

LEVEL: Advanced
TOPIC: Defensive shape

DESCRIPTION

20x20 yard grid - players in pairs, one ball per pair. One player dribbles while their partner backs up and tries to force the dribbler to the outside - the player backing up cannot touch the ball yet. When coach shouts switch - they switch roles.

To progress, coach will shout steal, and the player without the ball becomes an active defender and will try to take the ball from the dribbler. The dribbler cannot turn around and must try to go past the defender and keep going. The defender must steal the ball and dribble it out of the square.

Make it easier - increase the dribbling area

Make it harder - allow the dribbler to turn around

30x30 yard grid divided in half - you may need to set this up twice if you have a lot of players. Two teams that must stay in their assigned half - they will send one player to the opposite end line - that player can move sideways but must stay on the end line. Make sure to rotate target players regularly.

The objective is to pass the ball around in your half of the field and try to find a passing lane to get it to your target player.

Make it easier - allow the target player to go anywhere inside the opposition half Make it harder - decrease the size of the area

Same set-up as above but this time add one player (extra player) from the opposite side to create a 3v1 situation - we will still have a target player. Now the defensive line must try to think about keeping the target player blocked while also trying to stop the extra player getting the ball and connecting. This time you can award and extra point to any team that gets the ball to the target player via the extra player.

Make it easier - allow the extra player only one touch

Make it harder - allow the target player to come off the line in to the game

Small-sided game, we suggest setting up the teams to try and highlight the days topic; if anyone excelled then put them in a position to show it in this game. We always advise that you should allow time for players to enjoy the scrimmage without any conditions.

Make it real -

TACTICAL

- 1) Assign positions
- 2) Set a formation
- 3) Help players understand their role

COACHING POINTS

FIRST COACHING POINT - STANCE

Ask the defenders to have their hips and shoulders to the side, knees bent, eyes on the ball.

SECOND COACHING POINT - PLANNING

The defender should approach the side of the ball, not straight to it. They should use the sidelines - if the line is to their left they should approach the right side of the ball

FIRST COACHING POINT - DECISION MAKING

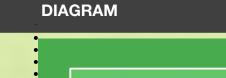
The defending players should take turns to push forward in order to close the ball down. As the ball moves they have to analyze if they should stay high or drop back and let another player press

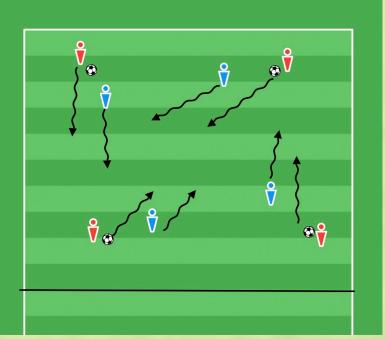
SECOND COACHING POINT - SHAPE

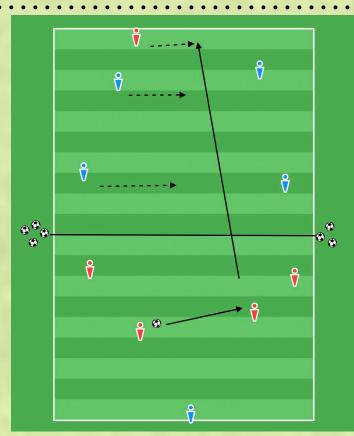
As one player presses the ball, their teammates should tuck in to close any gaps - the defensive unit should move as the ball moves.

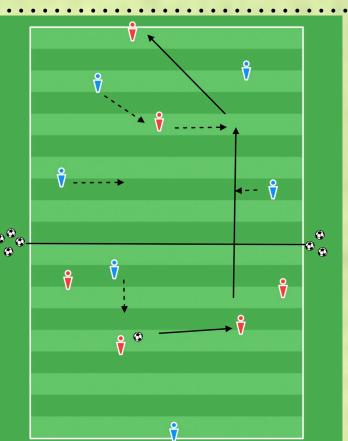
FIRST COACHING POINT - FIELD ANALYSIS

The "extra" player is outnumbered so it will be difficult for them to get the ball, they should add a low press to the opposition and try to pick an approach that prevents them from switching side-to-side. This approach should tell their teammates where to expect the ball and they should think about pinching in to close any gaps and stepping tight.











Try to find instances in the game to freeze the play when your coaching points are relevant. Keep your freeze short and concise - this can be a positive or negative scenario that you see. Some examples;

- 1) Defenders chasing the ball all over the field
- 2) Players failing to press the player in possession
- 3) Defenders not sliding and reacting to the movement of the ball



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