

# Soccer Practice Sessions



Phase III

15 - Adults

# Creating the Decision Maker

Player and Coach



By  
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# Acknowledgements

Thank you to every player I have coached.



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# Contents



**Compact defending**.....Teach the players how to slide and defend as a team. Get ready for a clean sheet.



**Balanced defending**.....The players will understand pressure, cover, balance and depth in this fun defending practice.



**Pressing reactions**.....Teach the players to look for trigger signs in this pressing practice that will put fear in the opposition.



**The role of the defensive midfielder**.....A very important position on the field needs to be addressed at practice. Your defensive midfielder will become the 'body guard'.



**Playing through the lines**.....This session will install bravery in your players. Play the game as a unit and build play up from the back.



**Transition in attack**.....Watch your players reaction time improve a lot. This fun competitive session will have the players begging for more.



**Penetrate in the final third**.....Your players will be able to probe and probe until they find the opportunity to take a shot.



**Switching the point of attack**.....Move the ball away from pressure and exploit the defence of the opposition.



**Counter Attacking**.....Attack like Manchester City FC and enjoy the speed and creativity of your team on game day.



**Counter Attacking v's Possession**.....Your players will understand the difference between these two important attacking phases of play.



**Possession & support**.....The team work of your players will improve dramatically if you start to use this practice session.



**Possession - Exploiting space**.....Watch your players move the ball away from pressure and attack the opposition.



**Possession overload**.....This will teach your players to pass the ball and create overloads on the field.



**Reactions in the box**.....Watch the goals go in on game day after running this practice session a few times.



**500 touches on the ball**.....Your players will take more than 500 game related touches on the ball.



**Pressing in the final third**.....Players will understand the triggers that starts a team press.



# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Compact Defending

**Area:** 24 x 25 (Two 12 x 25 areas)

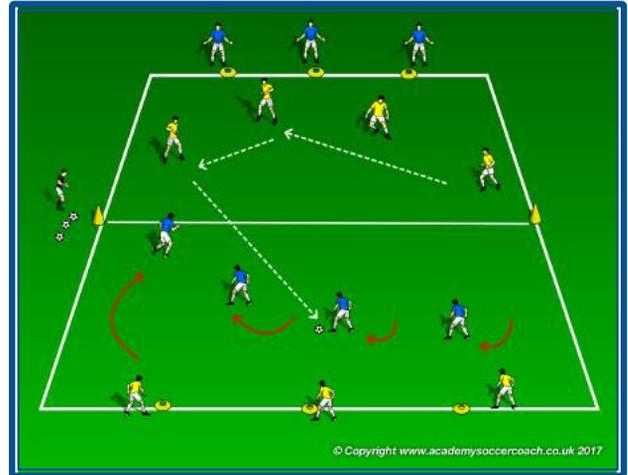
4v4 with 2 or 3 target players outside the area. The coach has all the soccer balls.

1. The 4 players cannot come outside their area.
2. The coach serves in a ball.
3. The objective of the exercise is for the players in possession to pass to any of the target players. The 'back four' move as a unit to block the passes.
4. If a pass is blocked or a pass is made to the target players the game continues.
5. Change target players.

**Coaching points:**

Team-work and communication. Movement by defenders is forward and back.

Positional sense, angles, balance of the four players.



**Area:** 36X40 with two 1 yard end zones and a 10 yard center zone. Use 15 - 18 players split into 3 teams. Two

teams are in the end zone and a defending team in the middle zone.

1. The coach plays the ball to yellows.
2. Two defending blues enter the area. The yellows keep possession and attempt to pass the ball to the opposite red team.
3. The defending blue team make play predictable. The two players inside the end zone press the ball while the other three cover, balance and block passing lines.
4. The ball cannot go above head height.

**Variation:** Switch defenders

**Coaching points:** Communication. Be compact. Make play predictable. Move as a unit. Arc your runs.



**Area:** Half a field with two teams 7 v 6 + GK. A defensive zone is marked out as shown. The team in blue is playing a 4-3 with one holding midfielder player. The 4 defenders and the holding midfielder player stay in the defensive zone. The two other midfielder players move around the outer area offering defensive cover.

1. Play 7 v 6 in the defenders favor.
2. The coach serves the ball to any yellow player.
3. The defenders move as a unit to close the play down and keep it compact. Pressure, cover and balance.
4. If the defending team wins the ball they attempt to keep possession and score through one of the goals on the halfway line. (They can come out of the zone)

**Variations:**

Add another yellow player

Remove the defending zone

**Coaching points:**

Communication from the defending team is so important. Leave the 'non danger' player, the player who is furthest away from play. You do not have to guard this player tight





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Balanced Defending

**Area:** Set up three 12 x 20 grids. Each grid has a goal at each end. The coach has all the balls. Players are placed at both sides of their goal.

Part 1

1v1 and is played in one grid.

1. The coach serves in a ball to any player. That player plays a 1v1 against the player diagonally opposite.

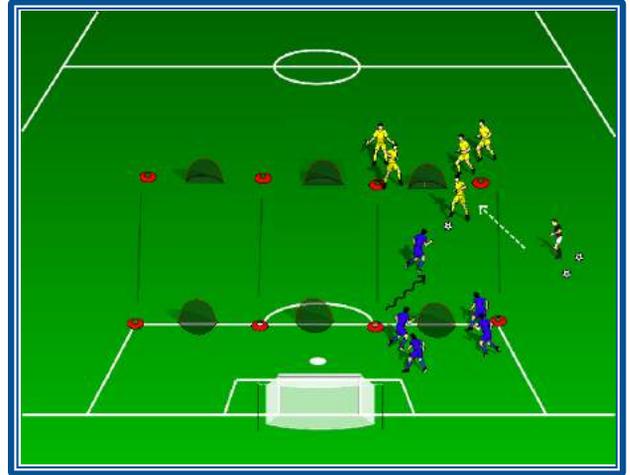
2. The object of the exercise is for the defender to defend the 1v1 properly while the player with the ball attempts to score on their goal.

**Coaching points:**

Force the play one way (weaker foot)

Take a good defensive stance

Encourage defenders to make the tackle.



**Variation:** Half of the players from each team move to the next grid.

Part 2 2v2 and is played in two grids. Players must stay in their own grid.

