

# ***Attack***

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***10 ready made coaching sessions***



# Movements to lose a defender

## What you tell your players the session is about:

This session shows you how to coach your players the ability to lose tight markers in order to receive a pass.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Make a movement in one direction, taking the defender with you, then double-back to lose the defender and create space to receive a pass.
- 2 Be quick and unpredictable, ready to change direction to be free for a pass.
- 3 Keep your head up so that you can see all the players around you.



### what to shout

- “Double back”
- “Pass on call”
- “Pass on eye contact”



### what to look for

Are your players making movements in a way which is useful to the passer? Your players need to understand that they must use the double-back movement to find a space which the passer can actually reach with the pass. Also, is the passing technique good? (quick, accurate, side-foot passing).



### what to think about

Make sure that your players take advantage of the space created. As soon as the pass is made, the passer then becomes a receiver and has to find space. Can your players use these techniques to pass their way up the pitch to the opposition goal?

## What you get your players to do:

### Set-up

Use a whole pitch for partner work.

Use a 30 x 30 yard area for the 2v1/3v2 work, with one goal and a goalkeeper.

### In pairs

Arrange your players into pairs. One acts as a defender and one acts as an attacker.

Get one player to make a movement away from where he wants to receive the ball and then immediately make a sharp double-back movement into the space where he wants to receive it.

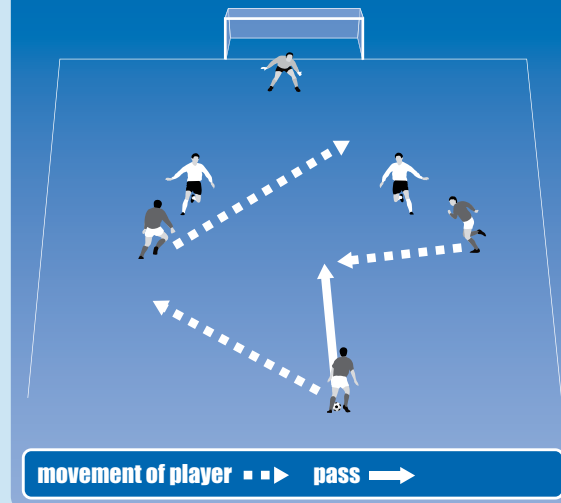
For example, get your players to make a sharp movement to the right, taking the defender with them, before changing direction and making space to receive on the left and vice versa.

### 2v1

Now add a passing player.

When the pass is made the ball is live and the two attackers must combine to complete the move by creating a goal-scoring opportunity.

### Movements to lose a defender



### Development

Add an extra pair of attackers/defenders and a passing player so that 2v1 becomes 3v2.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Play a small-sided game and see if the players are using the new techniques learnt. Encourage them to create space and react using the shouts above.

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# Heading to score

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Scoring goals.
- 2 Accurate and powerful heading.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Provide decent, accurate throws.
- 2 Move into the ball's line of flight.
- 3 Use the forehead.
4. Score past the goalkeeper!



### what to shout

- “Keep your eyes open”, “Attack the ball”.
- “Get above the ball”, “Accuracy first, power later”.



### what to look for

- Eyes on the ball.
- Use of the neck muscles for power.
- Heading the top half and the middle of the ball to direct it downwards.
- Ideally aiming for the corners of the goal.
- If jumping for the ball: taking off on one foot; use of the arms to help take-off; body almost side-on; an arched back before putting power into the header; making contact with the ball at the highest point of the jump; landing on both feet.



### what to think about

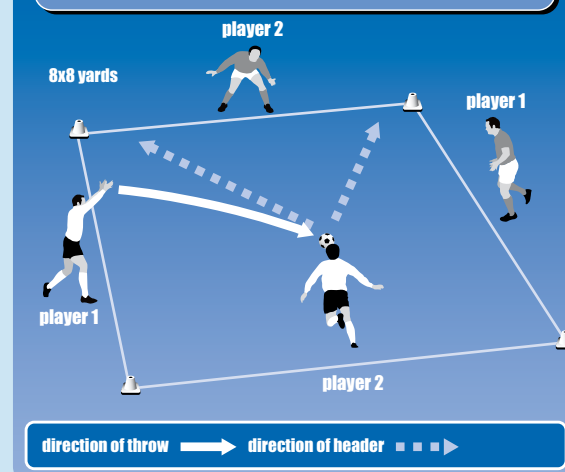
For safety reasons only begin heading sessions with young players when they're aged eight or nine, but even then don't overdo it. Try a softer ball to help build confidence, and make the distances you're asking players to head the ball suitable for their age. Finally, don't introduce opposition until kids are confident and old enough to cope with physical contact.

