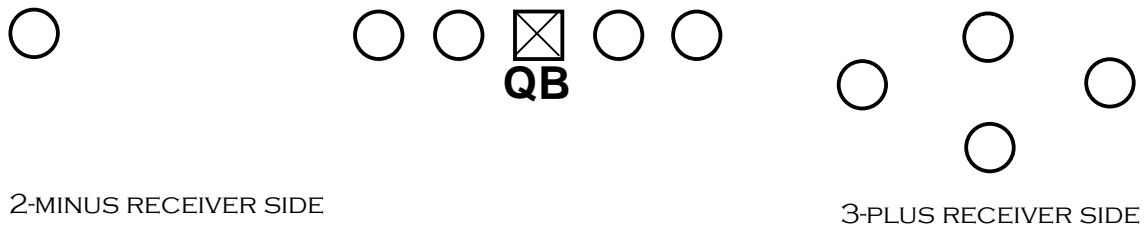
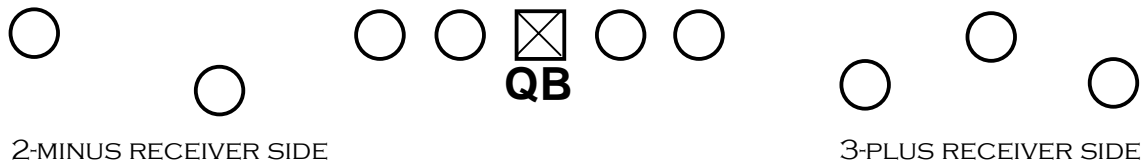


PROTECTIONS FOR AN EMPTY FORMATION

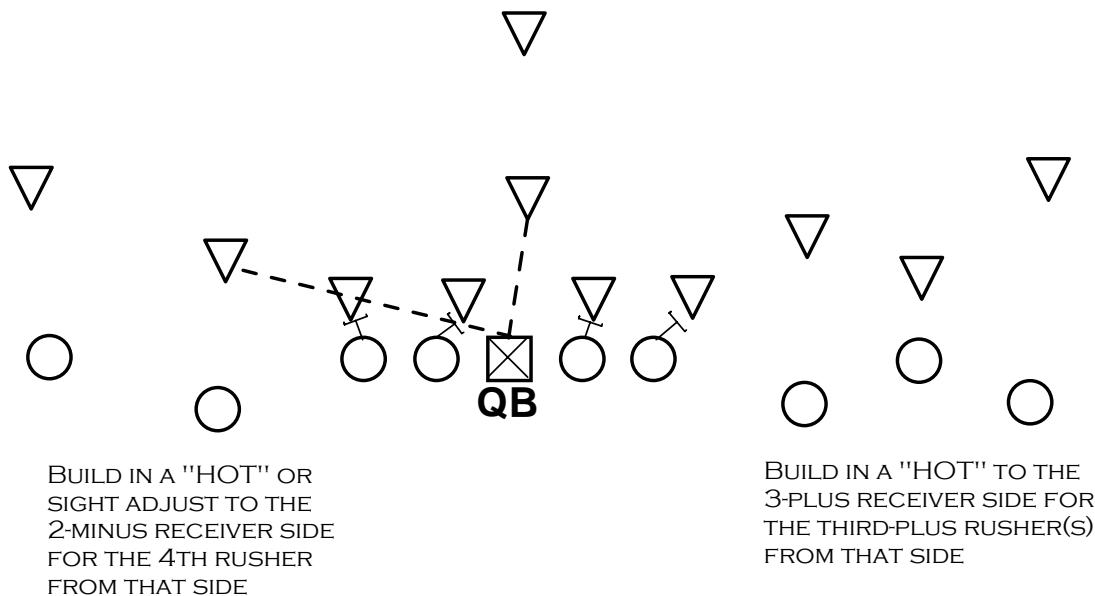
Most coaches have concerns regarding protection when running their offense from an empty set, with good reason. However there are a few advantages. Remember that because your receivers are spread out in formation, the defense has to show you who will be rushing the passer, and consequently also show you who will or will not be covered.

There are two terms I will be using: 3-plus-receiver side (which means the side where you will put three or four receivers), and the 2-minus receiver side (which means the side where you put two or one receiver).

