



# SEASON CURRICULUM

Development & Match Readiness  
Ages 9-12





## About SOCCERSPECIFIC

SoccerSpecific's mission is to create and share the highest quality coaching education for best player development around the world. For 14 years we have provided coaches with the educational tools they need to train players effectively. We continually strive to find new and innovative ways to meet the needs of coaches and players around the world. We are eager to share this invaluable knowledge with anyone who wants to learn because we believe this ultimately helps our players develop and reach their greatest potential.

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## A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Working with the last three US U-17 Men's National Team World Cup cycles and earning over 100 international coaching caps at the youth international level has given me an inside look at youth development across the world. It has never been more clear to me what is needed at the youngest age groups. I have spent countless hours on the training pitch sculpting a blue print for player development and a training curriculum that is simple and modern. This 12 week curriculum, specifically designed for Zone 1 ages 9-12, is cognitive based and has a great balance of rondos, position play, and game related activities! Whether you are training 2 or 3 days a week, playing 7V7 or 9V9, these 42 activities will help your players thrive. This curriculum will give your girls and boys the necessary foundation to succeed at the 11V11 level. Downloading it directly into your own library allows you follow the blue print as is or make desired edits based on your own environment. Let's continue to do our part in player development and take our coaching to the next level!

Passionately,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony V. Latronica'.

ANTHONY V. LATRONICA



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## Season Curriculum: Ages 9-12

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6
<b>TRAINING DAY 1</b>	AGILITY WARMUP 3V1 4V1 2V1/2V2 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP V2 3V1 TRANSITION 4V4 PENETRATE 3V2 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP 3V1 4V1 2V1/2V2 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP V2 3V1 TRANSITION 4V4 PENETRATE 3V2 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP 3V1 4V1 2V1/2V2 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP V2 3V1 TRANSITION 4V4 PENETRATE 3V2 TO GOAL
<b>TRAINING DAY 2</b>	COMMUNICATION WARMUP 6V2 3V3+1 FINISHING 7V7	COMMUNICATION WARMUP V2 RONDO PROGRESSION 4V4+3 7V7 ZONAL	COMMUNICATION WARMUP 6V2 3V3+1 FINISHING 7V7	COMMUNICATION WARMUP V2 RONDO PROGRESSION 4V4+3 7V7-1	COMMUNICATION WARMUP 6V2 3V3+1 FINISHING 7V7	COMMUNICATION WARMUP V2 RONDO PROGRESSION 4V4+3 7V7 ZONAL
<b>TRAINING DAY 3</b>	COGNITIVE WARMUP BARCA FINISHING 6V6+1 TO GOAL 9V9	COGNITIVE WARMUP V2 DOUBLE Y 6V6 INTERCHANGE 8V8+2	COGNITIVE WARMUP BARCA FINISHING 6V6+1 TO GOAL 9V9	COGNITIVE WARMUP V2 DOUBLE Y 6V6 INTERCHANGE 8V8+2	COGNITIVE WARMUP BARCA FINISHING 6V6+1 TO GOAL 9V9	COGNITIVE WARMUP V2 DOUBLE Y 6V6 INTERCHANGE 8V8+2
<b>TRAINING DAY 1</b>	AGILITY WARMUP 3V1 4V2 SCREENING 3V3/3V4 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP V2 3V1 TRANSITION THREE TEAM RONDO 7V7 SCREENING	AGILITY WARMUP 3V1 4V2 SCREENING 3V3/3V4 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP V2 3V1 TRANSITION THREE TEAM RONDO 7V7 SCREENING	AGILITY WARMUP 3V1 4V2 SCREENING 3V3/3V4 TO GOAL	AGILITY WARMUP V2 3V1 TRANSITION THREE TEAM RONDO 7V7 SCREENING
<b>TRAINING DAY 2</b>	COMMUNICATION WARMUP 4V2+2 RONDO 6V6 FINISHING 7V7	COMMUNICATION WARMUP V2 6V4 7V7+3 7V7-1	COMMUNICATION WARMUP 4V2+2 RONDO 6V6 FINISHING 7V7	COMMUNICATION WARMUP V2 6V4 7V7+3 7V7 ZONAL	COMMUNICATION WARMUP 4V2+2 RONDO 6V6 FINISHING 7V7	COMMUNICATION WARMUP V2 6V4 7V7+3 7V7-1
<b>TRAINING DAY 3</b>	COGNITIVE WARMUP MOVING RONDOS 6V6+1 TO GOAL 9V9	COGNITIVE WARMUP V2 4V2 TO 6V4 RONDO 4 GOAL GAME 8V8 SCREENING	COGNITIVE WARMUP RONDO BREAKOUT TO GOAL 6V6+1 TO GOAL 9V9	COGNITIVE WARMUP V2 MOVING RONDOS 4 GOAL GAME 8V8 SCREENING	COGNITIVE WARMUP 4V2 TO 6V4 RONDO 6V6+1 TO GOAL 9V9	COGNITIVE WARMUP V2 RONDO BREAKOUT TO GOAL 4 GOAL GAME 8V8 SCREENING

LATRONICA



WARMUPS



## Agility

3

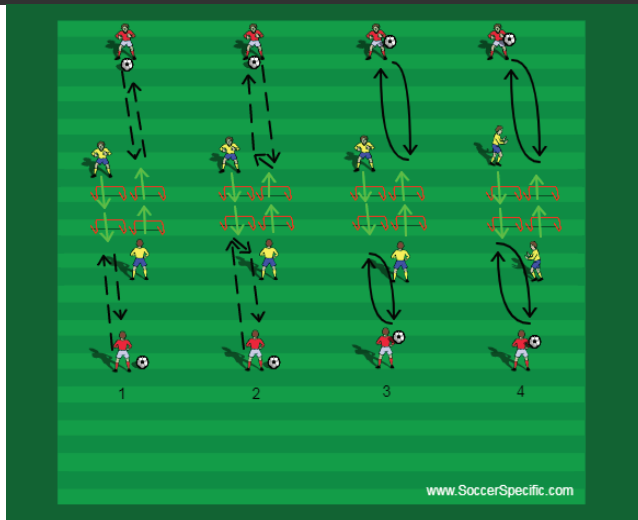
Date:

Duration: **15 Min**

Team: **Curriculum Ages 13-18**

Intensity: ● (8/10)

Category: **Warmup**



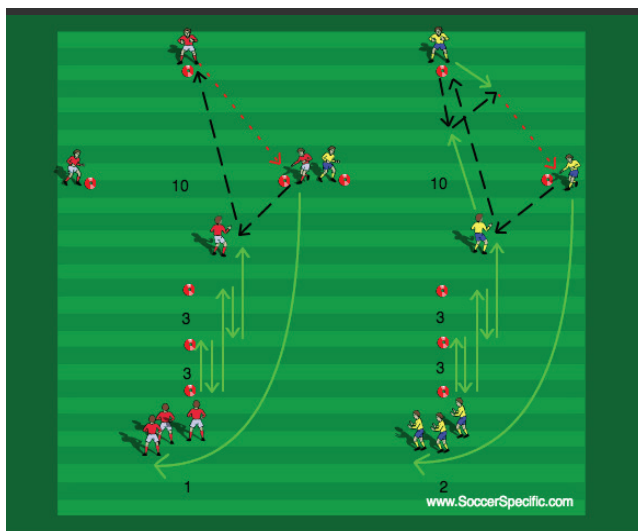
1

⌚ 15 Min ↗ 25yd

**Setup:** Groups of four, servers on the outside are 10-12 yards apart, hurdles are 1 yard apart. 30-45 second intervals per player per progression. Four variations total as shown.

**Instructions:** Start with movement prep, two lines 15 yard distance: side shuffle, 2 and 2 forward shuffle, high knees, carioca, open hips forward, open hips backward. Progression 1- High knees to one touch pass. Progression 2- Two foot hops receive right play left and receive left play right. Progression 3- Single leg hop to one touch volley. Progression 4- Lateral two foot hops one touch header.

**Coaching Points:** Between progressions include dynamic movements. 1- Kick straight, kick across, knee hug hamstring, quad stretch. 2- Lateral lunge to balance, lunge reach rotate, deep squat side to side. 3- Reverse lunge to hip cradle, on back alternate leg swings, flip over head to heel. 4- Stability bounds lateral, straight leg skip 20 yards. Equal take off on two footed hops and knees to hip height in front of body.



2

⌚ 15 Min ↗ 25yd

**Setup:** Groups of 6-8, multidirectional with the ball. 8 repetitions total, 2 right and 2 left for each passing sequence.

**Instructions:** Start with movement prep, two lines 15 yard distance: side shuffle, 2 and 2 forward shuffle, high knees, carioca, open hips forward, open hips backward. Progression 1- forward and backward footwork execute passing sequence, 2 to the right and 2 to the left. Progression 2- Lateral shuffle footwork execute passing sequence, 2 to the right and 2 to the left.

**Coaching Points:** Between progressions include dynamic movements. 1- Kick straight, kick across, knee hug to hamstring, quad stretch. 2- Lateral lunge to balance, lunge reach rotate, deep squat side to side. 3- Reverse lunge to hip cradle, on back alternate leg swings, flip over head to heel. 4- Stability bounds lateral, straight leg skip 20 yards. Athletic stance, feet under hips, from lateral shuffle to forward acceleration. Push off outside edge of foot of the inside leg.



## Cognitive

4

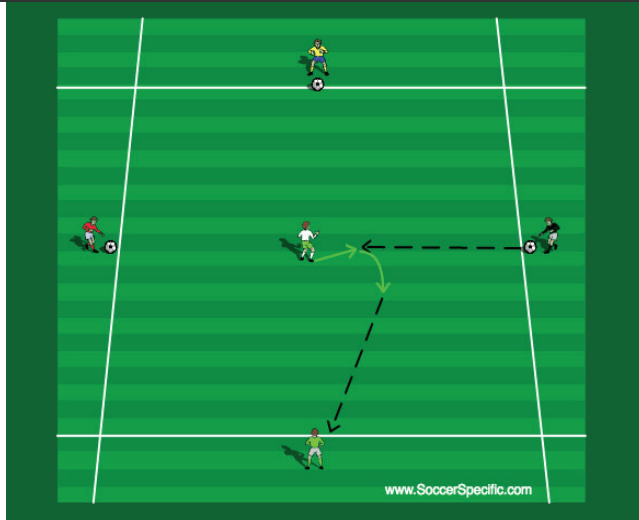
Date:

Duration: 15 Min

Team: Curriculum Ages 13-18

Intensity: ● (2/10)

Category: Warmup



1

⌚ 15 Min ↗ 10X10

**Setup:** Groups of five, 10X10 or 12X12 yard grids depending on your players' ability level. Players are wearing five different colors, three balls per grid.

**Instructions:** Start with movement prep, two lines 15 yard distance: side shuffle, 2 and 2 forward shuffle, high knees, carioca, open hips forward, open hips backward. Progression 1: Coach calls a color, receive from that player and find the open man. Two touch, 30 seconds each player. Progression 2: 4 balls on the outside, call color, play ball in and add pressure. Player who receives the ball beats pressure on the dribble and exchanges places. 1-2 minute bout depending on quality of technique.

**Coaching Points:** Between progressions include dynamic movements. 1- Kick straight, kick across, knee hug hamstring, quad stretch. 2- Lateral lunge to balance, lunge reach rotate, deep squat side to side. 3- Reverse lunge to hip cradle, on back alternate leg swings, flip over head to heel. 4- Stability bounds lateral, straight leg skip 20 yards.



2

⌚ 15 Min ↗ 10X10

**Setup:** Groups of three, 10X10 or 12X12 yard grids depending on your players' ability level. Three players and two balls per grid.

**Instructions:** Start with movement prep, two lines 15 yard distance: side shuffle, 2 and 2 forward shuffle, high knees, carioca, open hips forward, open hips backward. Progression 1: Cone color is called, player gets around cone and plays one touch ball back to server, 30 seconds each player. Progression 2: Cone color and channel is called, player gets around the cone and receives ball through proper channel. 1 or 2 touch return, 30 seconds each player.

**Coaching Points:** Between progressions include dynamic movements. 1- Kick straight, kick across, knee hug hamstring, quad stretch. 2- Lateral lunge to balance, lunge reach rotate, deep squat side to side. 3- Reverse lunge to hip cradle, on back alternate leg swings, flip over head to heel. 4- Stability bounds lateral, straight leg skip 20 yards.





## Communication

5

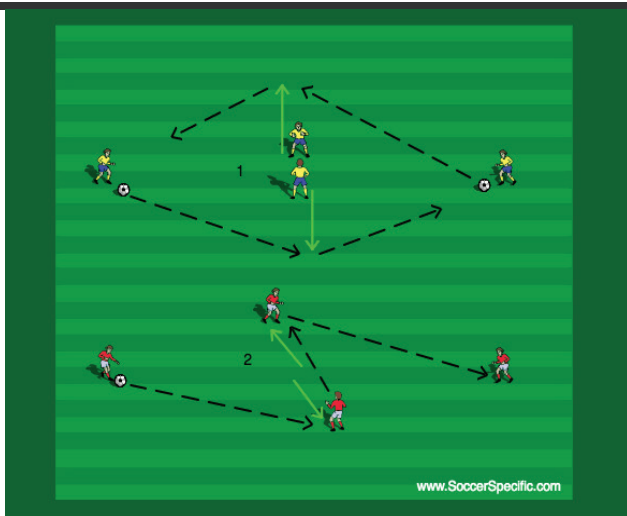
Date:

Duration: **15-20 Min**

Team: **Curriculum Ages 13-18**

Intensity: ● (4/10)

Category: **Warmup**



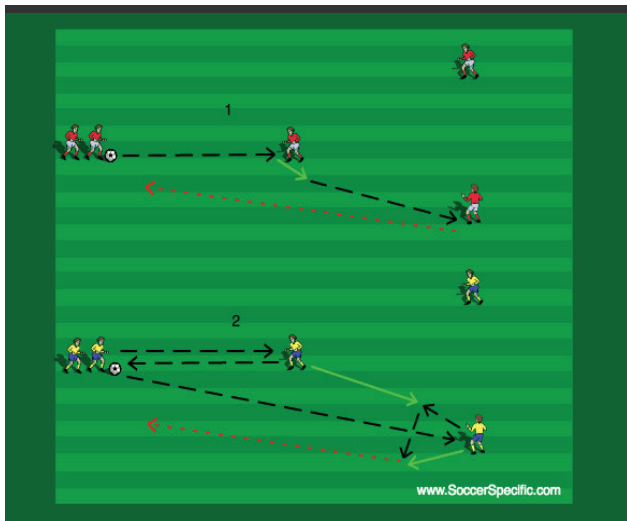
1

⌚ 20 Min ↗ 15X10

**Setup:** Groups of four, servers on the outside are 15 yards apart. At least two balls per group of four. Three progressions.