## What you get your players to do:

**Stage 1:** One player stands on each side of a square playing area. Each side equals the width of a match-size goal. A player from the white team throws the ball slightly ahead of his teammate who runs forward and tries to head it past the opponent acting as a goalkeeper. The service must be varied, from balls lobbed in the air to balls thrown closer to the ground that make players dive forward.

**Stage 2:** The other team has a go at trying to score. The person who was the goalkeeper now heads the ball thrown by his teammate, while the player who headed the ball last time is the goalkeeper. Change roles so all four players have a turn at scoring. As the players become accustomed to the ball coming from one side, make teammates swap positions.

### Heading to score



### Development

Make it competitive by keeping the team's scores. For example, first team to score five goals wins.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Play a 6 v 6 game of Throw, Head, Catch in an area 40 x 25 metres with normal size goals. Both teams have a keeper. Both teams must try to score but they can only move the ball by the first player throwing the ball to a second teammate who heads it to a third teammate. Once thrown the other team can win the ball back by “out heading” their opponents, or intercepting the ball with their hands in the “catching” phase.

# Focusing an attack

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Finding and creating space.
- 2 Changing the focal point of an attack.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Look for space to play the ball to.
- 2 Pass the ball through the goals to score.
- 3 Pass and move.



### what to shout

- “Keep the ball moving”
- “Call for the ball”.
- “Get your head up”
- “Switch the play”.



### what to look for

- Quick, accurate passing.
- Good first touch and close control.
- Lots of movement.
- Playing with the head up.
- Identifying and attacking the space.
- Attacking team spreading out to create space.



### what to think about

If the session is proving too difficult then increase the number of goals so the players can be successful.

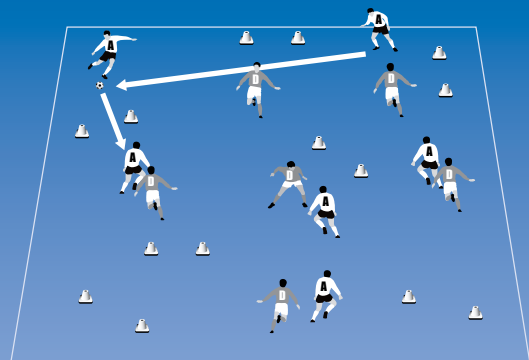
## What you get your players to do:

**Stage 1:** Play 9 vs 9 in an area approx 40 x 40 metres and set up 10 small goals or ‘gates’.

Reduce the numbers of gates and the size of the pitch accordingly depending on the number of players, but there should be one goal more than the number of players on either side.

**Stage 2:** Limit the number of touches each player can have to three or even two.

### Focusing an attack



movement of ball → goal    
A = attacker D = defender

### Development

Keeping the ball below head height will encourage the players to switch the play through a series of shorter ground passes.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Even in small-sided games encourage players to switch the play, whether it be a goalkeeper receiving the ball from one full back and moving onto the other, a centre midfielder changing the point of attack, or a long pass from one flank to the other.

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# Overload attacking

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Taking advantage of a “number up” situation (“overload”).
- 2 Punishing your opponents by scoring a goal.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 React to each ball.
- 2 Spread out and make it hard for the defenders.
- 3 Play direct and move the ball quickly.
- 4 Never ignore a shooting opportunity.



### what to shout

- “Stretch the pitch”
- “Pace”
- “Find your spare player”
- “Be ruthless”
- “Shoot at every opportunity”



### what to look for

- Decision making of the players in possession.
- Are they selfish?
- Do they take too long on the ball?
- Do they see a pass?
- Are they clever?
- Movement of the players not in possession.
- Do they close the space or do they spread out?
- Are they standing still or are they always on the move?
- Are they hiding behind the defenders or are they clever in their positioning?