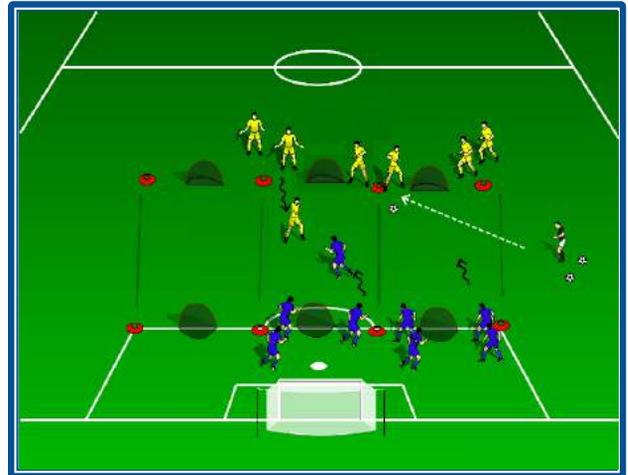
1. The coach serves in a ball to any player. That player and their team mate in the opposite grid enter their playing area. Two defenders enter their playing area also.

2. Players can pass to each other to try and move the defenders but they must stay in their own playing area.

3. A goal can be scored on either goal. The object of the exercise is to teach the defender who is not adding pressure, to cover their goal.

**Variation:**

Part 3 - Now move to the third grid and play 3 v 3. Watch how the players will offer instant cover and balance.



**Area:** Half a field or full field, depending on numbers.

Have two small target goals on each end line.. Teams score by passing through these goals. You can work one team on defending and keep having yellows attack or you can play it as a game and coach both teams on compact defending.

1. Look for the defending team to slide and make the area compact.

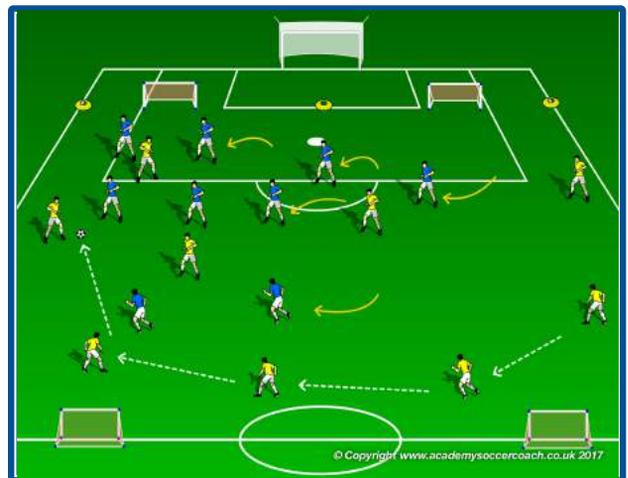
2. See if the players can use the coaching points from the other two exercises.

**Coaching points:**

Communication

Work as a unit

Reactions





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Pressing Reactions

**Area:** 6 x 15 area with one small goal and three cones. (3 stations are shown)

Each station has 3-4 players.

1. (Blue players) Player B checks to the ball and receives a pass from player A. Player B passes the ball back to Player A.

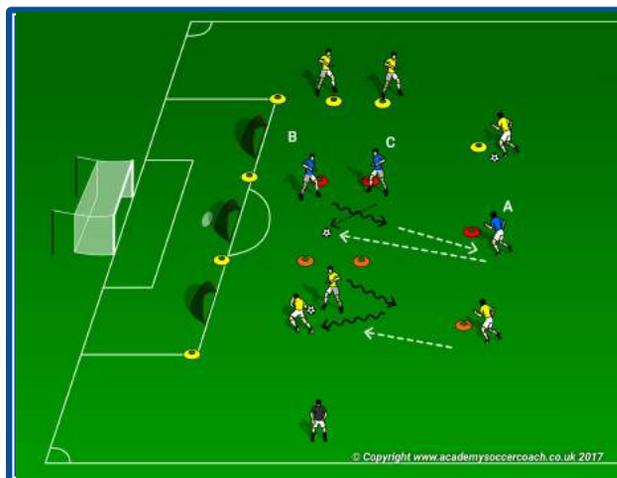
2. Player C makes a run into space and Player A passes the ball to C.

3. Player B reacts and attempts to stop Player C from scoring in the small goal. Rotate the role of the players.

**Variation:** Once B passes the ball back to A, player A does not make the pass again. Players B & C turn and see who can sprint through the goal first.

**Coaching points:**

You are teaching the brain to react.



**Rondo reaction:**

**Area:** Three 12 x 12 boxes with 4 players in boxes 1, 2 and 3 with one ball in each box.

1. Two players start at the yellow cones on the end-line as shown.

2. The players that are in the 12 x 12 area pass the ball and move in their own area working on their technique.

3. On the coaches signal, the two players sprint round the far yellow cones to box one and enter the 12 x 12 area.

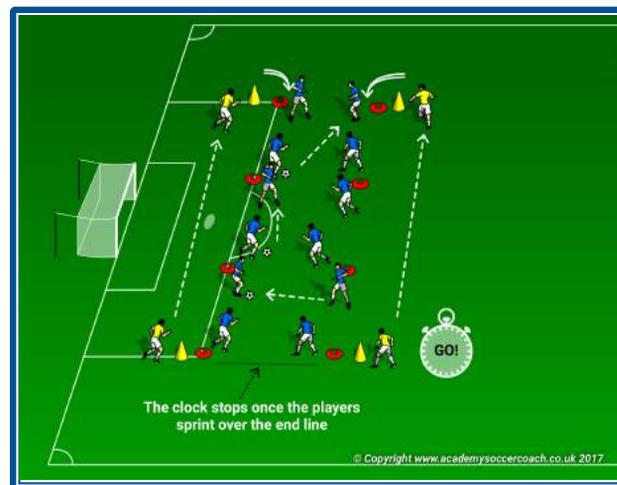
4. They attempt to win the ball while the 4 players play keep away.

5. Once they win the ball, they move into box two until they have won the ball and then into box three. Once they win the ball in box three, they sprint over the end line.

6. The coach times the players to see how long it takes.

**Coaching points:**

Praise the competitive actions. Intelligent pressing. Reactions & Team work.



**Area:** 60 x 40 with 8 v 4. The coach has all the soccer balls and a stopwatch. Each game runs for 90 seconds.

1. The coach serves in the ball to the blue team.

2. The four yellows work together to win the ball while the blue team look to keep possession.

3. As soon as yellows win the ball, that ball is no longer in play and the coach serves in another ball.

4. The coach counts how many balls are used in the 90 seconds of play.

5. After 90 seconds of play, switch to new defenders.

**Coaching points:**

Yellows pressing the play and working together. Forcing the play to tight areas.

Defenders press as a team

Communication





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## The role of the defensive midfielder player

**Technical warm up** Set-up a large square 25 x 25 area. Teams are in 3's each with different colored bibs. One ball per team. Two defenders are placed inside the square. 11 players are shown.

1. The outside player passes to their team mate who then transfers the ball to the other team mate. The ball is then passed back and forth using the middle player.
2. The two defenders attempt to block the passes, no tackling.
3. Switch the middle players.