**Instructions:** Start with movement prep, two lines 15 yard distance: side shuffle, 2 and 2 forward shuffle, high knees, carioca, open hips forward, open hips backward. Diagram 1- Progression 1: Players in the middle react to the servers touch on the outside and check away (open up) from each other as shown. Both servers say a "turn" command, both balls are played in and out the other side at the same time. 1 minute each pair. Dynamic flexibility. Progression 2: One of the servers says "turn" or "man on", based on the command the central players either play it back to original server or out the other side. 1 minute each pair. Dynamic flexibility. Diagram 2- Progression 3: One ball, central players separate, combine through the middle and out the other side with proper communication from all.

**Coaching Points:** Between progressions include dynamic movements. 1- Kick straight, kick across, knee hug to hamstring, quad stretch. 2- Lateral lunge to balance, lunge reach rotate, deep squat side to side. 3- Reverse lunge to hip cradle, on back alternate leg swings, flip over head to heel. 4- Stability bounds lateral, straight leg skip 20 yards.



2

⌚ 15 Min ↗ 16X8

**Setup:** Groups of 5-6, 16X8 spacing. Two variations as shown.

**Instructions:** Start with movement prep, two lines 15 yard distance: side shuffle, 2 and 2 forward shuffle, high knees, carioca, open hips forward, open hips backward. Diagram 1- Progression 1: Play an entry ball to central player, server says "turn left/right", player reacts to command and turns accordingly. Follow your pass. 2 minutes. Dynamic flexibility. Diagram 2- Progression 2: Play an entry ball to central player, server says "man on", ball is played back to original server who plays it long to either third man who combines with central player as shown, third man dribbles at pace, follow your pass. 2 minutes. Dynamic flexibility.

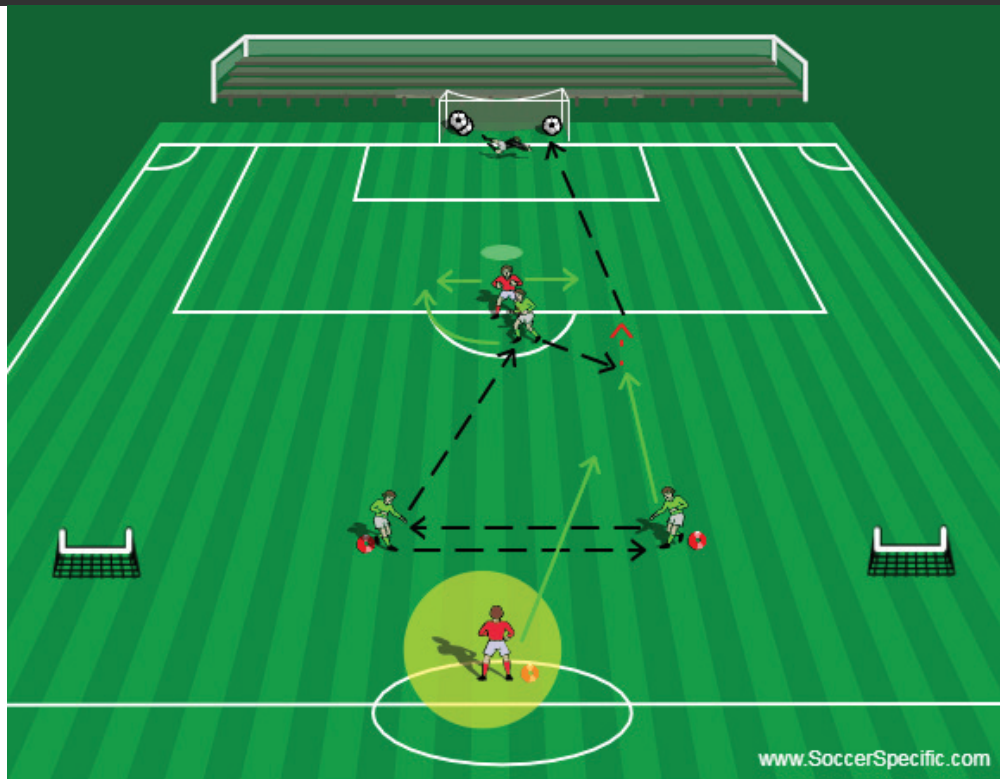
**Coaching Points:** Between progressions include dynamic movements. 1- Kick straight, kick across, knee hug to hamstring, quad stretch. 2- Lateral lunge to balance, lunge reach rotate, deep squat side to side. 3- Reverse lunge to hip cradle, on back alternate leg swings, flip over head to heel. 4- Stability bounds lateral, straight leg skip 20 yards. Make sure in the second progression players are turning efficiently to the third man receiving the ball.



ACTIVITIES



## 2V1/2V2 To Goal



⌚ 20 Min ↗ Final Third

### Setup

2V1/2V2 to goal with recovery defender. Set up as shown, divide your team into attacking and defending players.

### Instructions

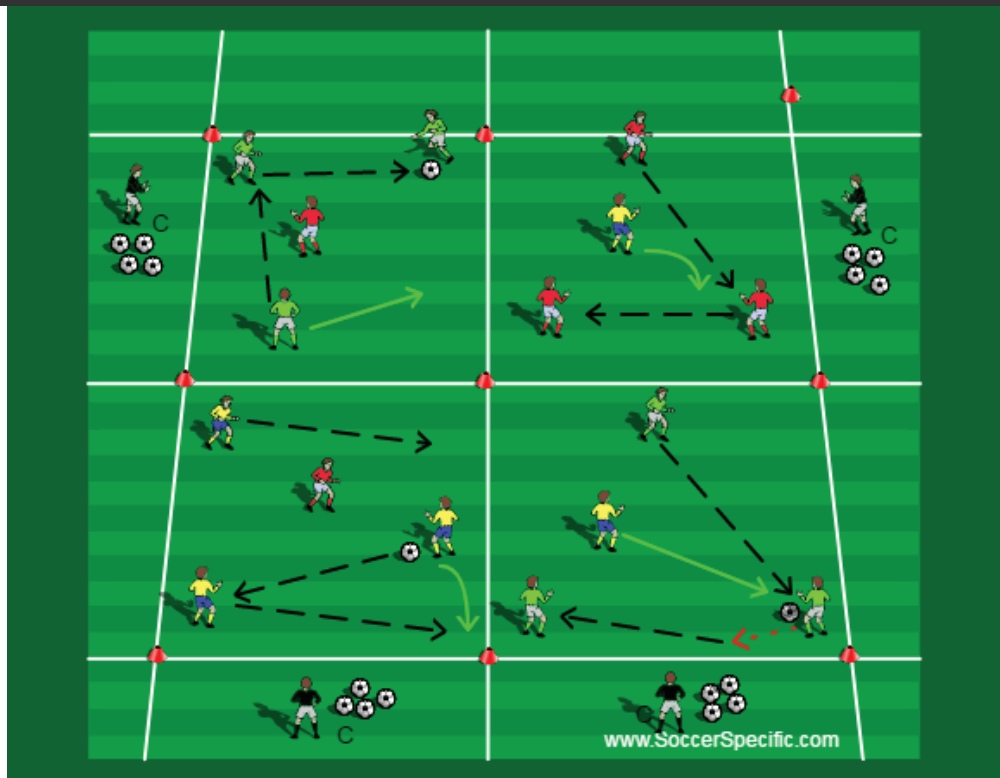
2V1: The two attacking green players pass the ball back and forth, on the third or fourth pass one of them can join the attack. They can attack by either dribbling into space or combining with the center forward making it a 2V1 to goal. Progression to 2V2: Once the third or fourth pass occurs, the defender highlighted in yellow can recover and defend making it a 2V2 to goal.

### Coaching Points

Speed of play and speed of thought to goal. Can the primary defender step in front of the center forward and win the entry ball or should he remain goal side? Can the primary defender win a through ball and/or step to the ball penetrating on the dribble and within shooting distance? Focus on the efficiency of the recovery runner and his recognition of who is most dangerous.



## 3V1 Possession



🕒 10 Min ↗️ 6X6

### Setup

3V1's, 25 field players, 6 identical 6X6 yard grids set up next to each other. Plenty of balls and one coach per grid.

### Instructions

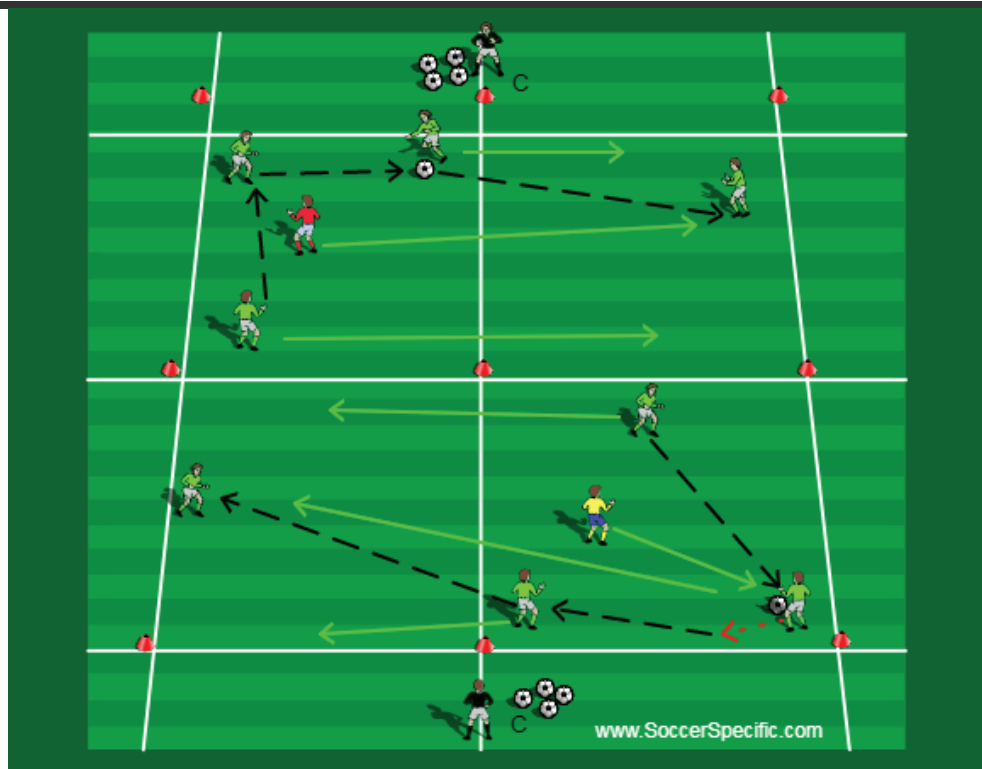
Players play 3V1 possession in the grid and try to keep the ball away from the one defender. If the defender touches or wins possession of the ball then they switch with the player on the outside that messed up. When the ball goes out of play a new ball is played in by the coach. 10 minutes.

### Coaching Points

Speed of play, tech passing and receiving, support angles, movement off the ball, game awareness, communication, set the tone for training.



## 3V1 Transition



⌚ 10 Min ↗ 8X8

### Setup

3V1 transition, 20 field players, 5 players per group, 4 identical 8X8 yard grids set up next to each other. Plenty of balls and one coach per grid.

### Instructions

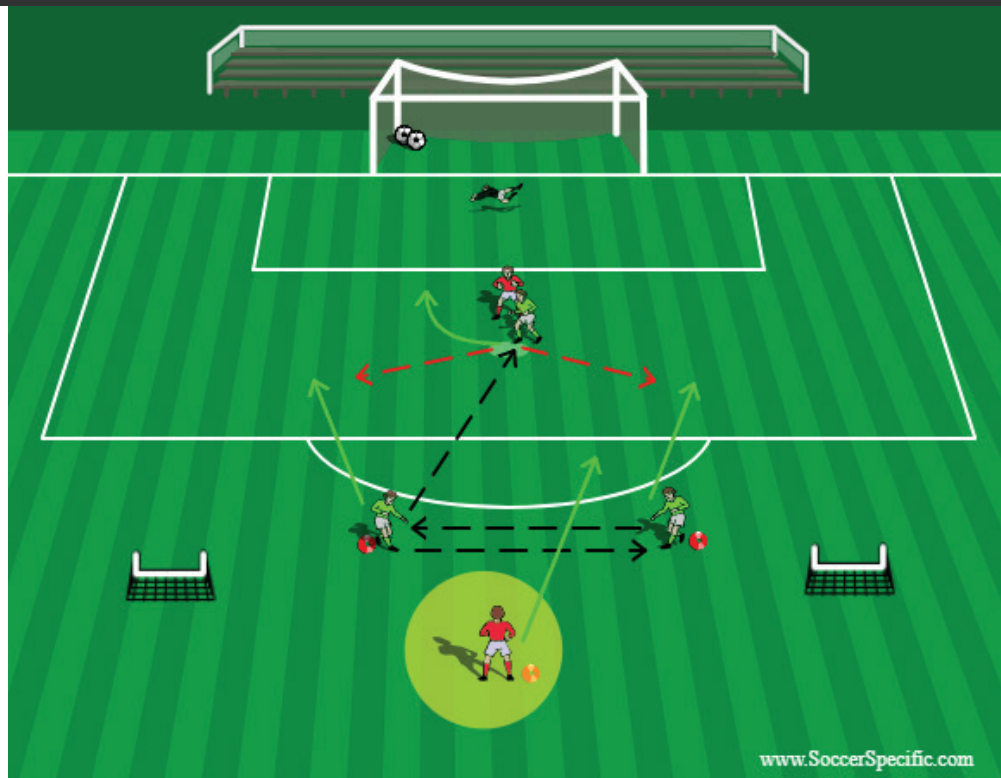
Players play 3V1 possession in the grid and try to keep the ball away from the one defender. Anytime after the fifth pass, the ball can be played to the fourth player in the open grid. Two attacking players and the one defender transition over to continue the 3V1. Each player defends twice for a duration of 1 minute. 12 minutes.