### what to think about

The players must play at pace as defenders will be racing back in a real game. The players must be ruthless in these situations and always get a cross or shot at goal.

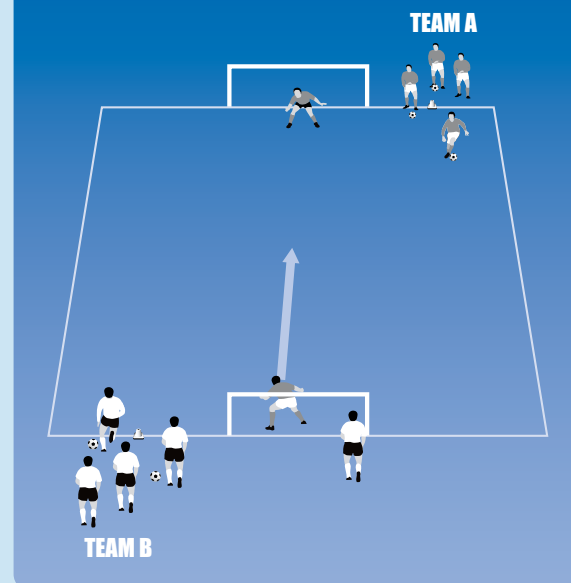
## What you get your players to do:

A player from Team A enters the pitch and plays 1 v 1 with the Team B goalkeeper. After each ball is played, the opposite team enters and now they have the overload situation. The game is played until all the players have entered the pitch and the last ball has left play. The series of attacks is as follows

Team A	v	Team B
1	v	Gk
1	v	2
3	v	2
3	v	4
4	v	4

You then count the scores and rotate the starting team.

### 4 v 4 continuous overload game



### Development

When the series of attacks is complete you can continue in a 4 v 4 game. After one minute take a player off one team for one minute. For the next minute take a player off the other team, thus reversing the advantage.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Games are won and lost on overload situations. As soon as a player is tackled in a game then there is an overload situation. If one team doesn't take advantage of their overload situations then there is a good chance that the opponents will.

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**Where does it fit?** **Individual skills:** movement, dribbling skills, passing, crossing, finishing  
**Team skills:** combination and link up play, communication, working as a unit

# Combining to score

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Building an attacking partnership.
- 2 Working on movement, understanding and finishing skills.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Use your imagination.
- 2 Communicate with each other.
- 3 Always be on the move.



### what to shout

- “Read each other”
- “Movements to receive”
- “Be clever, be creative”
- “Don’t get in the box too early”
- “Hit the target”
- “Follow in for the rebounds”



### what to look for

Look at the relationship between the two attacking players. Do they have a good awareness and appreciation of each other? When attacking crosses does their movement support each other and give them the best chance to score a goal or do they make the same runs?



### what to think about

Often partnerships will work instantly but some require practices like this to bring the best out of the players. This practice can be broken down in many areas to work on specific situations.

## What you get your players to do:

Arrange your players into pairs.

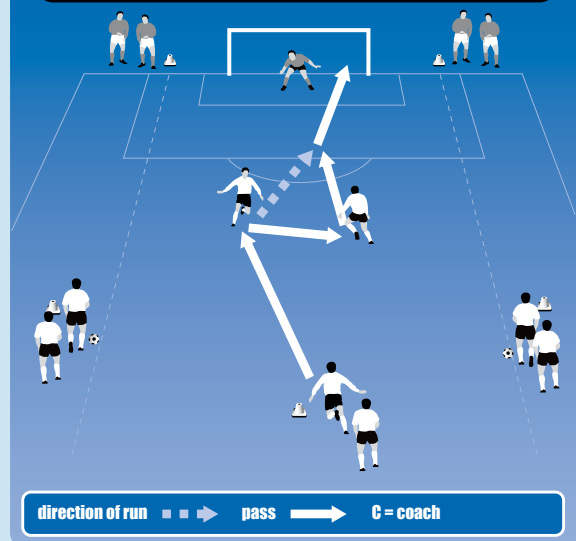
The first two players go out to the wings and the next two players become the forwards.

The two forwards must receive a pass and then combine to score. Immediately after the shot, one of the wingers must dribble and cross the ball for the forwards. The forwards must therefore make a new run to attack the crossed ball.