### Variation

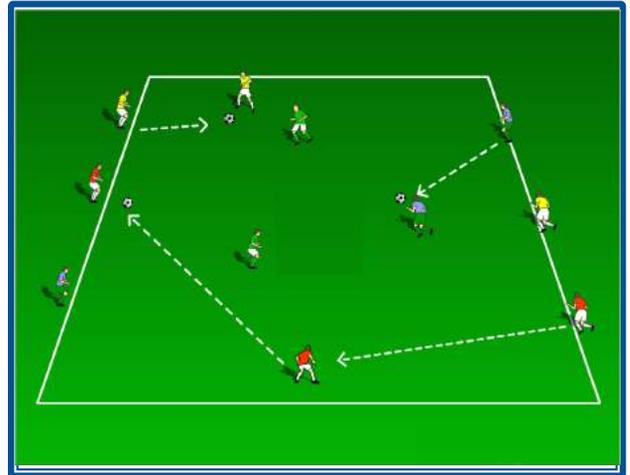
Allow the defenders to tackle

### Coaching points:

Move away from blocking defenders

Move the ball quickly. Communication

Receive on the back foot. Accuracy, weight and timing of the pass.



**Game related practice - Area** - 30 x 30 (three zones) Middle zone is 30 x 20 and two end zones are 5 x 30. 3 v 3 is played in the middle zone with a holding midfielder on the end line of the 5 x 30 zone. To score the ball has to be dribbled to the opposite end line.

1. The holding midfielders when defending or attacking give verbal instructions to their three team mates.

*When defending* - The holding midfielder communicates to team mates and can also stop a goal being scored.

*When attacking* - The holding midfielder player can be used when keeping possession of the ball. They stay in the end zone.

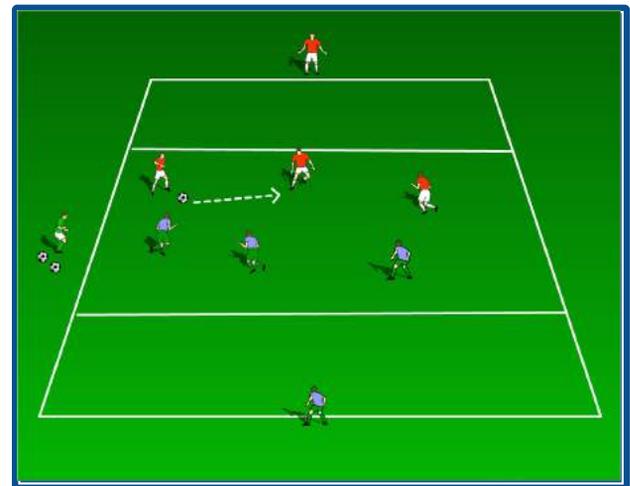
### Variation:

Add two holding midfielders.

### Coaching points:

Verbal support could be:

"Man on" "Get tight" "Show inside" "Win the ball" "Get goal side" "Support" "Score"



**Area:** 40 x 70 playing area with two teams. Play 6 v 6. 3 v 3 in each attacking zone. The holding midfielder player is in a 10 x 40 central zone. The group of 3 v 3 stay in their own half.

### Holding midfielders role:

1. (as shown) The red defenders attempt to get the ball to the red attackers.

2. The grey attackers and the holding midfield play try to stop this.

3. If the holding midfielder blocks the pass, they start the attack again. If the grey attackers win the ball they can use the holding midfielder player to keep possession.

4. If the ball is switched to the red attackers then the holding midfielder helps the reds in possession and attempts to stop the grey defenders getting the ball to the grey attackers.

(You could add two holding midfielders to the middle zone.)

### Coaching points:

Holding midfielders positioning and communication





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Playing through the lines

**Area:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a field. 2 teams of 7 players with two target players or GK's at opposite ends of the playing area. The 6 players set up in a 4-2 formation. Both target players have a soccer ball. (Be creative in how this can work for you)

1. The exercise starts with the target player distributing the ball to an open team mate. Whites move the ball from one side to the other. Blues do the same with their ball.

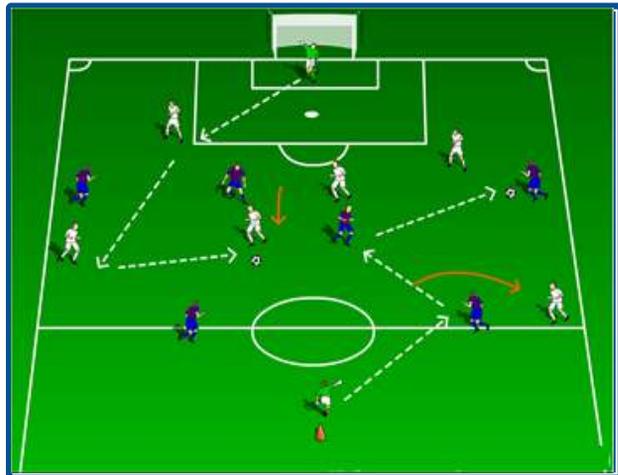
2. Once they find the opposite target player with a pass, they receive the ball back from the target player and move the ball quickly to the opposite target player.

### Coaching points:

Look for forward passes into space and 2<sup>nd</sup> midfielder making 3<sup>rd</sup> man run. GK delivery (Foot or throw). Body shape. Midfield rotation (One moves out and the other occupies the space that was vacated)

Technique - Accuracy, weight & timing of pass.

Creativity and mobility



**Area:** 30 x 55 in three zones. 25x30, 20x30 and a 10x30 middle zone. 6v6 with two neutral players. Set up a 3v3 in the 25 yard area and a 2v2 in the 20 yard area. All the players except the neutral players stay in their zones.

1. Play starts with a pass from the goalkeeper to a defending player who passes to the central player.

2. The neutral player now starts an attack for the blues. A 3v2 is played in the 20 x 30 zone.

3. If the yellow team win the ball they can pass to the other neutral player to start the attack on the opposite goal where a 4v3 will be played.

4. If a goal is scored the goalkeeper starts the attack by throwing the ball to a defending player.

**Variation:** You can add a defender in the middle zone

### Coaching points:

Play quickly. Look for the triangles

Get the players to play out of their '10 x 10 box'. More awareness on the field.

While defending the defenders must keep glancing at the two floating midfielders to see where they are on the field. When they win the ball back they can find them with a quality pass.