### Coaching Points

Speed of play, passing and receiving technique, support angles, movement off the ball, game awareness, communication, set the tone for training.



## 3V2 To Goal



⌚ 20 Min ↗ Final Third

### Setup

3V2 to goal with recovery defender. Set up as shown, divide your team into attacking and defending players.

### Instructions

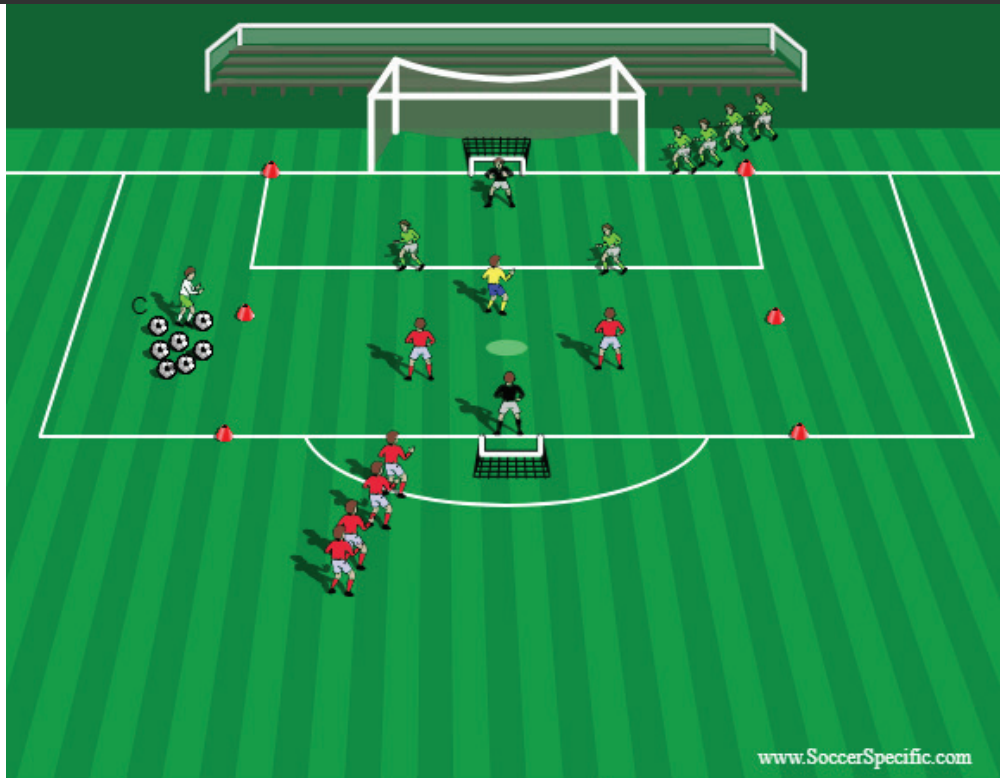
The two attacking green players pass the ball back and forth, on the third or fourth pass both of them can join the attack. They can attack by either dribbling into space or combining with the center forward. Once the third or fourth pass occurs, the defender highlighted in yellow can recover and defend making it a 3V2 to goal.

### Coaching Points

All previous coaching points but now the primary defender must recognize if they should leave their man, step to the ball or hold their position. The recovery defender must sense the danger and recognize the most efficient recovery run and who to defend. Focus on the working relationship with the two defenders now that they are in a numbers down situation in front of their own goal.



## 3V3+1 Finishing



⌚ 1 Min ↗ Pen Area

### Setup

Using a smaller goal. Something the size of a futsal goal. Width of 6 by 18 yard box. Everything is within shooting range. Coach immediately passes in when ball is out/scored.

### Instructions

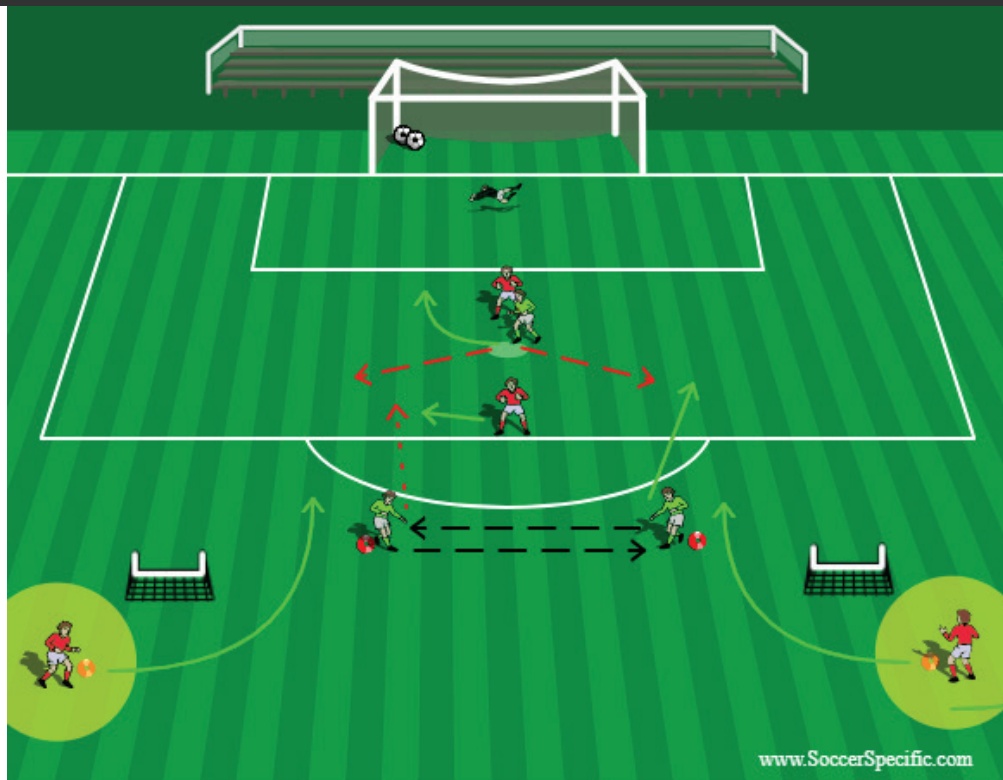
3V3+1 The plus 1 should allow attacking teams to get shooting opportunities within limited number of passes. Rotate players after each round. 1 minute round

### Coaching Points

The smaller goals force the attackers to shoot at a smaller target which will allow the GK many opportunities to make saves with the feet and hands in reaction scenarios similar to those possibly presented in a game.



## 3V3/3V4 To Goal



⌚ 20 Min ↗ Final Third

### Setup

3V3/3V4 to goal with one and two recovery defenders. Set up as shown, divide your team into attacking and defending players.

### Instructions

3V3: The two attacking green players pass the ball back and forth, on the third or fourth pass both of them can join the attack. They can attack by either dribbling into space or combining with the center forward. Once the third or fourth pass occurs one of the defenders highlighted in yellow can recover and defend making it a 3V3 to goal. Progression: both recovery defenders highlighted in yellow can join making it a 3V4 to goal.

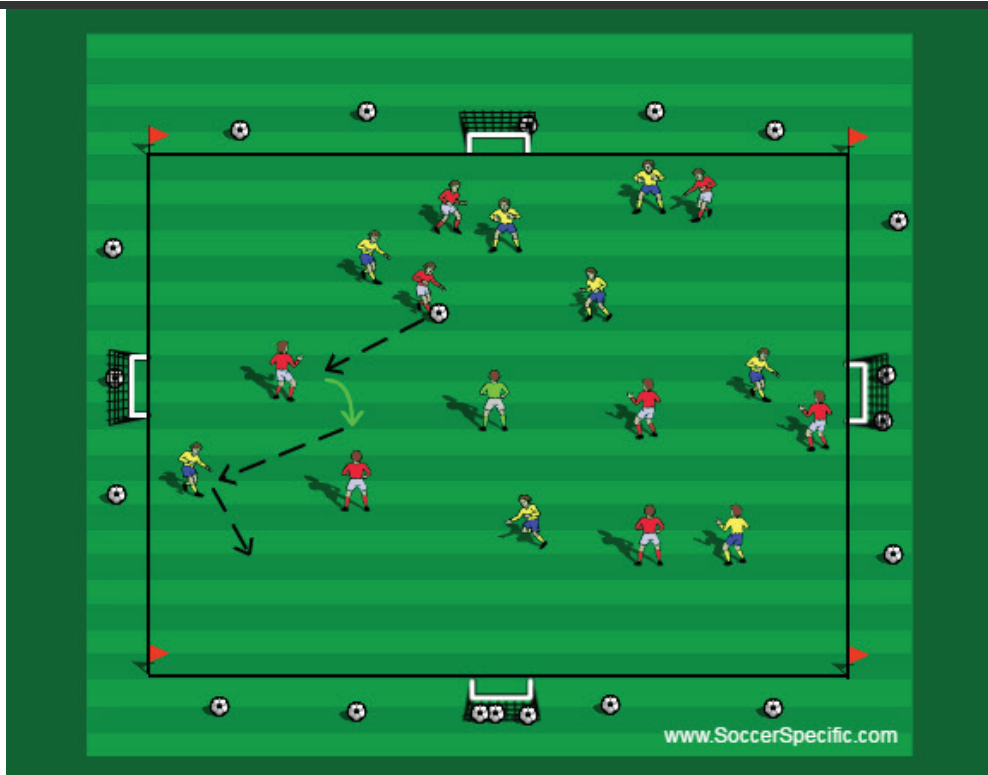
### Coaching Points

All previous coaching points but now the attackers could find themselves in a numbers down situation if they don't execute quickly to goal.





## 4 Goal Game



⌚ 4X3 Min ↗ 60X60

### Setup

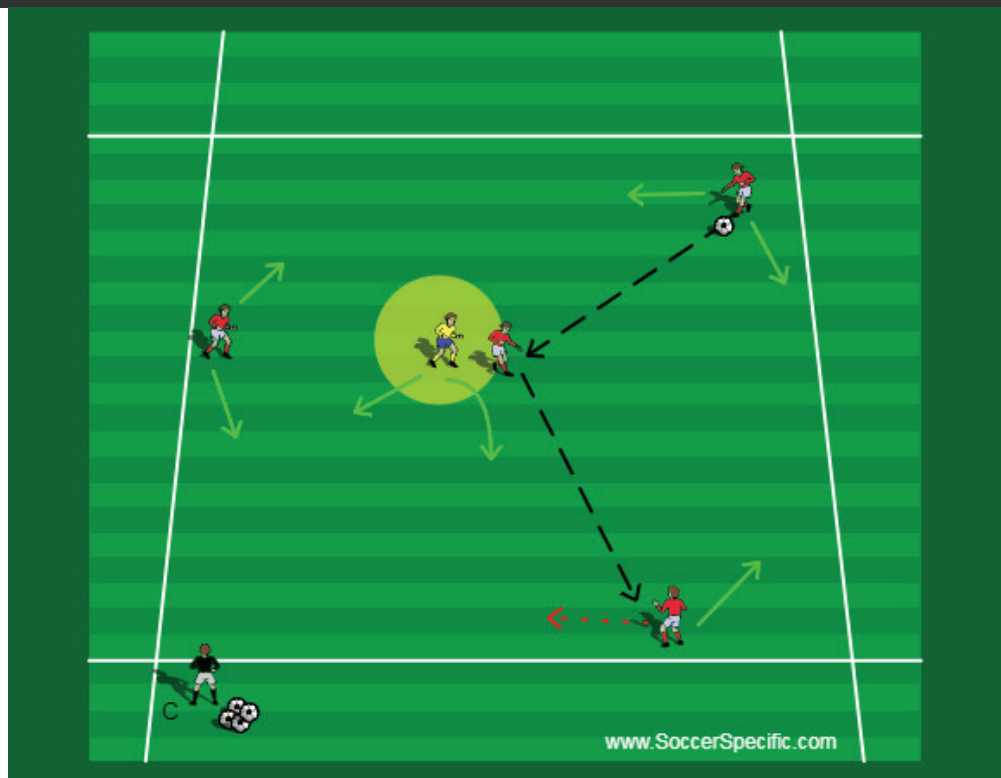
8V8+1 4 goal game, 60X60 yard field, 17 field players. Two teams of eight.

### Instructions

Each team is responsible for defending two goals and attacking the other two. If the ball is played out of bounds then it is the other teams kick in, if a goal is scored then the opposing team can quickly play out of either of the two goals they are defending. 3 games, 4 minute games. Keep track of the score, wins, and losses.

### Coaching Points

Create numbers up situations, switch the point of attack quickly, penetrate open space on the dribble, pass or shot. All previous attacking principles. Defend higher up the field away from your own goals, hunt in packs, win the ball back immediately, surround the ball with numbers, 1V1 defending technique.



🕒 10X1 Min ↗ 8X8

## Setup

4V1 positional rondo with a central midfielder and defender. Groups of 5, three identical setups as shown.