Immediately after this cross the opposite winger must also dribble and cross. Therefore the two forwards have 3 attempts to score.

After this, the forwards become the wingers and the wingers wait to become the new forwards

### Forwards combining to score



### Development

- 1 Add a defender to the practice, now the forwards must combine more efficiently and improve the sharpness of their movements.
- 2 Use two defenders and an additional forward, creating a 3v2 situation.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

This will naturally occur in a game, but you could choose to condition the game so that after the initial shot a wide player also crosses a ball into the same box. This will force the forwards to make new runs and lose their markers.

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# The two footed striker

## What you tell your players the session is about:

This session will coach your players to be comfortable shooting with either foot.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Hit the target when shooting.
- 2 React to the next ball.
- 3 Work at a realistic speed.



### what to shout

- “Hit the target”
- “Shoot across the goal”
- “Match speed”



### what to look for

Carefully examine the technique of the players. Are they leaning back? Are they using their arms for balance? Where are the players shooting – either side or right at the goalkeeper?



### what to think about

All players must be willing to accept an opportunity to shoot with both feet. In games chances to score may be rare. When a chance arises, the attacker must be confident to shoot with whatever foot the ball arrives to.

## What you get your players to do:

The white-shirted players dribble and then pass to the coach.

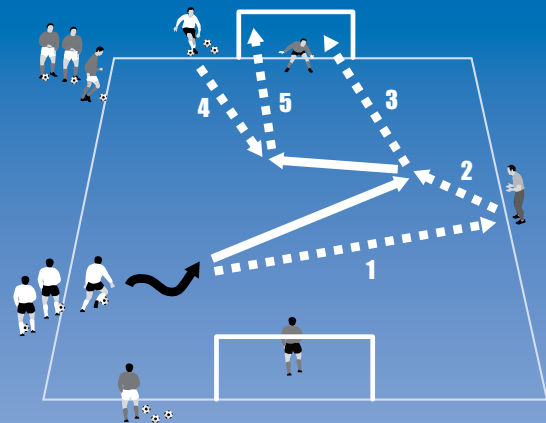
The coach makes a lay-off for a first time strike with the right foot.

Immediately the white-shirted player reacts and receives a second pass from the server for a left-footed shot.

For the next attack, the shooting player takes the place of the server and the server joins the dark-shirted line.

The dark-shirted line now play, attacking the other goal and are shooting left foot first and then right foot.

### The two-footed striker



direction of run → direction of pass - - -  
dribble 

### Development

Play a game where extra points are awarded for scoring with your weak foot.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Play a normal small-sided game. Games will naturally involve shooting. Make it a rule of the practice game that the players must shoot at every opportunity. Two goals are awarded for first time finishes or goals with the weaker foot.

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**Where does it fit? Individual skills:** Movements, shooting technique, reactions  
**Team skills:** Team work, communication, combination play (in the game)

# Accurate shooting

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Scoring goals.
- 2 Improving their chances of beating the goalkeeper.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Look at the keeper's position – has the goalkeeper left any gaps to aim at?
- 2 Concentrate on accuracy.
- 3 Aim for the high-scoring zones.



### what to shout

- "Take a good first touch", "Pick your spot."
- "Compose yourself", "Shoot!"



### what to look for

- Good execution of the selected technique – sidefoot or instep ("laces").
- Head down, eyes on the ball when taking the shot.
- Body over the ball and non-kicking foot alongside to keep the shot under the bar.
- If going for power, use of the instep and follow through with the kicking foot after striking the ball.