**Area:** 40 x 60 playing area with two teams. Play 7 v 7 with 2 neutral players.

1. Normal soccer rules apply.

2. Start the game with the goalkeeper having the ball.

3. The attacking team allows the GK to distribute the ball to the defender. They switch the ball to the opposite side.

4. Once that wide player touches the ball, the game is live.

5. Look for players moving the ball away from pressure and building through the thirds.

6. Play with the same restart for about 10 minutes and then let the players play.

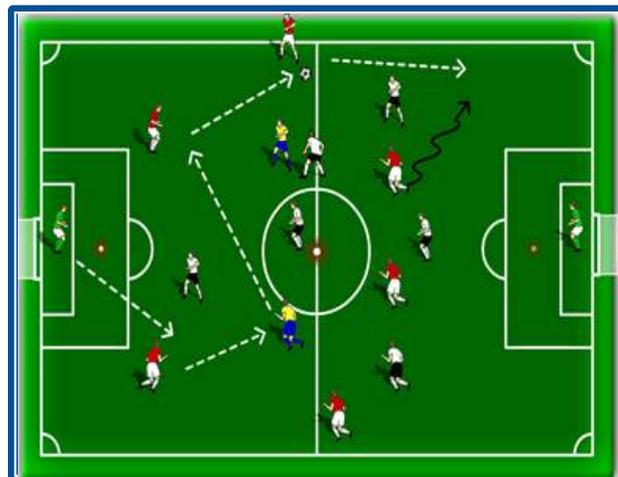
### Coaching points:

Mental awareness of space.

Players keep scanning the field.

Move the ball quickly and with quality especially in the attacking third.

Look for players who want the ball.





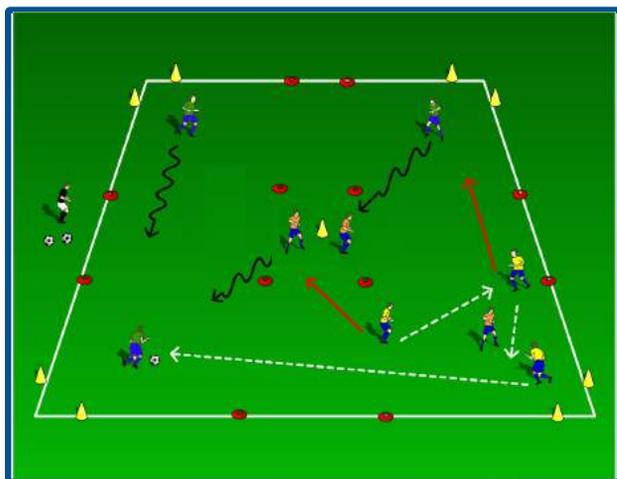
# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Transition in attack

**Area:** Four 12 x 12 yard boxes with a 3 yard cross shape channel in the middle as shown. 9 players in 3 teams of 3. The coach has all the balls. A 3 yard goal is positioned at every corner. The 3 yellows are positioned in one 12x12 area while the greens have one player in the other three 12x12 areas. The orange players are situated on the center yellow cone.

1. The orange players are defenders. The coach passes the ball to the yellow team. One orange player enters that playing area.
2. The yellow team keep possession for 3 or more passes and then pass the ball to any green player.
3. The other two green players quickly move to support the green player while the yellow players move to individual playing areas and a new defender enters the green teams area. The other orange defender returns to the center.
4. If oranges win the ball the coach restarts the exercise.

**Variation:** See below

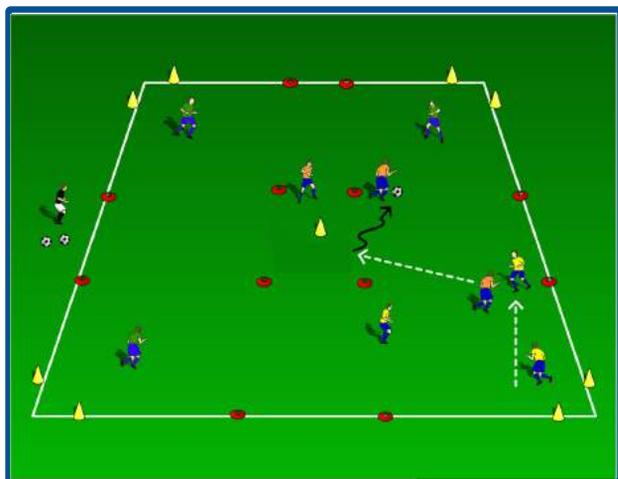


**Area:** Same as above

1. If the players are advanced, you can allow two defenders to enter the playing area.
2. Add a scoring element for the defenders.
3. If a defender wins possession they can pass the ball out to another defender who turns and attacks any of the three squares. They can go it alone or receive help from another defender and attempt to dribble through the outer goal.

**Coaching points:**

- Awareness and energy
- Reaction to winning and losing the ball
- No player should 'ball watch'
- Communication
- Angles for passing

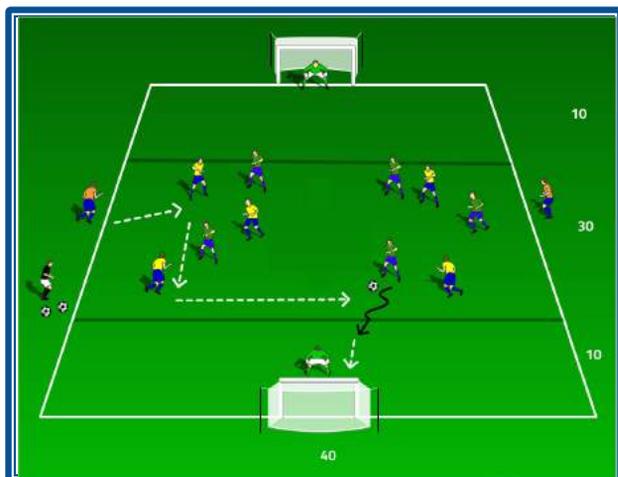


**Area:** 50 x 40 with two 10 x 40 defensive zones and a 30 x 40 central zone. Two orange neutral players are placed as shown. Yellows and orange play a 7v5 against the greens.

1. The yellow team keep possession by using the outside orange players.
2. The green team attempt to win the ball. If they win the ball they can attack on either goal by passing behind the line or dribbling to goal.
3. The attacker plays a 1v1 against the goalkeeper.
4. If the green team scores, the roles are reversed, they now become the possession team and are leading 1-0.

**Coaching points:**

- Good passing and receiving skills
- Play with an open body stance
- Good pressing and defensive play
- Shooting
- Communication





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Penetrate in the final third

**Handball - Area:** 44 x 30. 7 v 7 with goal keepers..

1. The ball is thrown from team mate to team mate.
2. Once the ball is caught by a player they cannot travel with it.
3. Team mates move up the field to receive a throw.
4. As soon as the ball hits the ground, possession goes to the opposite team. If a block is made from a throw and it hits the ground then possession stays with the team that threw it.
5. A goal has to be scored by a header or a volley.
6. The player holding the ball has 3 seconds to get rid of it.