## Instructions

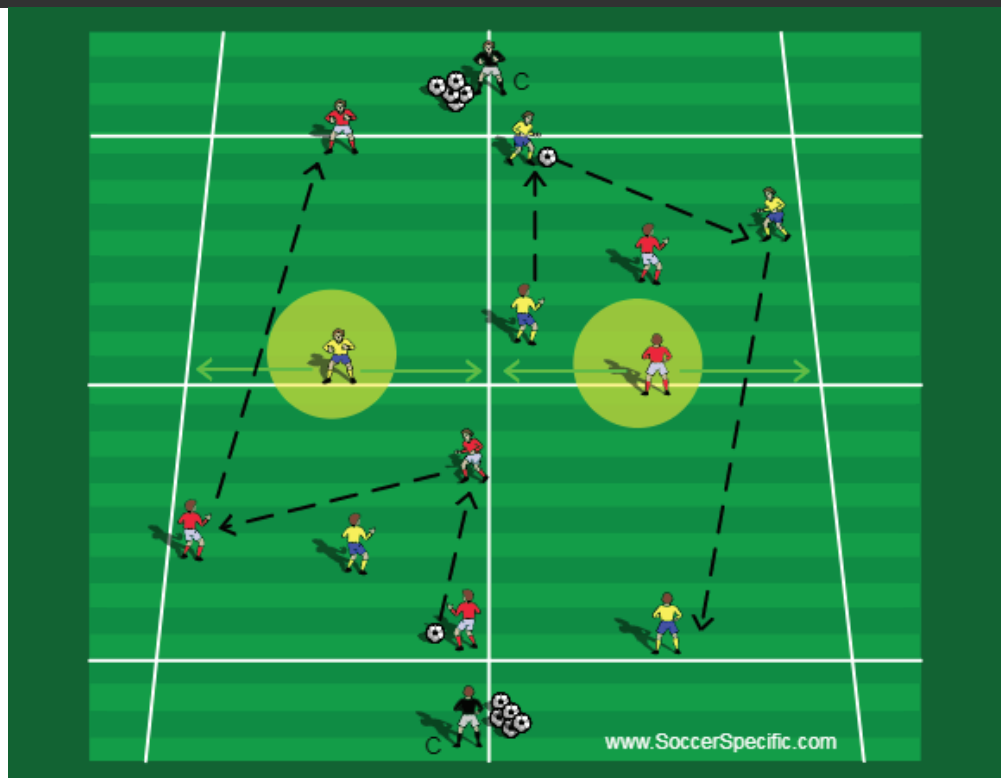
The four attacking players in red try and keep possession from the yellow defender. If the yellow defender wins the ball he plays it outside the grid and a new ball is started from the coach. The same player defends for 1 minute, then switch the roles.

## Coaching Points

The defender must decide when to step out and win the ball, when to stay goal side of the central midfielder and when to pressure/win the ball from a one of the perimeter players. The defender must focus on tracking the central midfielder as well as the ball. Recognize the appropriate moment to win the ball. Controlled aggression and intelligent defending. Encourage the attacking players to find the central midfielder as often as possible.



## 4V2 Screening



⌚ 20 Min ↗ 10X10

### Setup

4V2 directional rondo with a screening defender. 10X10 yard grids, 12-18 field players, 2-3 identical set ups as shown. A coach at each end with plenty of balls dictating the pace of the activity and the point of entry.

### Instructions

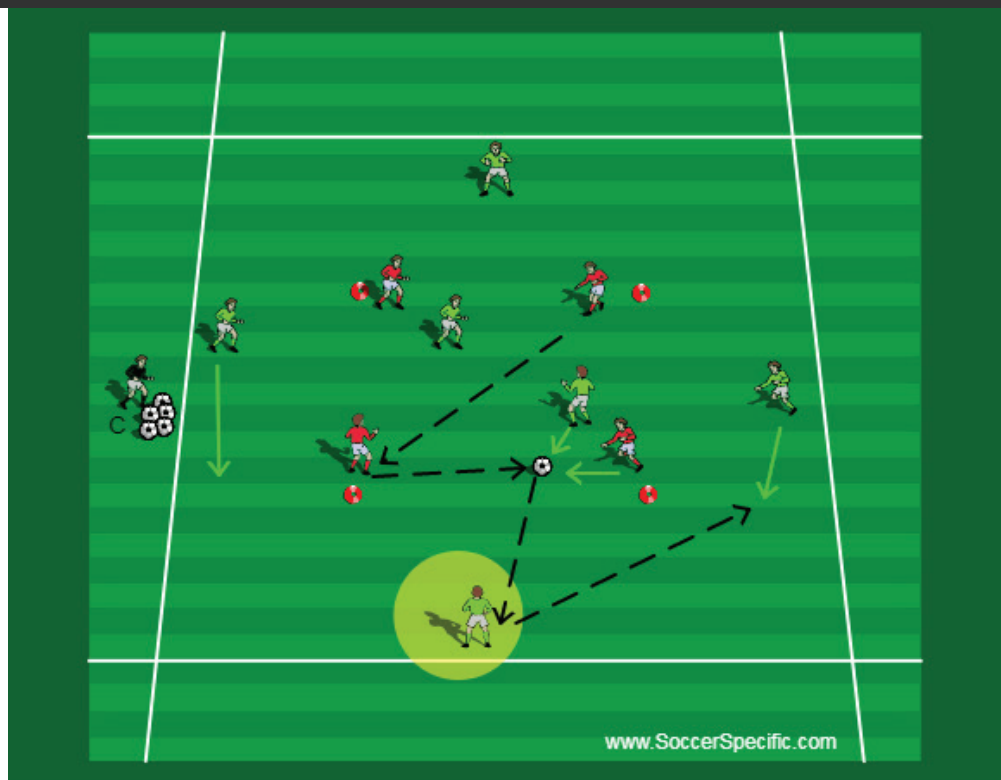
The team in possession must connect a minimum of three passes before playing a penetrating ball to their teammate/target inside the other grid. The screening defender must move laterally along the middle grid line and cut off any penetrating ball and passing lanes to the opponents target player. If either defender wins the ball or the ball goes out of play, a new ball is initiated by the coach.

### Coaching Points

The primary focus is on the screening defender highlighted in yellow. They must look over their shoulder at the target and try to align themselves between the ball and the target. This will prolong the ability for the team in possession to play through lines quickly. The primary defenders job is to win the ball or make the play predictable for the screening defender by cutting off lanes himself.



## 4V2 to 6V4 Rondo



⌚ 4X2 Min ↗ 8X8 & 12X12

### Setup

Minimum of 12 players, 8X8 possession grid placed in the middle of a 12X12 possession grid.

### Instructions

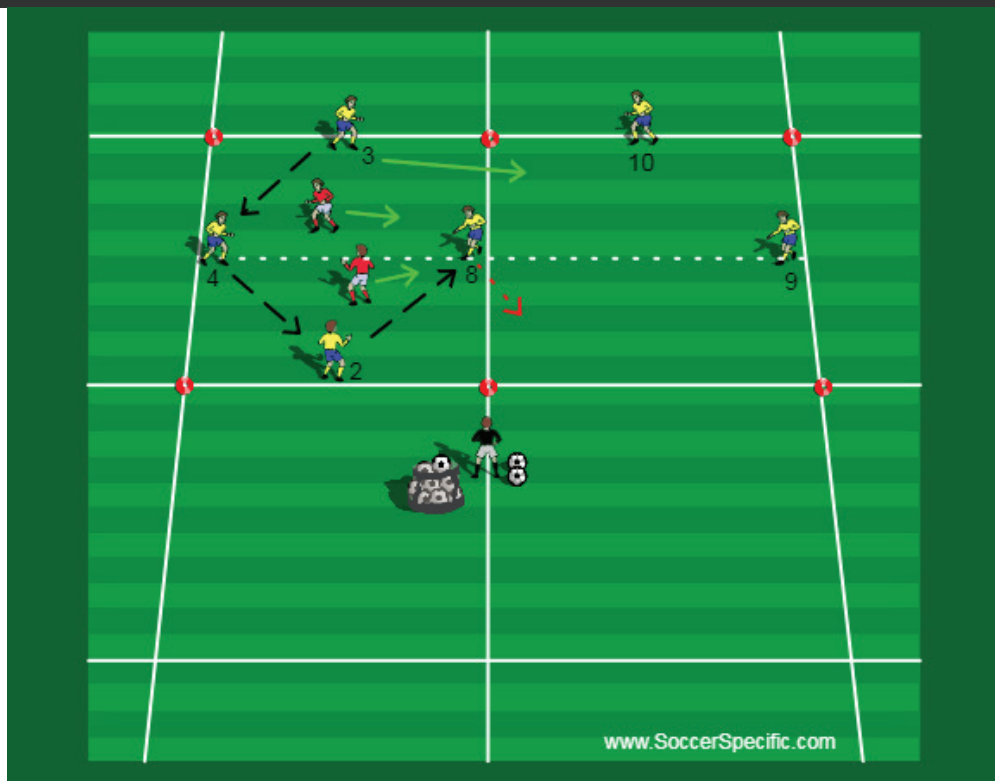
The coach starts by playing a ball into the red team in the 4v2 possession area. The objective for the red team is to keep possession for as long as possible, the green team must press together and win possession. Once possession is won, they must find a "safety pass" to one of their four green teammates waiting in the larger 12X12 possession area. The green team must try and keep possession for as long as possible. If the ball goes out of the larger playing area a new ball is started by the coach and played back into the 8X8 playing area. Variation: If the red team wins possession from the green team, they can pass their way back into the smaller 4v2 scenario and start again without any stoppage or new ball. Play for a designated amount of time and make sure you are switching up the roles of the players.

### Coaching Points

Obviously the ability to maintain possession is a major focus of this activity. In addition, try focusing on the transition from offense to defense and winning the ball back within several seconds if possible. Once the transitional moment has occurred make sure the "safety pass" is executed properly and make sure the team of six keeps their shape by having at least one option in the center. From a defensive standpoint, make sure they press together, make play predictable for the supporting defenders, be aggressive but under control.



## 4V2+2 Rondo



⌚ 4X2 Min ↗ 12X12

### Setup

4V2+2 Positional Rondo. Two grids 12x12 are set next to each other. Coach dictates the pace of the activity by having plenty of balls at his feet. The white dotted line is imaginary and only used as a visual reference to one of the activities' conditions. Players have been organized by position based on 3-2-1 and 2-3-1 systems of play. We have chosen to work with one central defender (#4), two wide defenders (#2,#3), two attack minded central mid elders (#8,#10), and the center forward (#9).

### Instructions

Four yellow players possess the ball against two red players. The objective is to move the ball from one playing area to the players waiting in the other grid representing the center forward (#9) and the attacking midfielder (#10). The players have the three following conditions: 1. You must connect five passes before you advance the ball to the other grid. 2. You must play through the central midfielder (#8) to advance it to the other grid. 3. The entry pass to other grid must be on a diagonal and not in a straight line. (across the imaginary white dotted line). Possession continues on the other side with the #9, #10 and the joining #8 and left back #3 against the same two transitioning defenders. This 4V2 continues until the ball is either won by the defenders or the ball goes out of bounds. The next ball is started with the coach. Switch the two defenders as needed.

### Coaching Points

Focus on individual positional roles as well as small group patterns and relationships within the system of play. Encourage scanning the field without possession of the ball, finding the central midfielder and details off the ball. All movements and decisions should replicate game like scenarios when playing in a 3-2-1 and 2-3-1 formation. The movements of the #8 and outside backs will help create an overload from the back in a real match.



🕒 4X3 Min 🔍 35X40

## Setup

4V4 inside the playing area with a player from each team inside the five yard channel with a ball at their feet. Multi-directional when the coach plays a new ball into the playing area. Coach dictates possession and the tempo of the activity.

## Instructions

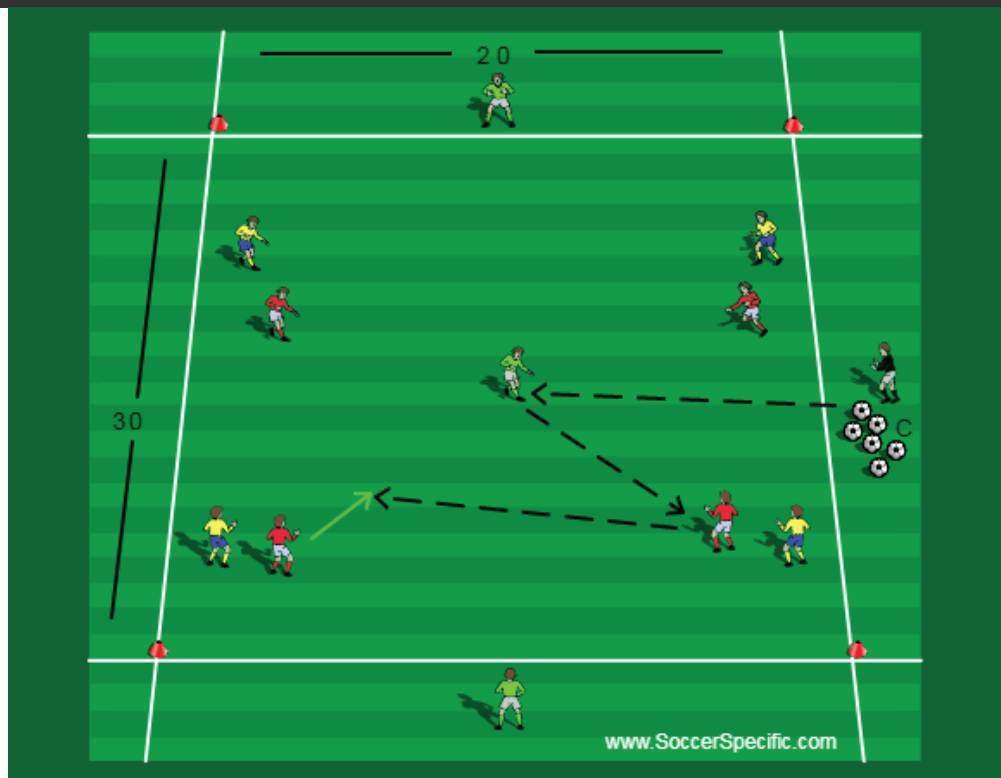
The objective of the 4V4 in the middle is to maintain good possession in order to open up space and dribble over the end line. As shown in the diagram, player A has dribbled over the end line and player B highlighted in yellow has penetrated the playing area on the dribble. The red team can maintain possession and dribble across the other end line. If the ball goes out of bounds a new ball is played in from the coach. Only when a new ball is played in can the team choose which direction to attack, if the ball is turned over they must attack the other end line.

## Coaching Points

When to dribble? When to pass? Be aggressive and take players on 1V1, if things close down quickly put your foot on the ball and switch the point of attack. The player waiting in the channel must anticipate where the space to attack will be and enter the playing area there, thus making it difficult for the four defending players in the middle to react, recover and deny penetration.



## 4V4 + 3



🕒 4X3 Min ↗️ 20X30

### Setup

22 field players, 4V4+3 possession in a 20X30 playing area. Extra balls in each corner. 11 players, position specific and certain player combinations used. Two identical grids set up. 12-15 minutes.