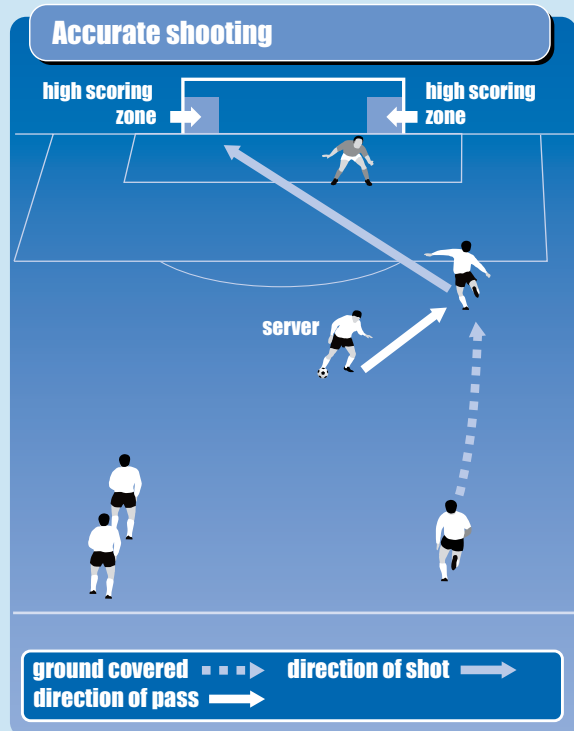
### what to think about

It's generally harder for the goalkeeper to reach the ball if it's hit along the floor, so encourage players to keep the ball low. Also get them to aim across the goalkeeper and for the corners because if the keeper makes the save in match situations, other attackers can score from the rebound. Power shouldn't be overlooked either because the speed of the ball alone may be enough to beat the goalkeeper.

## What you get your players to do:

**Stage 1:** Set up two pairs of corner flags centrally in a goal. Split the players into two lines about 20m from goal with a server between them. The server plays the ball to either side and the player on that side reacts by running onto the pass, taking a touch to control the ball then shooting. A point is awarded for a goal, but bonus points are given if the ball goes between either of the outer two flags and the posts. After taking the shot the player joins the other line.

**Stage 2:** When players are on the side that doesn't favour their strong foot, encourage them to use the weaker one.



### Development

Get the server to vary the delivery by bouncing the ball so the players have to hit volleys. Or make the server change their position so the players have to hit the ball coming towards them or across them. Other ways of increasing difficulty include insisting on a first-time shot on goal, introducing a time limit, or adding a defender.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Play 6 v 6 in an area approx 40 x 40. Use full-size portable goals, and encourage the players to shoot at every opportunity.

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# Power shooting

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Hitting a hard shot.
- 2 Scoring goals.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Drive the ball with the instep.
- 2 Aim to get plenty of power, but don't sacrifice accuracy.
- 3 Aim ideally for the corners and across the goal.



### what to shout

- “The goal doesn't move so eyes on the ball!”
- “Be positive” “Stay composed” “Hit the target”



### what to look for

- Non-kicking foot alongside the ball to keep the shot under the bar.
- Head still and eyes on the ball when striking.
- Knee and head over the ball.
- Using the arm on the same side as the non-kicking foot for balance.
- Toe down on kicking foot to strike with the “laces”.
- Contact with the middle to top half of the ball.
- Follow through with the kicking foot after striking the ball.
- Land on the kicking foot after taking the shot.



### what to think about

It's generally harder for the goalkeeper to reach the ball if it's hit along the floor, so encourage players to keep the ball low. Also get players to aim across goalkeeper and for the corners because if the keeper makes the save in match situations, other attackers can score from the rebound.

## What you get your players to do:

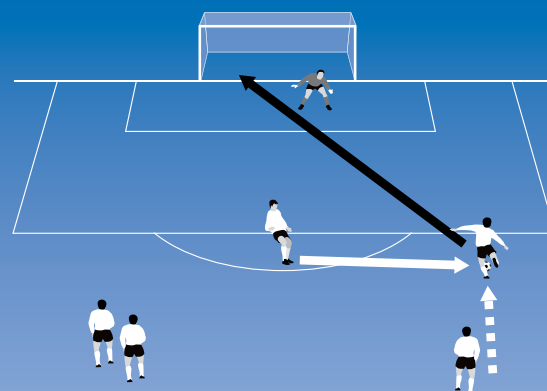
Stage 1: Split the players into two lines about 20 metres from the goal with a server between them.

The server plays the ball to either side and the player on that side reacts by running onto the pass, taking a touch to control the ball then shooting.

After taking the shot the player joins the other line.

Stage 2: Get the players to shoot first time.

### Power shooting



ground covered - -> pass -> shot ->

### Development

Get the server to change their position so players have to hit balls travelling across or towards them first time. The server can also try bouncing the ball so the players have to hit volleys.

Other ways of increasing difficulty include introducing a time limit, adding a defender and encouraging players to use their weaker foot.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Play 6 v 6 in an area approx 40 x 40. Use full-size portable goals and encourage the players to shoot at every opportunity.