### Coaching points:

Communication. Movement. Build up play  
Decision to set up a goal scoring opportunity  
Team work



**Area** - Same as above. Place a full size goal with goalkeeper at one end of the area and three mini goals at the other end.

1. Play a 6v6 possession game. The attacking team (yellow) must try to score a goal with good movement and passing, attempting to score in the main goal.
2. If the defending team wins the ball they can try to score in any of the three mini goals.
3. The offside rule applies to the attacking team.

### Variation:

Play two touch for the attacking team.

### Coaching points:

It is possession with purpose.  
Movement, angles and dribbling are key factors in this exercise. Do not be one dimensional.



**Area** - Half a field with two teams. Play 7 v 7 with yellows attacking the main goal. Place a target player for blues on the half line.

1. The attacking team starts with the ball and must try to score. Work on the things they have learned from the previous exercises.
2. If the defenders win possession, they attempt to find the target player.

### Coaching points:

Keep probing for openings  
Create 2v1 overloads on the wings  
If the team is not getting through by passing, get the ball to a player who is good at 1v1. Once this player beats the defender, another defender will have to come and defend which will disorganize the defense.





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Switching the point of attack

**Area:** 30 x 20. Player A starts the exercise.

1. Player A passes to player B. Player B passes the ball wide to Player C.
2. Player A overlaps Player C who passes Player A the ball.
3. Player A passes to middle Player D. Player D starts the exercise coming the opposite way and so on.

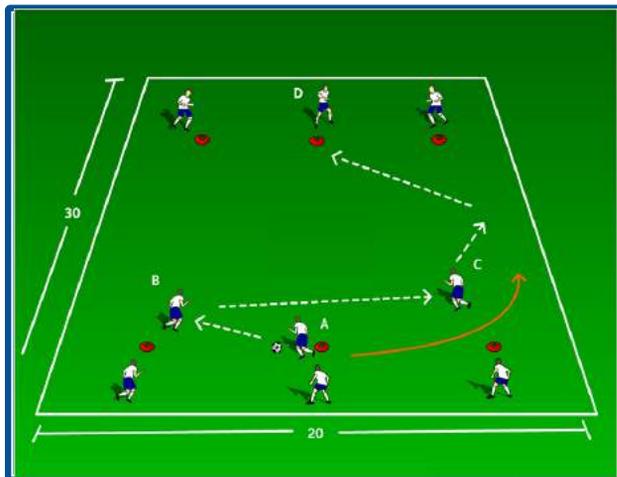
### Variations:

- After passing to player B, Player A overlaps player B. Player B passes to Player C and Player C passes the ball to Player A. (3<sup>rd</sup> man run) Player A passes to D.
- Player A passes wide to either B or C. They then pass the ball back to player A who starts moving forward with the ball. Player B & C overlap central player A. Player A decides who to pass the ball to.

### Coaching points:

Timing, weight of pass.

Movement and communication



**Functional phase - Area:** Third of a field. Six cones are placed on the field to imitate 2 center midfielders, 2 wide players and 2 forwards.

1. Player A passes to player B who has checked to the ball.
2. Player B controls the ball. The two forwards quickly rotate positions. Player B passes to moving Player C who passes one touch to Player A.
3. Player A switches the point of attack to Player D. Player E makes an overlapping run and receives the ball from Player D.
4. Player E crosses the ball for the 2 forwards, wide player B and Player A will be on the edge of the penalty area.
5. Work both sides.
6. You could add a defender who becomes active when the ball gets played wide.

### Coaching points:

Make it look realistic – control and move the ball quickly

Body shape when controlling the ball. Quality Crosses



**Area:** Half a field. Place three small goals at the end lines for teams to attack. Each team has a player staying behind the three goals.

1. Normal rules apply.
2. To score the ball has to be passed through one of the three goals.
3. The 'sweeper' behind the goal moves along the end line to stop a goal being scored. This encourages the players to move the ball quickly.
4. Rotate the sweeper.

### Coaching points:

Quick ball movement

Movement off the ball and communication

Quality passing – to feet or into space.





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Counter Attacking

**Technical warm up:** Area 30 x 20 (2 15 x 20 boxes) 6 players and one soccer ball. One player is positioned on each end line.

1. Every player has to touch / pass the ball. The last person to receive the ball passes the ball long to the player on the opposite end line.
2. All four players now move into the opposite playing area. The player who passed the ball to the end line player, swaps positions.
3. The end line player who has just received the ball passes to one of the incoming players and starts the same passing sequence.
4. Same passing sequence is performed.

### Coaching points:

Quality of passing. Intelligence to make the correct pass. Who is the last player receiving the pass? Body shape of the receiving players. Communication.

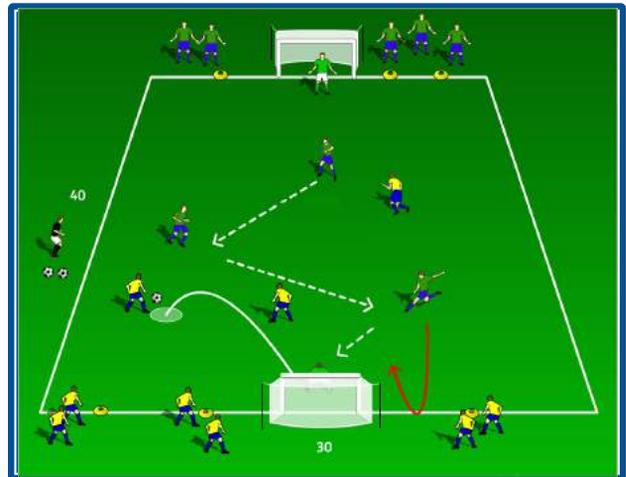


**Area:** 30 x 40 with two teams plus GK's. 3 groups are placed on each end line. The coach has all the balls.

1. The exercise starts with one team of three on the field (Green). The GK feeds them the ball. That player moves forward and shoots (unopposed).
2. Once a player takes a shot they must sprint to the end line and rejoin the game. The GK or coach now passes the ball to a yellow who play a quick counter attack in a 3v2 until the other defender recovers.
3. Once a yellow takes a shot a new three of greens enter the field quickly. The yellow shooter runs to the end line and defends.
4. The rotation is after an attack and a turn at defending, the three players rotate with a new three (or on the coaches call)

### Coaching points:

Shooting. Communication. Quick passing and movement  
The two defenders try to delay the play so the returning defender can recover.