### Instructions

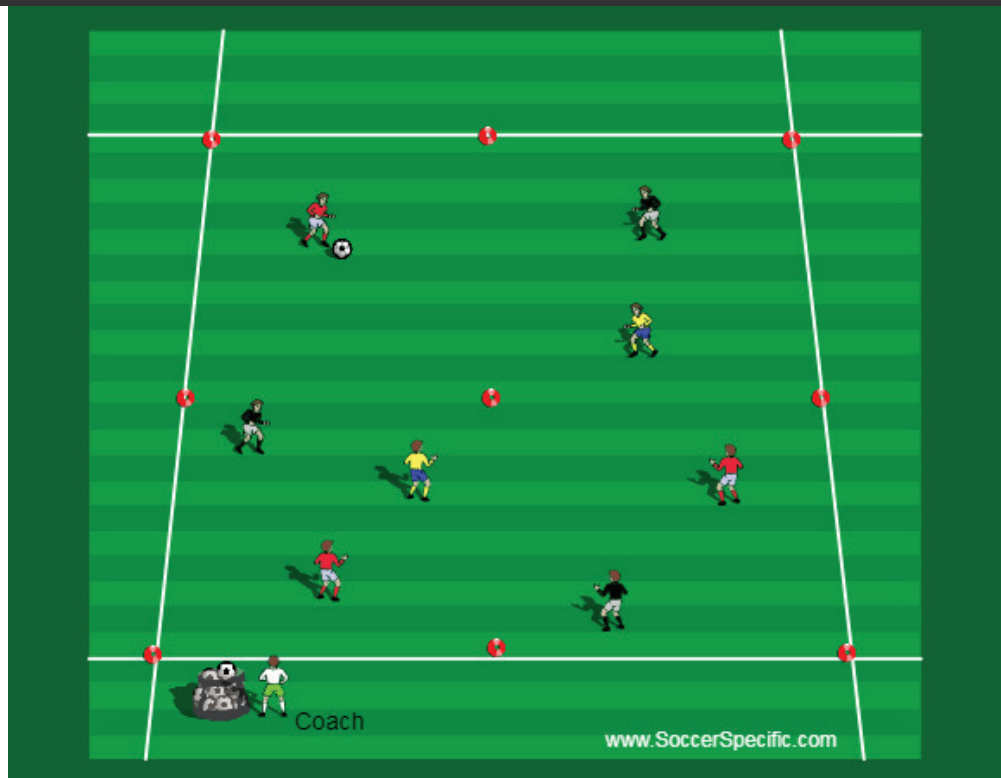
4 sets, 3 minutes each. Players utilize the three neutral players to possess the ball within the playing area as shown in the diagram. The four variations include: 3 touch max, 3 touch max and 8 passes is a point, 3 touch directional, 3 touch max 8 passes is a point.

### Coaching Points

Position specific guidance, transition from attacking (open) to defending (compact) and defending to attacking, creating triangles for passing and support on and off the ball, lose ball-immediate chase to win it back.



## 6V2



🕒 15 Min ↗ 12X12

### Setup

12X12 area divided into four smaller squares as shown. 8 players: 3 black, 3 red, 2 yellow and plenty of balls. Games of 6V2 are organized as shown. Focus is ball possession.

### Instructions

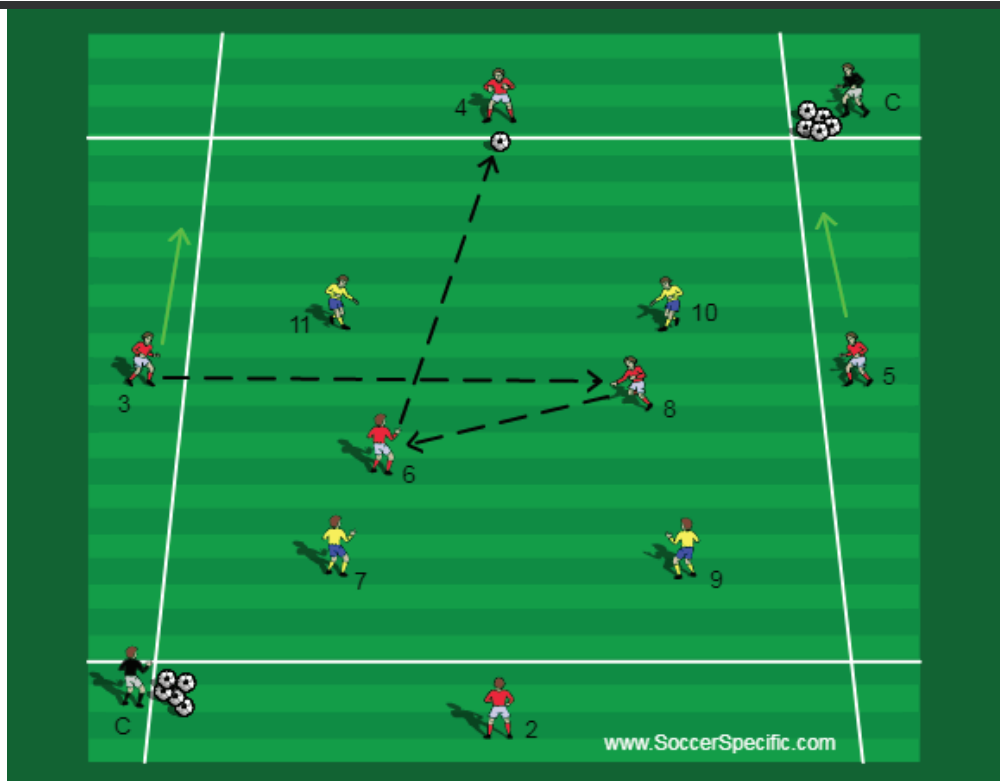
The three black and three red players try and maintain possession while the yellow players try to dispossess. Once yellow wins possession they must dribble quickly out of the big square. The coach immediately plays in the next ball. After 1.30 minute the coach changes the defenders, all 8 players take a turn defending.

Progression: After a pass is made the player who passed the ball must run into the small square that is not occupied with someone from your same color. THE COACH SHOULD NOT GIVE DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS, HE MUST LET THE PLAYERS FIGURE IT OUT, USING COGNITIVE WAY, MAKE THE PLAYER THINK ABOUT THE SOLUTIONS, HELP THEM WITH USING QUESTION LIKE (WHY, WHEN, WHAT....).

### Coaching Points

NO COMMUNICATION. Perception (always looking around where your teammates are located, the body position when you are changing the square is facing the ball. Sideways on facing the field. NO COMMUNICATION.





⌚ 3X2.5 Min ↗ 15X20

## Setup

12 players total, 6 red and 4 yellow players organized as shown. Two additional yellow players will exchange with their teammates after each 2.5 minute progression. Red team represents your back four (2,3,4,5) and two holding midfielders (6,8) and the yellow team represents your three forwards and attacking midfielders (7,9,10,11). Your two additional yellow players are extra central midfielders 6,8, or 10s.

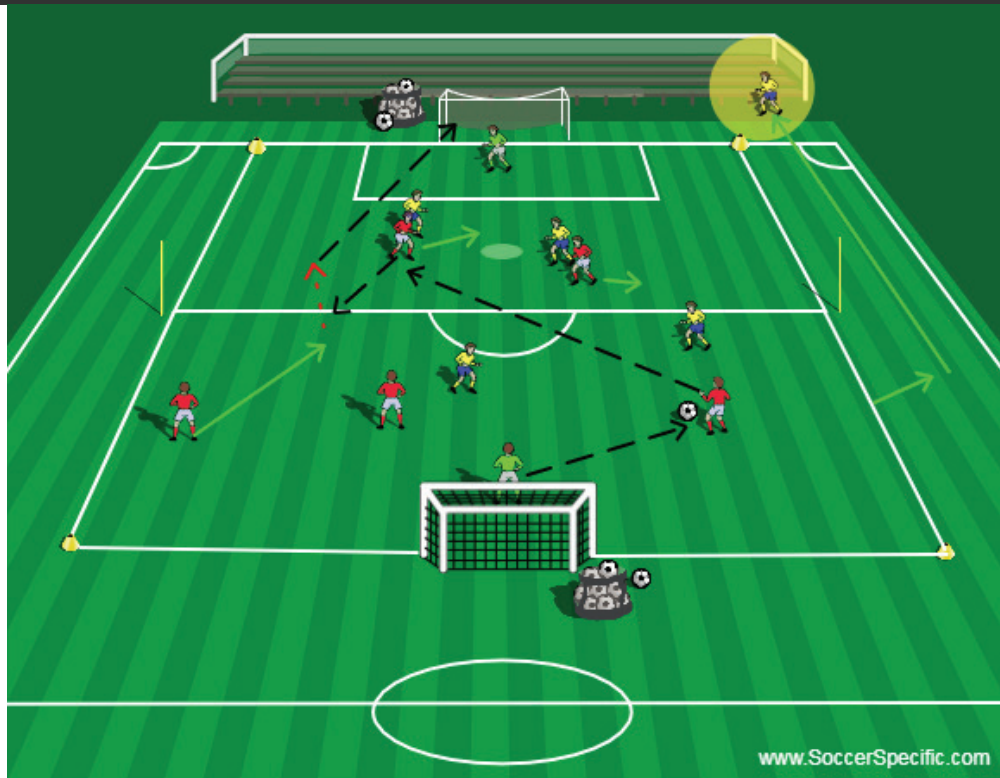
## Instructions

6V4 possession game. The objective of the red players is to maintain possession, dictate the tempo and play away from the pressure. The objective of the yellow team is to pressure and win the ball collectively. If the yellows win the ball they must dribble it over one of the lines, meanwhile the red players on the outside can enter the playing area and prevent the yellow team from penetrating. Three progressions include: unlimited, two touch, one touch restrictions.

## Coaching Points

Red team emphasize spacing, movement off the ball, speed of play, and rhythm. Yellow team focus on small group defending and pressing as a unit.

## 6V6 Finishing



🕒 3X4 Min ↗️ 36X44

### Setup

6V6 finishing game that encourages technical skills around the opponent's box. Pitch size is double penalty box. Attacking team: 3 + GK (assisting with build out) v 2 (strikers defending) in their own half and then 3 v 2 + GK in attacking half of the field. (one defending player must drop off the field/ in transition this can also be used as recovery run). Plenty of balls at the goals.

### Instructions

Various conditions can be applied such as 1 touch finishing or a maximum of 3 passes in attacking half before the ball is required to go back across the half-way line to re-set the attack phase.

To create early success, you can initially instruct the defenders that they require to play "goal side" of the attackers during the opposition build up.

Restriction options can be varied such as players being told that they must pass the ball across the halfway line or dribble or allow both.

Tactical Extension: increase both halves by 10 yards and use this space to add in options of offside.

### Coaching Points

Encourage set up play of quick short passes leading lay-offs for shots.

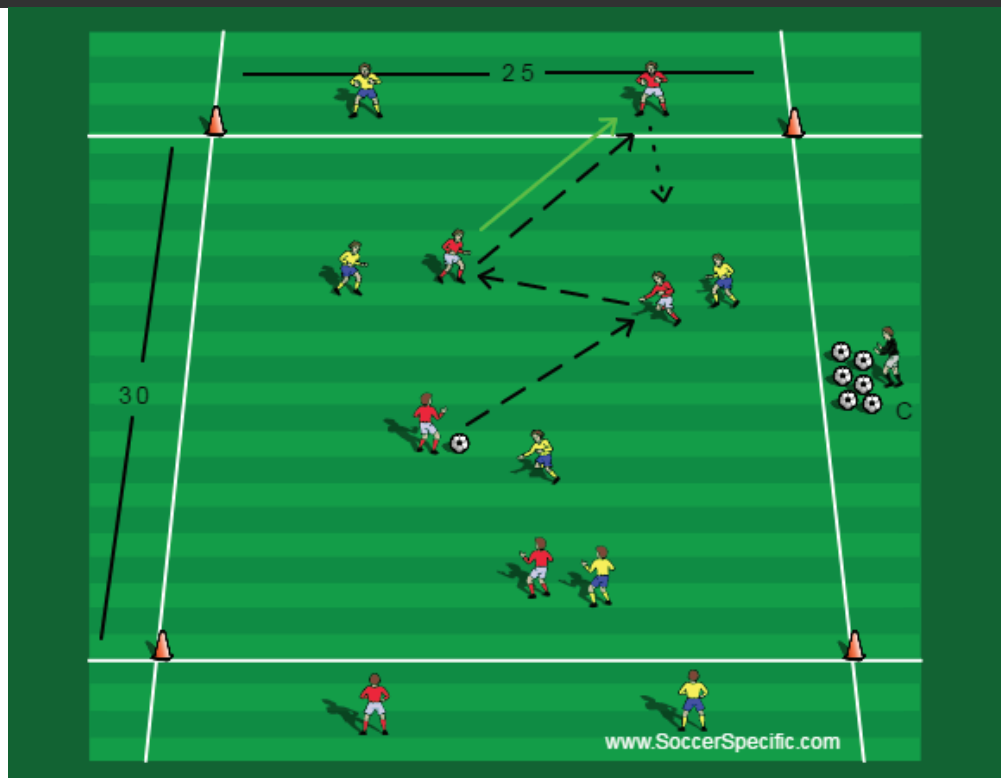
Encourage strikers to be aware when they can turn or make movements to create shooting opportunities for themselves.

Encourage the creation of opportunities to shoot as early as possible but also for players to be aware of when to recycle for a 2nd phase approach.

Encourage awareness of why the deliberate creation of the 2nd phase approach can craft attacking options by controlling the movement of the defending team.



## 6V6 Possession Interchange



🕒 4X2 Min ↗️ 25X30

### Setup

6V6 possession, 24 total players, 12 field players per group, 4v4+2 targets for each team, one on either side of a 25X30 yard playing area as shown in the diagram. 4X2 minutes, 1 minute rest in between. Two identical field set ups.

