

## Options at the breakdown - Keeping the ball alive

**When the ball is under threat at the breakdown from a defender/s the ball carrier and support need to work quickly and efficiently to secure possession and maintain forward momentum. Key steps to follow when the attacking player breaks down:**

1. Look for the pop from the deck - first prize is to keep the ball alive and maintain forward momentum by popping to a supporting player who is running from depth onto the ball at pace.
2. Pick and go - if there is no direct threat on the ball and the defense is not organized, the supporting player should pick the ball and exploit the open space.
3. Clean out and secure - if there is only one cleaner then work to clear the threat but stay over the ball securing possession and defending the poach. If the head cleaner has support e.g. two cleaners then the head cleaner (first support) must clean the threat and the third supporting player either plays the ball or secures if still under threat.

The key is to keep the ball moving forward so always look for the first two options the pop or the pick and go as 'continuity is king'. If neither of these two options are available then secure possession quickly and efficiently to set the base for quick recycled ball.