**Area:** Full field with a 30 x 40 central playing area. 4v4 is played in the central area while a forward and a defender occupy the edge of each penalty area.

1. The coach plays the ball into the central area.
2. After keeping the ball for three or more passes the team in possession (blue) play a ball into the forward.
3. When the ball is played to the forward, the best player to support the forward will move out of the central zone and play a 2v1 against the defender.
4. The two attackers play quickly to create a shooting opportunity.

### Variation:

You can have two midfielders support the attacker and a opposition midfielder recovering to create a 3v2.

You can add wingers

### Coaching points:

Awareness of the forwards position  
Passing and movement  
Support play  
Decision making





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Counter Attacking v Possession

**Technical warm up: Third man run** - Exercise shows 8 players with one ball. (Can be done with more players or run two stations) Two players are placed in the central area.

1. 'Player A' passes the ball to the first central player and continues his / her run.
2. 'Player B' moves forward and receives the pass from the middle player. He / she then passes the ball to the next middle player who passes to the running 'Player A'. 'Player B' joins the opposite group.
3. 'Player A' now passes to the end player. The exercise now goes the other way in the same passing sequence.

### Variations:

- Change the middle players.
- Add two balls. One at each end. The quality has to be good for this to work. The middle players have to be alert.
- Get Players A & B to make diagonal runs instead of straight ones. One ball is used for this.

### Coaching points:

- Timing of runs and quality of passing.
- Middle players checking to the ball.



**Area:** Set up between the two penalty areas on a full size pitch, coned off to the width of the penalty area. Three yellow defenders in each end with two attacking blue players. The rest of the blue players are standing by the goals.

1. The session starts with a pair of attackers moving onto the field. One of them plays a pass to the two forwards and then create a 4v3.
2. They have 10 seconds to try and score.
3. Once this first attack is over, the coach feeds another ball into the same four players so they can make another attack on the same goal with no time constraint. Patient possession.
4. Once both attacks are over, the midfield pair join the back of the line at the goal they have just attacked. The practice then continues, with another midfield pair launching the same kind of attack in the other direction.
5. If defenders win the ball they pass it to the coach.

### Coaching points:

- Quality passing. Timing of runs. Create angles.



**Area:** Full field with two floating players.

1. Normal soccer rules apply.
2. The floating orange players play for the team in possession.
3. Look for quick counter attacks and overloads.
4. Allow the players to play and make their own decisions.

Are you seeing signs of learning from the two previous exercises?





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Possession & support

**Area:** Divide 30 x 50 into three zones two outer zones 30x20 and a middle zone 10x30. The game is shown as 5 v 5 (can be more) blues v yellows. No goal keepers. 4v4 is played in the bottom zone. 1v1 in the opposite zone. Coach has all the balls.

1. The blues keep possession and transfer the ball to their team mate when they feel the time is right.
2. Once the ball is transferred three players from each team follow the ball. A blue and a yellow stay in that zone, ready for the ball to come back in the opposite direction.
3. A team scores a point every time the ball is transferred twice consecutively and possession is kept.
4. If an interception or tackle is made, yellows now attempt the same task.

### Variation:

Count 10 passes as a goal also.

### Coaching points:

Quick passing. Work ethic. Movement and hold up play by the target player. Decision to pass forward.



**Area:** 40 x 60 split in half with two 20 x 60 playing zones. Two teams of 7 v 7 with a 4v3 in favor of attackers in each zone. The coach has all the balls.

1. Each player remains in their designated half of the field with three defenders in each half protecting their goal.
2. A 4v3 attack is played. Possession is kept until a shooting opportunity arrives.
3. If the defenders win the ball they attempt to pass it into the opposite zone to one of their team-mates.
4. If the GK gets the ball they restart by throwing the ball to an open team-mate.
5. Switch players if need be so others get opportunities to attack or defend.

### Variation:

Play 2 touch. Attackers have 15 seconds to get a shot off.

### Coaching points:

Decision making. Technical and tactical awareness  
Make the extra man count



**Area:** 60 x 40 A game, 8 v 8 is shown.

1. Normal rules apply.
2. Allow the players to make their own decision.
3. The team in possession has to have the mentality of, 'If we have the ball, the opposition cannot score'.
4. You may play with one or two floating players who play for the team in possession.

### Variation:

Play 2 touch

### Coaching points:

Quality passing and control  
Movement and support  
Field awareness

When coaching, ask the questions to the players.... "How could we have kept the ball?"

Use the GK's when keeping possession.





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Possession - Exploiting space

**Technical passing - Area:** 15 x 15 with five players and one ball.  
Have multiple stations.

1. The ball starts at position A.
2. Player A passes to player B who drops the ball back to player A.
3. Player A now passes diagonally to player C who drops the ball back to player B.
4. Player A moves to the next cone that is vacated by player B.
5. Player B passes diagonally to Player D who drops the ball back to player C and player B moves to the next cone. The passing sequence continues.

**Variation:**

Go the opposite direction

**Coaching points:**

Passing and receiving technique - Correct foot  
Body shape. Communication



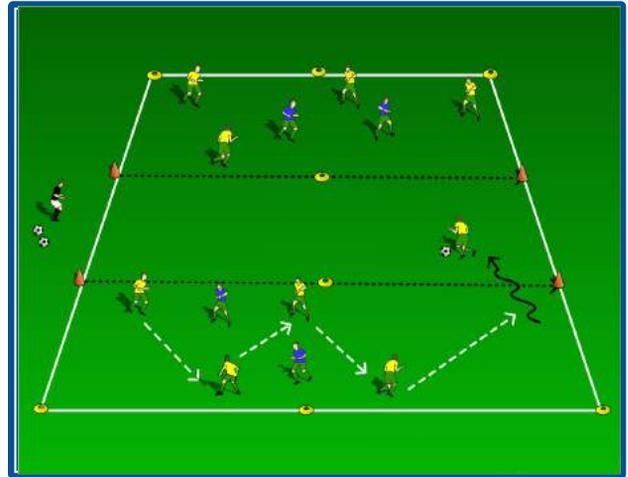
**Area:** 40 x 30 with two end zones 15 x 30 and a middle zone 10 x 30. 13 players are shown (can be done with more) One ball is used. The coach has all the balls. A 5v2 is in one end zone and a 4 v 2 in the other.

1. The exercise starts with the 5v2. The team keeps possession for 4 or more passes.
2. When they complete the passes one of the players can break out into the middle zone and pass to a team mate in the opposite box and create a new 5v2...and so on.
3. When the player breaks free the defenders switch roles with other players.
4. If a defender wins the ball the coach calls out a players name and plays a ball in the central zone for them to move into the opposite playing area.