### Instructions

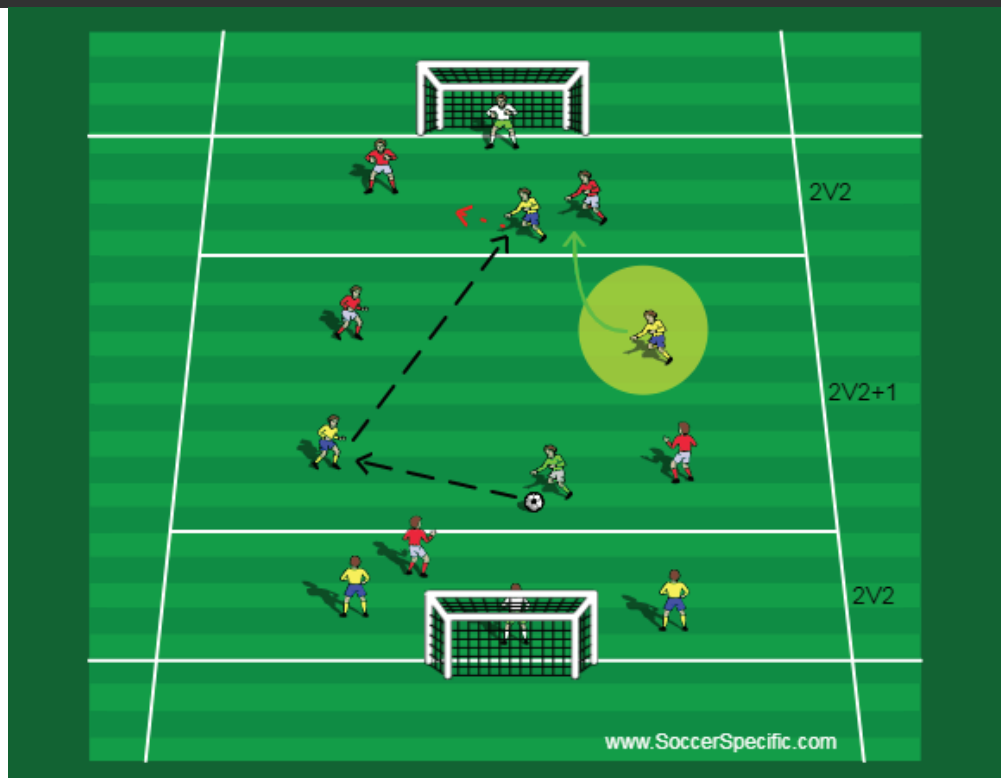
Normal possession inside the playing area, if the ball is played to one of the targets then the player who played the ball must switch positions with him. The target then must penetrate into the grid on the dribble or with a pass. 4 sets of 3 minute games, Variations for each game include 3 touch max, 3 touch max and 8 passes is a goal, unlimited touch and 10 passes is a goal, 3 touch directional play and combine from end to end for a point.

### Coaching Points

Possession, passing accuracy, mobility and movement off the ball, combination play, deciding when to penetrate or possess, communication and all previous coaching points.



## 6V6+1 To Goal



🕒 2X8 Min ↗️ 30X40

### Setup

Game related 6V6+1 in designated zones to goal. 2V2+1 in the middle zone and 2V1 building to a 2V2 in both attacking zones.

### Instructions

The red and yellow teams try and possess the ball from their defensive third, through the midfield and into the final third. Once the ball has entered the final third a second attacking player may enter the zone making it an even numbered 2V2 to goal. If the ball goes out of play the new ball starts with the GK. 2X8 minutes games.

### Coaching Points

All previous defending principles apply, deny goal scoring opportunities and play forward quickly in transition. A variation could include manipulating the touch restrictions in each of the zones.



🕒 4X3 Min ↗️ Half Field

## Setup

7V7 game to two big goals. Teams are organized in a 1-2-3-1 or a 1-3-2-1. Half field.

## Instructions

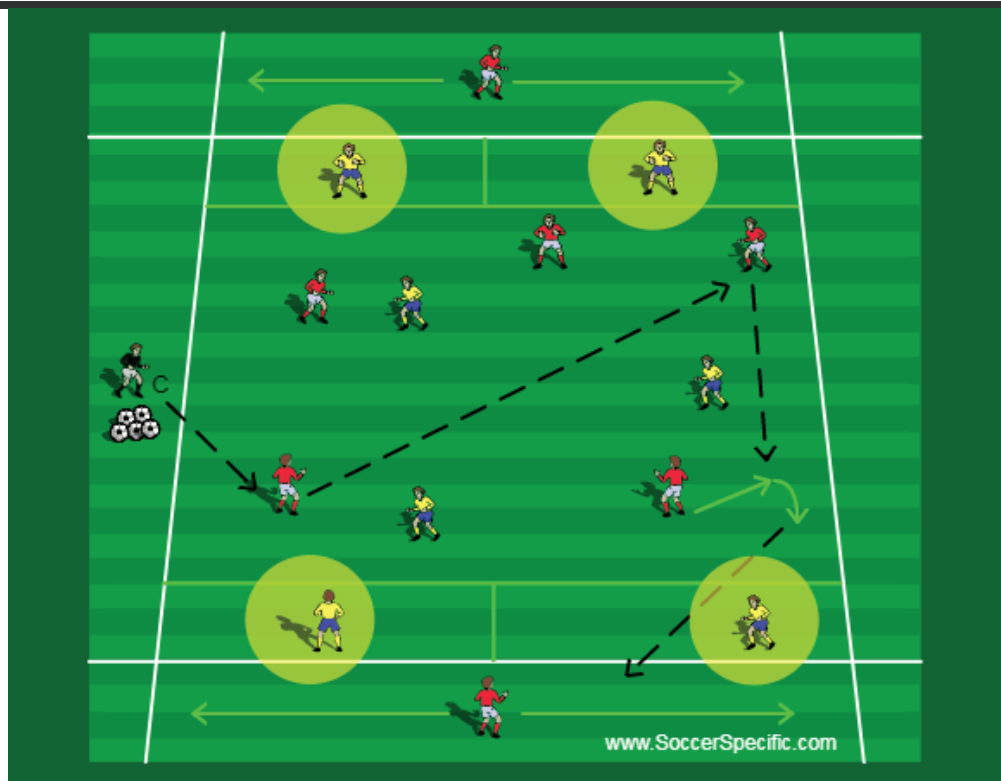
Normal soccer rules apply, if a team scores a goal they get to start buildup from their own GK. 4X3 minute games.

## Coaching Points

If you have an extra player, they can be utilized as a neutral player in the midfield making it a 7V7+1.



## 7V7 Screening



⌚ 20 Min ↗ 20X30

### Setup

7V7 directional possession game. 5V3 in the middle of the playing area with two targets and four screening defenders as shown highlighted in yellow. 20X30 yard playing area.

### Instructions

The coach plays a ball into the playing area and the objective of the red team is to find either of their target players with a penetrating pass. The target can combine back into the area to continue to keep possession and hopefully find the other target. The three primary defenders try and win possession in the middle or at least make the play predictable for the four screening defenders. The screening defender must work within their channels to cut off and deny any passing lanes or penetrating balls. Within their defensive shape the yellow team can try and maintain possession for as long as possible. If the ball goes out of play a new ball is played in by the coach. The screening defenders must stay in their channels and on their half of the field.

### Coaching Points

All previous coaching points. Focus on developing a working relationship between the two screening defenders on each side of the field. These two players could represent the two holding midfielders in a 4-2-3-1 formation.



## 7V7 Zonal



⌚ 2X8 Min ↗ Half Field

### Setup

7V7 zonal game to goals. Set up as shown.

### Instructions

One player can advance one zone creating a numerical advantage in the defensive and midfield third and even numbers in the attacking third. Once the transitional moment happens, the defending team must get back to their original zones.

### Coaching Points

All previous coaching points to beat the defenders as quickly as possible and create chances on goal.



⌚ 4X3 Min ↗ Half Field

## Setup

7V7-1 to goals. The red team is in possession of the ball so one of the yellow defenders has stepped off the field of play. When the yellow team wins possession and attacks, one of the red defenders must do the same. The yellow defender can now join the build up out of the back.

## Instructions

One player can advance one zone creating a numerical advantage.

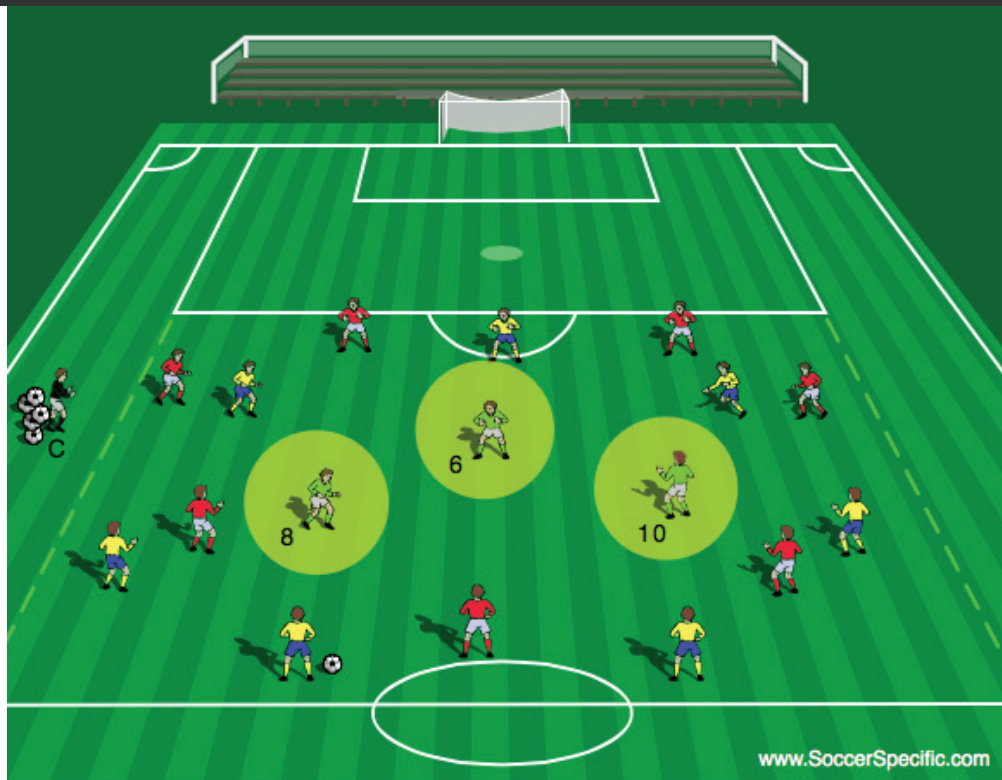
## Coaching Points

All previous coaching points to beat the defenders as quickly as possible and create chances on goal.





## 7V7 + 3 Possession



🕒 4X2 Min ↗️ 44X45

### Setup

7V7+3 functional, position specific possession, 44X45 (top of the penalty box to half field, the width of the penalty area) 17-24 field players.

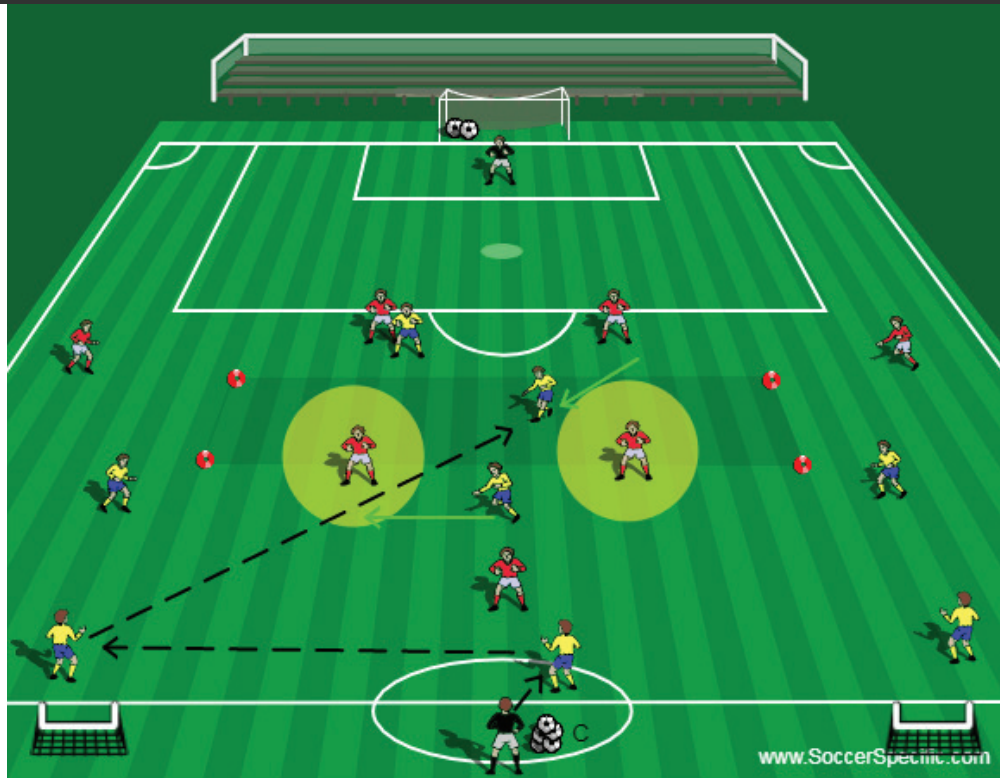
### Instructions

Teams are in a 4-3-3 formation, 2 or 3 teams based on your numbers for training, 4 games, 2 minutes each. 12 minutes.

### Coaching Points

The main focus is the transitional movements/shape of your three central midfielders. Making sure one of the three midfielders takes the starting position of a holding midfielder. Team shape, small group tactics building up through lines especially utilizing the midfield, spreading out while in possession, staying compact while defending, speed of play, establishing a rhythm, all defensive and attacking principles.

## 8V8 Screening



⌚ 2X6 Min ↗ Half Field

### Setup

8V8 (8V7+GK) functional to goal with two counter goals. 15 field players plus GK as shown. Red team is playing out of a 4-2-3-1 without their center forward or wide attackers (4-2-1). The yellow team is playing a 4-4-2 diamond without their two central defenders shown. Forwards are stacked and outside backs are in an advanced attacking position.

### Instructions

The coach plays a ball into the yellow attacking team. Their objective is to pierce the shadowed box with a penetrating ball before they can combine and go to goal. The red team must focus on screening the box as well as defending their goal. If the red team wins possession they can counter and score on either small goal. 2X6 minutes.