# Taking penalties

## What you tell your players the session is about:

Honing their penalty-taking method so it becomes second nature.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Make up your mind early which spot you're going to shoot at and stick to it.
- 2 Concentrate on accuracy before power, but...
- 3 Strike the ball firmly – it gives a goalkeeper less time to react.
- 4 Whether high or low, aim for the corners – this will make it hard for the goalie.



### what to shout

- “Don't let the keeper put you off – remember, his job is to pick up the ball after you score!”



### what to look for

- Ideally taking four to six steps in the run-up.
- Disguise – for example, approaching the ball as if aiming for one corner but striking it to the opposite corner.
- Head down, eyes on the ball when taking the shot.
- Body over the ball and non-kicking foot alongside the ball.
- Instep ('laces') for power and follow through with the kicking foot, or sidefoot for accuracy.
- Following up the rebound if the goalkeeper saves the first effort.



### what to think about

Have your team practice penalties at the end of a training session because that will replicate how tired they might feel on the day.

Remember, the aim of penalty drills is to let players find a method that works for them (which could be blasting the ball at the middle of the goal) and to achieve repeatability with that method. That's so that on matchday they know exactly what they're doing, including how many steps are in their run-up.

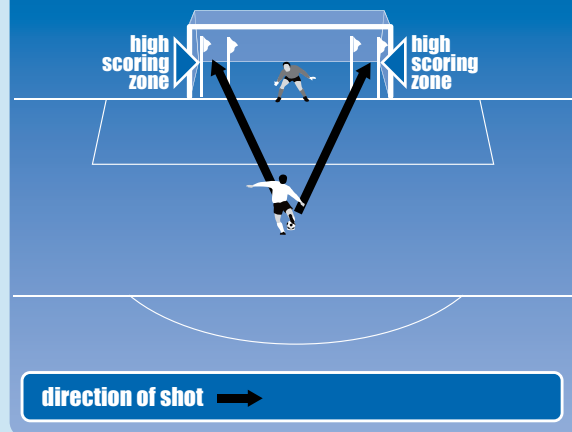
## What you get your players to do:

**Stage 1:** Set up two pairs of corner flags on the goal-line but towards the posts.

Every player has one go at a time, and begin by asking them to aim low, between either of the outer two flags and the posts.

**Stage 2:** Challenge your players to place the ball in either of the high corners, between either of the outer two flags and the posts.

### Taking penalties



### Development

Remove the corner flags and introduce a goalkeeper.

### How would I put this into a game situation?

Bring back the corner flags but this time put them just behind the goal-line.

Split the players into two teams and have one goalkeeper. Award, for example, one point for a goal scored in the middle of the net, two points for shots that go in the bottom corners, and three points for shots that go in either of the top corners.

Remove the corner flags again and finish with a conventional, say best of five, penalty shoot-out.

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# Ultimate 1v1 circuit

## What you tell your players the session is about:

Attacking and defending in a variety of 1v1 situations.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Play with a good tempo.
- 2 Be direct in your play.
- 3 Hit the target with all shots.
- 4 Be clever and use disguises and feints.
- 5 Defenders - be patient, stand up and force the attacker away from goal.



### what to shout

#### Attackers

- “Be direct”
- “Hit the target”
- “Be clever”
- “Go past him”



### what to look for

Who is your best attacker? Who is your best defender? Can you make them compete against each other? It's vitally important that the players work realistically and to their maximum in all practices. Ensure that there is genuine intensity in everybody's play.



### what to think about

This practice works through all the possible 1v1 situations that your players will experience in a real game. Each player works as a defender then as an attacker and is therefore gaining valuable experience in all roles. It's important for forwards to play a defensive role so that they can understand the issues a defender faces in a competitive situation, and vice versa.