**Variation:** After 4 passes or more can a player break into the middle zone to receive a pass?

**Coaching points:**

Quick combination play. Movement. Passing angles



**Area:** 30 x 40. 14 players including GK's arranged in a 7 v 5 plus GK's. Inside the paying area play a 5v3 with the three being helped by the goalkeepers and the players on the outside. Yellows have to keep possession only. Blues have to win the ball and score.

1. Outside players are limited to two touches. They cannot pass to the outside player that is on the same side. But they can pass to either one on the opposite side, the GK's and the three central players.
2. If the 5 blues win the ball, they keep possession, play a 5v3 and can score on either goal (as shown)
3. Have the players switch roles to give everyone an opportunity to see different scenarios.

**Coaching points:**

Quality passing. Ball control. Body shape  
Movement off the ball and communication  
Field awareness





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Possession overload

### Technical – Movement off the ball (Rotations)

**Area:** 20 x 20 box with a 5 yard square on the inside. Five players for this exercise with one soccer ball.

1. The players pass the soccer ball between themselves.
2. Once a pass is made the passer must change places with another player left, right or in the center.
3. Players attempt to play the exercise by using two touches. Players can rotate positions even if they are not passing.

### Coaching points:

Players receive the ball across their body on the back foot in order to see the entire playing area.  
Pass the ball to players that are ready to receive the ball. Weight, accuracy and timing of the pass.  
Regardless of the movement, players should always be looking toward the center of the area and be able to see the ball.

**Area:** 30 x 40 Split into two sections of 30 x 20 with 4 mini goals. Two teams of 6. Players are restricted to their half with a 3v2 on each half of the field. The end line players and the coach have a supply of balls.

1. The objective is for the attacking team to take advantage of the extra player and score in either of the two goals.
2. If the defenders win the ball, they attempt to pass to the attackers.
3. The end line players play into the defensive team after a goal is scored or when the ball goes out of play. This encourages pressing from the opposition.

### Variation:

Give the attacking team a time limit in which to score.  
The defender behind the goal can join in once the attackers receive the ball

### Coaching points:

Do not let players turn this into a possession exercise. Success is measured by the creative attacking opportunities.

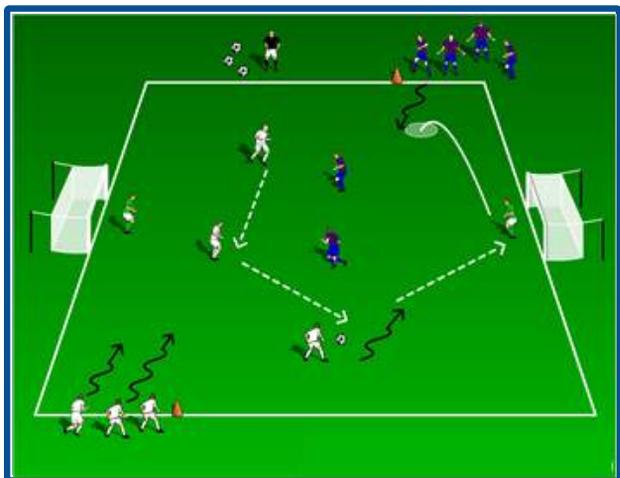
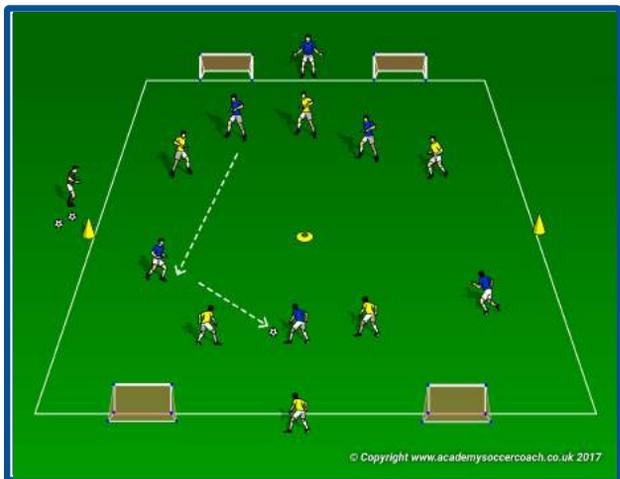
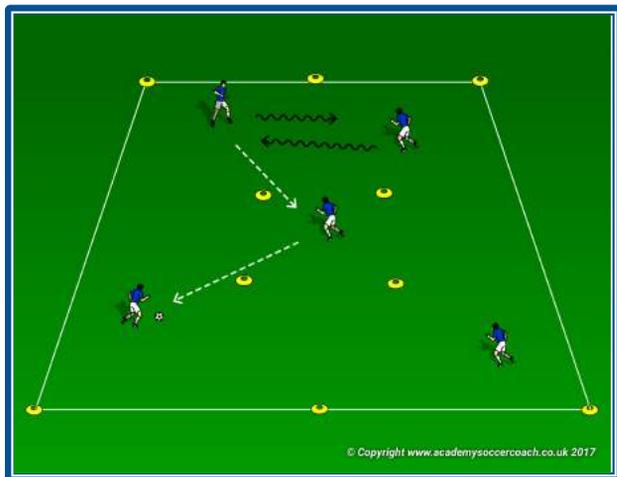
**Area:** 30 x 40. Two teams and a GK in each goal. The players start from the position shown. The coach has all the balls. A 3 v 2 starts the exercise. **(A good demo by the coach is required)**

1. Play starts with a pass from the coach to the team with 3 players. That team plays a 3v2 to goal.
2. Once a shot is made or the defenders win the ball:
  - The team of three attackers quickly come off the field and are replaced by two new defenders.
  - The two that were defending are now joined by another team mate to give them three. When this transition occurs the ball has to start with the player who is joining the attack.
  - A 3 v 2 is now played by the opposite team. The same sequence is performed throughout the exercise.

### Coaching points:

Decision making. Reactions to losing and winning the ball.  
Attackers – Make the extra man count. Mobility with and without the ball.

Defenders – Pressure, cover and delay.





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Reactions in the box

**Technical warm up - Area:** 5 cones set up as shown. Position A is the starting position. There is a player on cones B through E. Player at E is the shooter. A goalkeeper is in goal. Run two stations if you have more than 12 players

1. Player A passes to B. Player B drops it back to C. Player C plays it to D who passes to running E who shoots at goal.

2. Players move to the next cone. The same passing sequence follows.

3. After a shot, the shooter retrieves their ball and joins the group at position A.

### Variation:

Move cone D over to the opposite side and run the exercise. Do not tell the players the sequence of passes. See if they can figure it out.

### Coaching points:

Quality passing - to the correct foot

Timing of run and pass from D & E.