### Coaching Points

Against a diamond midfield the red team will be overloaded at times in the central area of the field, especially the two holding midfielders highlighted in yellow. Focus on the working relationship of the back four and two screening defenders. Passing players on, communication from behind, stepping to the ball etc.



## 8V8 + 2 Possession



🕒 4X2 Min ↗️ 44X45

### Setup

8V8+2 possession, functional position specific, 44X45 (top of the penalty box to half field, the width of the penalty area) 26 field players.

### Instructions

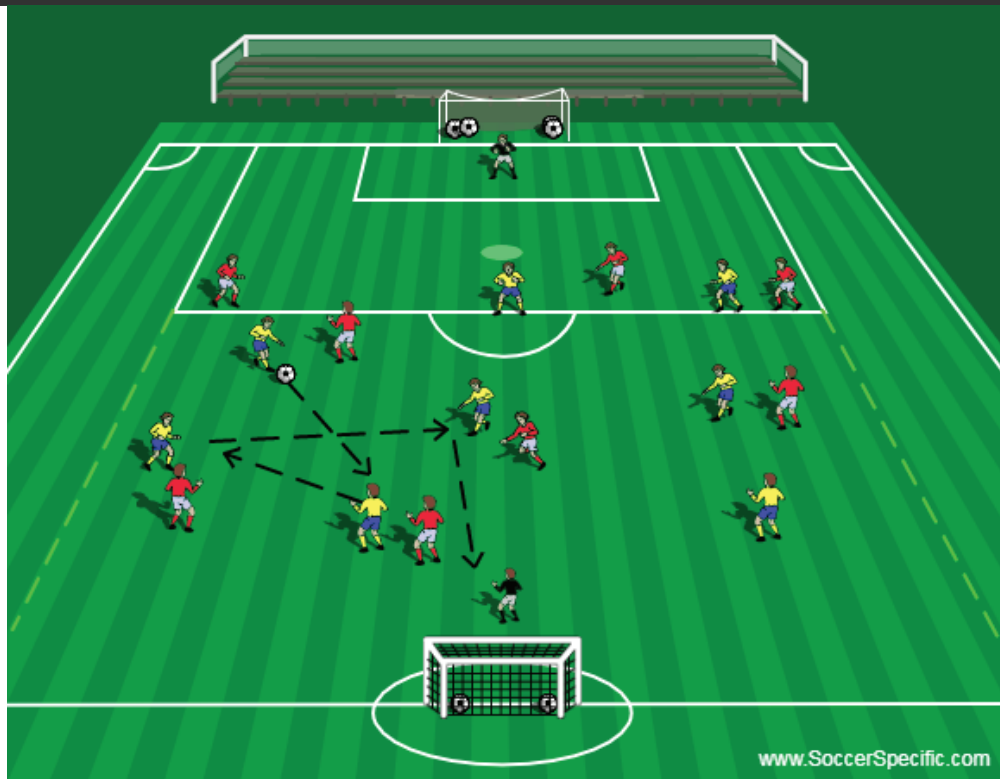
Teams in a 4-1-3, 3 teams, 4 games, 2 minutes each. 12 minutes.

### Coaching Points

Transition, team shape, small group tactics building up to a 4-1-3, compactness, possession, all previous defensive and attacking principles.



## 9V9



🕒 3X4 Min ↗️ 44X55

### Setup

9V9 small sided game, 1-3-3-2 formations, 2 teams. Width of the 18, half field. 16 field players plus 2 GK's.

### Instructions

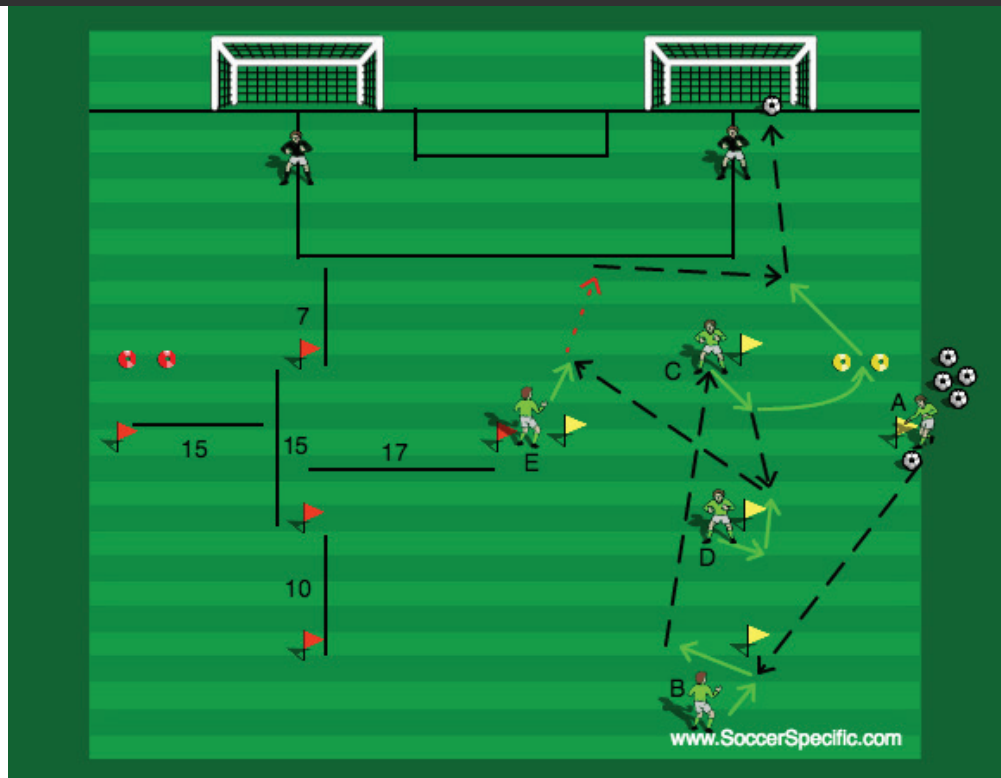
No offside, normal game to goals. If a goal is scored that team starts with possession from their own GK, 3 games 4 minutes each.

### Coaching Points

All attacking and defending principles. Set pieces and penalties can be added through the run of play if desired.



## Barcelona Finishing



⌚ 2X6 Min ↗ Half Field

### Setup

Finishing to two big goals. Set up as shown. Two groups of 10-12 players, minimum of two GKs or as numbers permit, 10 balls per group, 10 flags, 4 cones.

### Instructions

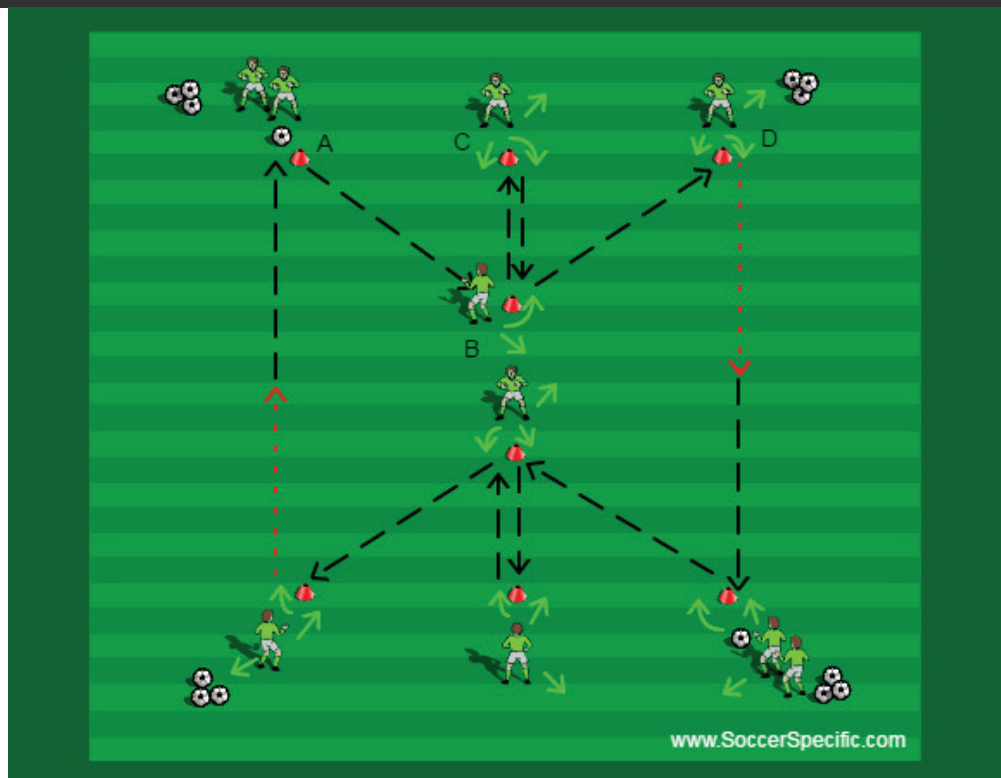
5 pass sequence with a finish on goal. 5-6 minutes of repetition and then switch sides, keep track of goals. Player A passes it to Player B who pulls away from the flag and touches across his body to the other side of the flag. On his second touch Player B plays a crisp ball into Player C's feet who lays a first time ball off to Player D. In the meantime Player D has cleared the passing lane and checked underneath Player C. Player D plays a ball into the path of Player E. Player E penetrates on the dribble and crosses the ball on the ground 16-18 yards out to Player C that has curved his run through the two cones for a first time finish if possible.

### Coaching Points

Timing of runs, checking away from the flags (defenders), quality service across the box, finish on frame. Players follow pass for rotation.



## Double Y Passing Sequence



⌚ 4X2 Min ↗ 30X20

### Setup

10-20 players, two 30X20 yard grids, 10 players per grid. 4 sets, 2 minutes in each direction.

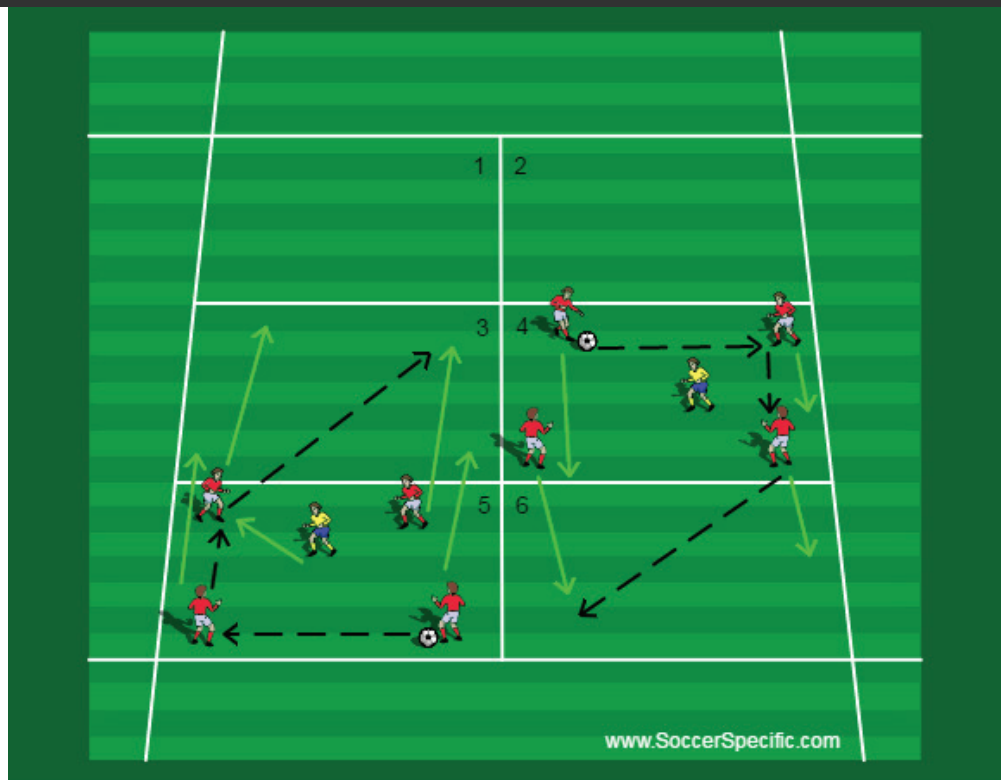
### Instructions

A pass to B, B pass to C, C pass back to B, B pass to D, D dribbles half way and then plays it on the ground to the other side. A replaces B, B replaces C, C slides over to D. Two balls passing simultaneously. Work clockwise and counter clockwise for a specified time. The first time through everything is two touch, the second time through the passing sequence with the players in the middle is one touch and instead of dribbling half way, the players drive the ball on the ground with their laces. Variations: two touch, one touch, Player D can dribble, short pass, or long pass with inside foot or laces.

### Coaching Points

Looking over shoulder before receiving the ball, adjust your feet/hips to play the way you face, play to front foot, choosing correct foot and surface of the foot, communication, accuracy and quality of passing/receiving technique.

## Moving Rondos



⌚ 15 Min ↗ 16X24

### Setup

Six 8X8 or 10X10 grids are set up next to each other as shown. Rondos can be either 4V1 or 5V2 depending on your numbers for the training.

### Instructions

Players play a 4V1 in 8X8 square with five other 8X8 squares set up around them as shown. In another square, there is another 4V1 game. The four attackers look to play 5 passes without losing possession to the defender in the middle. When five passes have been completed, all the players move to another square whilst maintaining possession. Obviously they cannot go in the same square as the other group and cannot go back to a square they just left. When the defender wins possession, he changes places with the attacker that lost possession. They goal is to successfully possess the ball in all six grids.

### Coaching Points

Overall game awareness (knowing where the other group is playing), speed of play, speed of thought, movement off the ball, maintaining composure when traveling grids. Variations could include making the playing area bigger or smaller, adding extra defenders or attackers, and touch restrictions. Lastly, you can go with a set time with the defender.