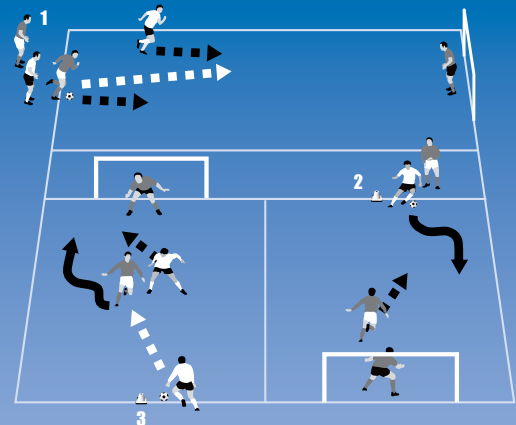
## What you get your players to do:

Pitch 1 – the defender passes a ball into space and tries to recover, the forward must try to sprint away and score.

Pitch 2 – the attacker must attack the defender in a 1v1 situation.

Pitch 3 – the attacker must try to turn and score. The defender must prevent the attacker turning.

### Ultimate 1v1 circuit



direction of run ■■■▶ dribble —▶ pass ■■■▶

## Development

Play a small sided game. 1v1 situations will naturally occur in all three of the areas worked on.

When the situations above arise, point them out to your players.

## How would I put this into a game situation?

1v1s will occur naturally in any game.

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**Where does it fit? Individual skills:** Speed of play, decision making, dribbling, shooting, movement, defending  
**Team skills:** Gk and defending communication

# How to use these sessions

**Print off the session and take it to training. It should take you less than five minutes to read the instructions, set up the session, and then you are ready to communicate what happens to your players.**

## **Number of players**

You only need six players to complete a session, though it can easily be expanded to meet your needs. With lots more players you could have a number of grids working at the same time.

## **Timings**

The timings are for a twenty minute session, but it can be expanded or reduced to meet your needs. It's your call.

As a rule of thumb 10 minutes would be enough time for a well executed first drill, development and feedback. Any shorter and you have not explored the full skill range or asked enough questions of the players. Longer is fine as long as you feel the session is developing. The game related element adds another 10 minutes.

## **Equipment**

The equipment used is simple. A set of cones (or trainers or tops) as markers and a couple of balls.

You can add in other equipment where you feel you need them – we just assume that you don't have them because sometimes the shed is locked or another coach is using them.

## **Training area**

The size of the training area is left for you to decide. Smaller players need a smaller area, but the session will never need more than a 20m x 20m grid for initial drills. The smaller the area the more intense the training.

## **The standard and age groups**

These sessions are based on the core skills of soccer. They will challenge any standard because a player can always perform the core better.

The "development" ideas can be used to differentiate between the different standards of your players; the "think about" section can challenge the more advanced; the "game related situations" can change the contact situations the teams face.

Players should wear shin pads in all coaching sessions. They should be suitable to the player's physique and worn correctly with socks pulled up.

## **Elements of the session**

### **What to tell your players the session is about:**

This is your introduction and outlines the objectives of the session. Just read this out. The players then have an objective. Return to this at the end of the session to see if you have achieved your objectives.

### **What you tell your players to do:**

This is how you want your players to achieve the objectives. You can tell the players straight away how to achieve the objectives, or you can tease it out of them as the session goes on.

### **What you get your players to do:**

This shows you how the session is going to work. Depending on what is going to be achieved, it sets out what actions the players are going to take. There are no exact measurements, or complicated patterns – the approach is "simple, stupid, successful". Slow motion the first few patterns – get the drill right and the skill right first before speeding up. Use the "What to shout" prompts to keep the players focused. Use the "What to look for" to keep your eye on why the players might be failing.

### **Development**

No session is worth doing unless there is some form of progression. Normally there will be an increase in pressure, say by adding more defenders, or by restricting the time available. Other areas for you to think about are: Where do I stand as coach? Do I throw the ball into the grid?

### **How would I put this into a game situation?**

All the elements of the session are geared to the game, but this section puts the session one step away from a full game, with attack, defence and a goal line.

### **What to shout**

Have the words handy, because apart from the usual words of encouragement, it is good to shout the key factors to players. Of course you can hold some of these "shouts" back and ask the players to identify how they can improve.

### **What to look for**

You need to keep your eyes open for "best practice". This section helps you identify quickly where players might go wrong so you can quickly put them right.

### **Think about**

Here you have the chance to challenge the players and situation, either by using feedback or just asking yourself the questions. It is a little more advanced and might not be appropriate for your players.

### **Where does it fit:**

To help you file and order our coaching we have given you the core areas of individual and team skills that the session covers.