Hit the target - Away from the goalkeeper.

**Area:** Use the penalty area. Three goals. Each goal is assigned to a team. (You can use 3 large goals with GK's if available) Here we show one large goal with a GK and two smaller goals with out a GK. 4v4v4 is played.

1. Teams are looking to score on the other two goals while defending their own.

2. Run for three periods of 5 minutes and rotate each team after 5 minutes so they get to defend all three goals.

3. Add the score at the end.

### Coaching points:

Looking for reactions - Decision making.

Lots of one touch passing and shooting.

Quick movement. Defensive blocks

**Area:** Half a field 6v6 (or more) with yellow players acting as wall players.

1. Normal soccer rules apply.

2. Play 6v6.

3. If a goal is scored from normal play, the team gets one goal. If a goal is scored from a pass from a yellow, the team gets 2 goals.

4. Outside yellow players are allowed one touch only.

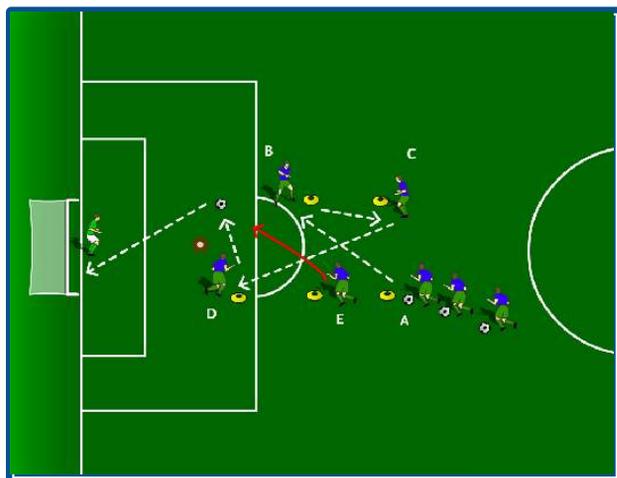
5. Change the outside players to keep players involved.

### Coaching points:

Passing

Decision making

Field awareness



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Remove all restrictions, bring on the yellow players and let them play.



# Soccer Practice Sessions

## 500 touches on the ball

**Technical warm up - Area:** Three 5 x 24 channels with players at the start with a ball and one player occupying the spaces as shown. The inside central player receives the ball on the back foot. The outside player, with their first touch, moves the ball into the next channel.

1. Starting player passes the ball to the correct foot of the next player and follows the pass.
2. Central player receives the ball on the back foot and passes to the correct foot of the outer player, and follows the pass.
3. Outer player takes a first touch into the next channel and passes to the next player and follows the pass.
4. Once the final player of the group receives the ball, they move the ball wide and run with the ball through the gate and then rejoins the start.

### Coaching points:

- Quality of passing. Weight, accuracy and timing.
- Body shape when receiving the ball.
- Quick movement after the pass.

**Area:** 30 x 30 split in two 30 x 15 playing areas. The teams start in opposite halves.

1. The coach serves in the ball to the blue team.
2. Two of the yellows move into the blue half and attempt to win the ball.
3. Blues keep possession.
4. The yellow defenders have to win the ball and pass it back into their half.
6. If the ball is kicked out by a player, it goes to the opposite team.

### Coaching points:

- Awareness of others, create angles and space
- Defenders press as a team
- Communication

**Area:** 60 x 40, 4 v 4 v 4 with 4 defenders holding a cone. This makes 8 v 4.

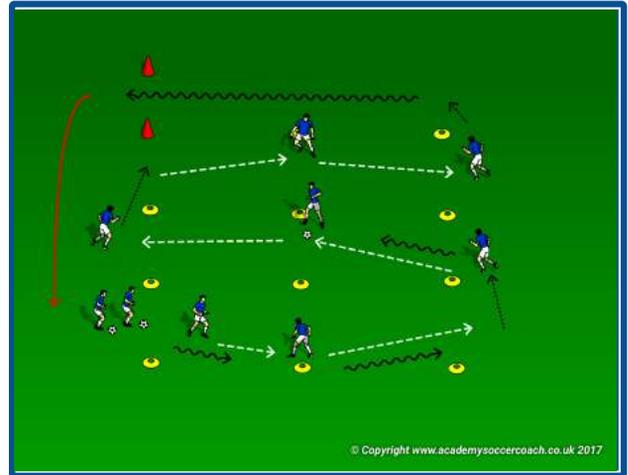
1. The teams are separated by colored pinnies.
2. Choose a defending team (yellow). All yellows are holding a cone.
3. The attacking teams (blue & orange) play possession. Once a defender wins possession of the ball, all defenders drop the cone.
4. The team that lost possession or has kicked the ball out of bounds has to pick up a cone that has been dropped before they are allowed to defend the ball.

### Variation:

Play without holding cones. (Chaos)

### Coaching points:

- Possession. Move the ball quickly.
- Defending – contain the ball if your team mates have not yet picked up a disc.
- Pressure, cover and balance
- Communication and Enthusiasm





# Soccer Practice Sessions

## Pressing in the final third

**Area:** 10 x 10 The coach has the soccer balls

1. The coach serves in the ball. The player opposite closes down the player receiving the ball.

2. The player receiving the ball passes to the left and runs to the right.

3. As you can see the player opposite always closes the player down and the player passes to the left and runs to the right.

4. Keep repeating this pattern.

**Variation:**

Pass to the right and run to the left.

Players can pass either right or left.

**Coaching points:**

Reacting when closing down the player receiving the ball.

Defensive stance – force the play in a certain direction.

You are preparing your players on reacting to pressing. Cues and triggers.



**Area:** 40 x 30 split in thirds (10x40). 2 target players are on one end-line. Two small goals are placed at the opposite end.

6v4 is played in favor of the red team.

1. A target player passes the ball to a blue.

2. The two red forwards press the ball. The other four reds look for triggers where they too can press the play.

3. Blue team attempt to score in the small goals. If red team are not pressing, blue player can hit a longer shot to score.

4. Reds score by passing the ball to a target player.

**Variation:** Switch the target players.

**Coaching points:**

When to add pressure and when not.

Do you use a trigger word?

The press triggers reactions from all players.

Reds are engaged and focused.



**Area:** Half a field 6v6+GK. Two small goals on the halfway line.

1. The GK has the ball. Reds move behind the 'retreat line' and let the GK throw the ball out wide.

2. Once the GK does this, #9 arcs their run to block the square pass. This is the trigger for the rest of the red team to react. If #9 does not make this kind of run, the team does not press.

3. When reds win the ball they attempt to score on the large goal. As soon as they lose the ball, can they press?

**Coaching points:**

Team-work.

When to press and when not to press?

Work ethic