## Rondo Breakout To Goal

36

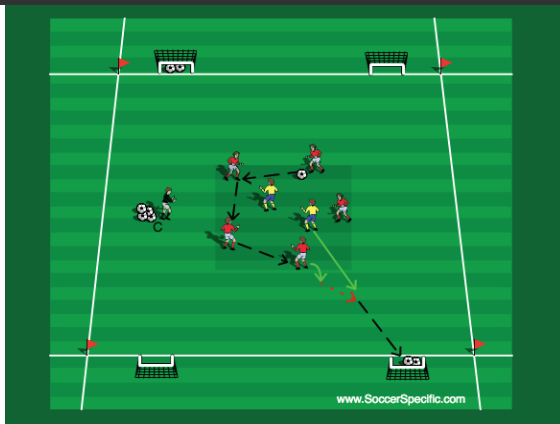
Date: Jan 01, 2018

Duration: 12 Min

Team: Curriculum Ages 9-12

Intensity: ● (5/10)

Category: Tech / Tact



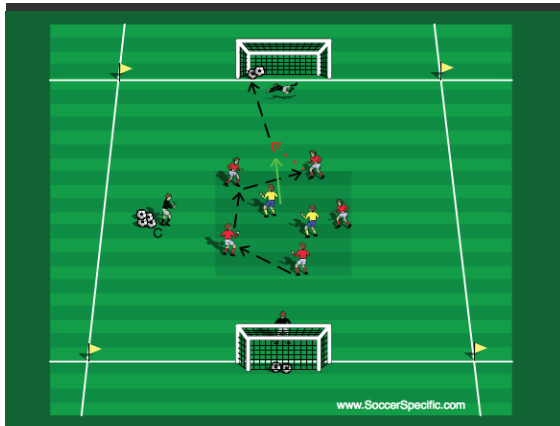
1

⌚ 12 Min ↗ 40X30

**Setup:** 10X10 designated playing area is placed in the middle of a 30X40 field with two small goals on each end line.

**Instructions:** The coach plays a ball into the red team, the red team tries to connect a designated amount of passes before they can go to goal. Once they have broken the 10X10 playing area, one of the yellow defenders can initiate an immediate chase to stop the attack. After a given amount of time switch the roles of the players. Variations include: (1) Coach verbally dictates which of the four goals they can attack each sequence. (2) A second attacker and two defenders can join. (3) Must finish in maximum three touches or three seconds.

**Coaching Points:** Develop a rhythm of play in possession, try and draw the two defenders to one side of the grid in order to switch the play quickly and continue the attack in the direction of the desired goal.



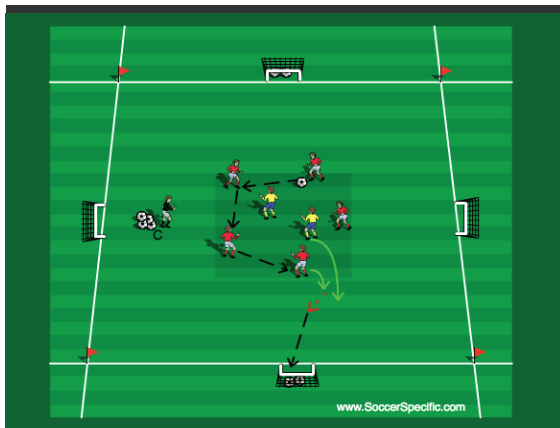
2

⌚ 12 Min ↗ 40X30

**Setup:** 10X10 designated playing area is placed in the middle of a 30X40 field with a big goal placed on each end line.

**Instructions:** The coach plays a ball into the red team, the red team tries to connect a designated amount of passes before they can go to goal. Once they have broken the 10X10 playing area, one of the yellow defenders can initiate an immediate chase to stop the attack. After a given amount of time switch the roles of the players.

**Coaching Points:** Develop a rhythm of play in possession, try and draw the two defenders to one side of the grid in order to switch the play quickly and continue the attack in that direction towards the desired goal. Efficiency and deliberate movement towards goal.



3

⌚ 12 Min ↗ 40X30

**Setup:** 10X10 designated playing area is placed in the middle of a 30X40 field with a small goal placed on each touch line.

**Instructions:** The coach plays a ball into the red team, the red team tries to connect a designated amount of passes before they can go to goal. Once they have broken the 10X10 playing area, one of the yellow defenders can initiate an immediate chase to stop the attack. After a given amount of time switch the roles of the players. Variations include: (1) Coach verbally dictates which of the four goals they can attack each sequence. (2) While the play is developing take away one of the goal options. (3) Must finish in maximum three touches or three seconds.

**Coaching Points:** Develop a rhythm of play in possession, try and draw the two defenders to one side of the grid in order to switch the play quickly and continue the attack in that direction towards the desired goal. Players must continue to scan off the ball to recognize their attacking options.





## Rondo Progression

37

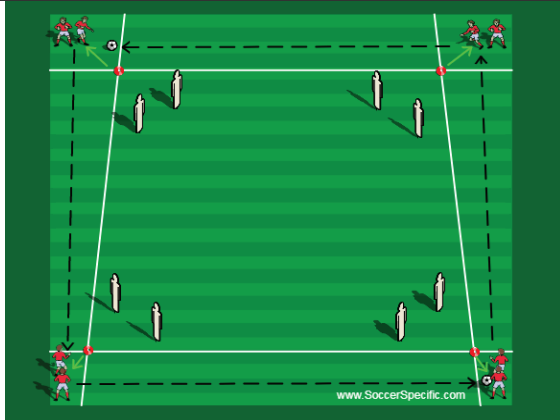
Date: Jan 01, 2018

Duration: 20 Min

Team: Curriculum Ages 9-12

Intensity: ● (5/10)

Category: Tech / Tact



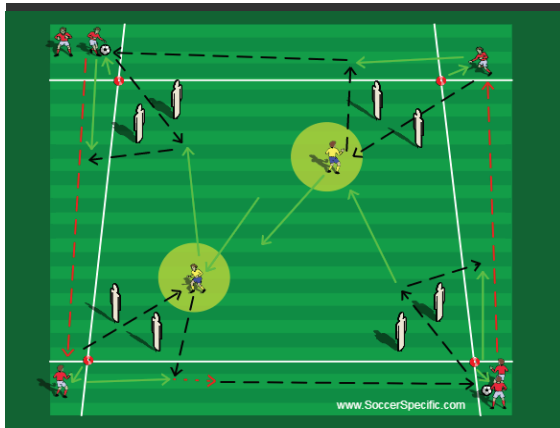
1

⌚ 2X2 Min ↗ 15X15

**Setup:** 15X15 Grid, 8 players per grid, multiple grids if necessary, 8 mannequins, two players and extra balls in each corner.

**Instructions:** Balls in opposite corners start at the same time. The first player starts at the cone and pops away from the cone (defender) and receives the ball. Pass with the right foot and receive with the right foot, to rotate follow your pass in a counter clockwise sequence. Right on right for two minutes and then switch the direction to left on left for two minutes.

**Coaching Points:** Scan off the ball and recognize how the play is developing on the other side of the grid. Don't ball watch, look off the ball at your desired target before you receive it. Exaggerate the movement off the cone to create space from the defender. Timing of the check off the cone, don't check off the cone too early.



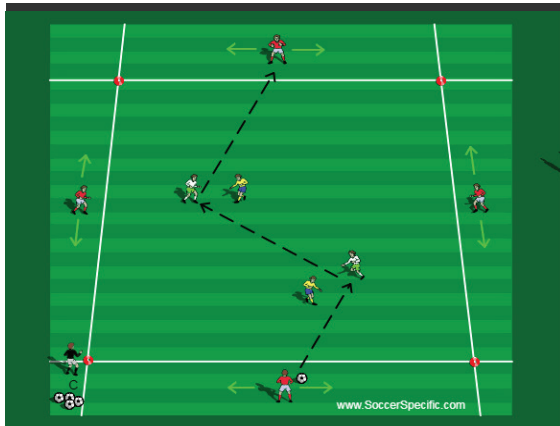
2

⌚ 4X2 Min ↗ 15X15

**Setup:** 15X15 Grid, 8 players per grid, multiple grids if necessary, 8 mannequins, two players and extra balls in each corner.

**Instructions:** Place two center midfielders in yellow in the center of the grid. The remaining six players will execute the passing sequence on the outside. Balls in opposite corners start at the same, the initial passes are shown in red. The balls are played counterclockwise, the receiving player must check off the cone and find one of the center midfielders with a sharp pass that splits the two mannequins. Play continues with a quick combo play around the mannequin and to the next player as shown. The two midfielders must work off each other and find the next ball. Continue for two minutes and then switch directions. Rotate through all four sets of players.

**Coaching Points:** Sharp passing on the perimeter of the grid, scan off the ball and recognize the central midfielders movement. Receive the ball with hips open to the field so you can hit the CM with a first time pass. Two CM's must work on different angles and time their runs appropriately. Too easy? Add one defender, add two defenders!



3

⌚ 4X2 Min ↗ 15X15

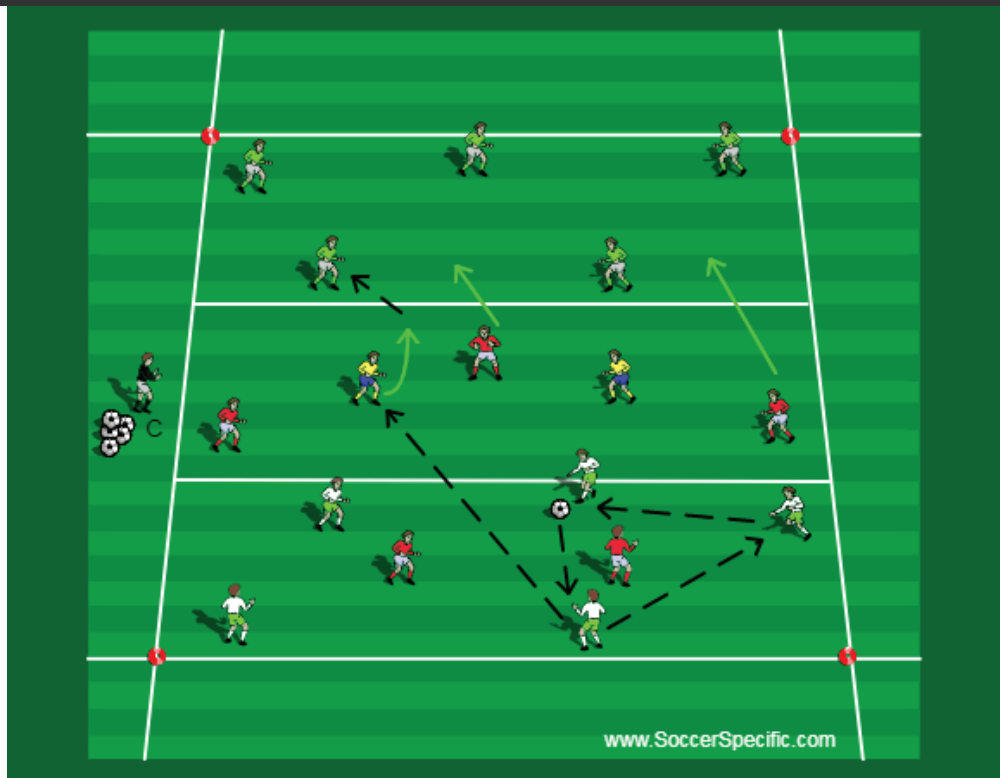
**Setup:** 15X15 Grid, 8 players per grid, multiple grids if necessary. Four red players on the perimeter and two sets of central midfielders in the middle.

**Instructions:** 6V2 rondo. Players on the outside of the grid try and find penetrating balls to the yellow or white players in the middle of the grid. Possession continues by combining with the other midfielder and the four players on the perimeter. The two defending MF's must try and win the ball back quickly! Rotate through all four sets of players for two minutes each.

**Coaching Points:** Encourage combining through the middle in order to switch the point of attack. Encourage the MF's to combine with each other when possible. Limit the passes from perimeter player to perimeter player. Midfielders must use sharp movements to lose the defender. All players must constantly scan off the ball to recognize how the play is developing. Players on the outside must always be in a spot where the ball can see them.



## Three Team Rondo



⌚ 20 Min ↗ 15X10

### Setup

17 players, three teams of 5 plus two neutral players. Three 5X10 grids set up next to each other as shown.

### Instructions

The white team possesses the ball for five passes against two red defenders. The white team's objective is to transfer possession to the green team at the opposite end. If successful, the green team does the same against two different red defenders. If the red team win possession from the whites or intercept in the middle zone, they take the place of the white team on the outside and whites move to the middle as defenders. Shown above, the white team have utilized the two yellow neutral players to transfer the ball across, they can also play the ball directly to the green team.

### Coaching Points

Keep an eye on the two neutral players in the middle zone and make sure they are working on different planes and providing depth for each other. Movement off the ball, look for passing lanes and pockets of space between defenders. Receive the ball on the half turn to play through quickly. Progressions include: Allow more defenders, allow neutral players to drop in to help maintain possession and dribble across line into middle zone.



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*"I'm very thankful for everything Anthony did for not just me but for our whole U-17 Men's National Team. He really taught me what it meant to be a good teammate. Not just relying on talent but the togetherness of teammates and supporting each other no matter what. He had the right mix of when to have fun and be serious and was always there to give good advice."*

*Christian Pulisic, United States Men's National Team, Borussia Dortmund*

*"I felt that Anthony's sessions were always organized, intense, and focused on proper technique, which for me was really important. Sessions were always top quality and realistically geared to the high levels of professional and national team goal keeping. I especially enjoyed the up-beat tempo and high expectations Anthony had of me throughout each session. I appreciated Anthony's ability to also expect that same level of quality and consistency from himself. The two things that stick with me still today that Anthony enforced are hard work and self-confidence. You can't have one without the other; there is no substitute for hard work, and no short cuts!"*

*Ethan Horvath, United States Men's National Team, Club Brugge*

**ANTHONY LATRONICA** has worked with the last three United States U-17 Men's National Team World Cup cycles and has earned over 100 coaching caps at the youth international level. His experiences have given him an inside look at youth development across the world. It has never been more clear to him what is needed at the youngest age groups. He has spent hours on the training pitch sculpting a blue print for player development and a training curriculum that is simple and modern. This Season Curriculum, specifically designed for Zone 1, ages 9-12, is cognitive based and has a great balance of rondos, position play, and game related activities! Whether you are training 2 or 3 days a week, playing 7V7 or 9V9, these 42 activities will help your players thrive. This curriculum will give your girls and boys the necessary foundation to succeed at the 11V11 level. Downloading it directly into your own library allows you to follow the blueprint as is or make desired edits based on your own environment. Let's continue to do our part in player development and take our coaching to the next level!