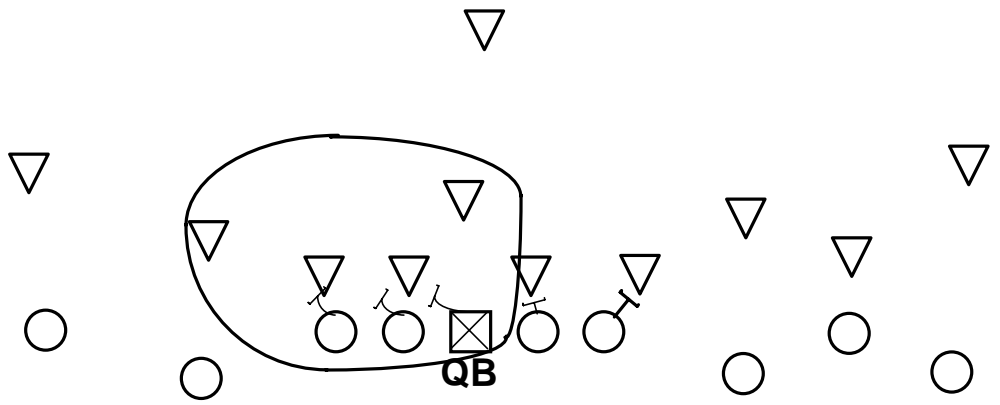


There are two basic ways to pass protect from an empty set: man or zone. In man, you can have the center (or uncovered guard) double read away from the 3-plus receive side. This is because

you can build in a hot route to that side that will stretch the defense horizontally (to open up the passing lanes) if the 3rd (and forth) rusher comes from that side. On the 2-minus receiver side, you can also build a hot route into the pattern, or have a receiver sight adjust his route on that side. I suggest building in a hot route.



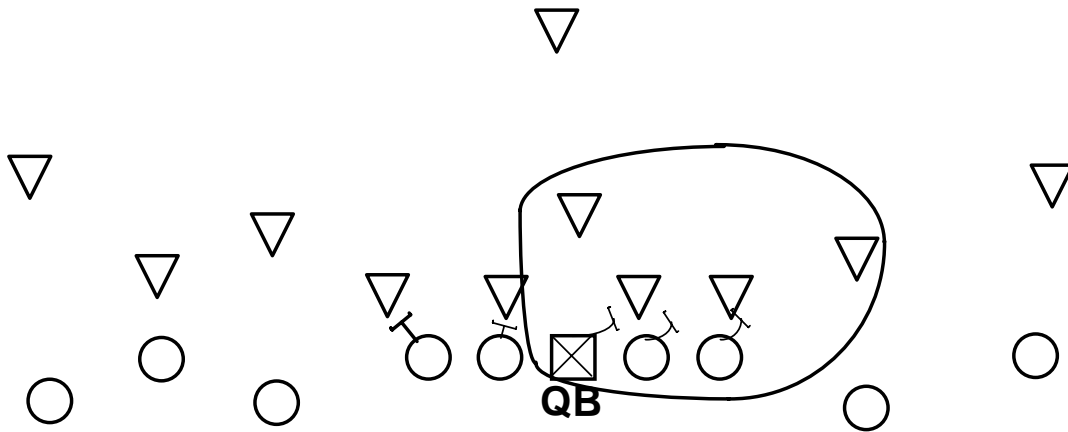
Zone (or slide) protection is a little different. You will slide away from the 3-plus-receiver side. This will take care of the third and sometimes forth rusher with the wash. The tackle (and sometimes guard) away from the slide direction has man protection.



BUILD IN A "HOT" OR
SIGHT ADJUST TO THE
2-MINUS RECEIVER SIDE
FOR THE 4TH RUSHER
FROM THAT SIDE

BUILD IN A "HOT" TO THE
3-PLUS RECEIVER SIDE FOR
THE THIRD-PLUS RUSHER(S)
FROM THAT SIDE

Protection when the 3-plus receiver side is to the left



BUILD IN A "HOT" TO THE
3-PLUS RECEIVER SIDE FOR
THE THIRD-PLUS RUSHER(S)
FROM THAT SIDE

BUILD IN A "HOT" OR
SIGHT ADJUST TO THE
2-MINUS RECEIVER SIDE
FOR THE 4TH RUSHER
FROM THAT SIDE

My opinion is that although I think man protection is better when passing from an empty formation, zone protection is easier to install and teach. I would do whatever my line coach said was best for his guys.

In addition, running some plays from the "Fly Offense" can become a part of this package. Depending on how you align your receivers, you can have any one of them run the ball from an empty set.

Installing the "no-back passing attack" is fairly straightforward. Start with the quick passing game. We start with the quick passing game because it forces the QB to make good pre-snap reads, and helps him make quicker decisions down the road. In addition, the QB now will be able to unload the ball before the pass rush gets to him.

The line will aggressively attack the rushers and cut the end men (if necessary) to get their hands down. The tackles need to be especially cognizant of this, and help the quarterback by creating a passing lane.

Once the quick passing game is installed, we put in the dropback passing game. I always have the QB throw to the HOT receiver the first few throws to get him used to finding the uncovered receiver or the receiver with the best leverage on his defender. Plus, it develops a rhythm for the QB and gives him confidence.

Most of the time, I will shift out of another formation when I go to an empty set. This should confuse the defense, and give the QB an easy pre-snap read. When the defense is expecting our

empty backfield, I won't usually shift to it, but will instead motion to a no-back formation.