



COMBINATION PLAY TO CREATE CHANCES

SESSION OVERVIEW

During this session, players will focus on the following principles of play:

- Opposite Movements
- Overloading one side to attack the other
- Wall passes and up-back-throughs

PART 1: UNOPPOSED PASSING EXERCISE

This segment of the session aims to establish the foundations of passing combinations to create goal-scoring opportunities.

PART 2: 4+GK VS 4+GK +3 SMALL-SIDED GAME

Building upon the principles learned in the passing exercise, this small-sided game provides players with a contextual application of their skills.

PART 3: 6+GK VS 6+GK +2 SMALL-SIDED GAME

This stage of the session increases the complexity of combinations to create goal-scoring chances, challenging players to apply their understanding of the principles of play.

Throughout the session, players will develop their passing skills, improve their understanding of movement and positioning, and apply tactical concepts to enhance their ability to create goal-scoring chances.

UNOPPOSED PASSING EXERCISE (PART 1)

This passing exercise focuses on building the foundation for combinations to create goal-scoring chances. It is an unopposed drill that requires a minimum of six players. The exercise consists of two variations and is designed to be continuous.

- Players start at designated cones: two at Cone A, two at Cone B, and one each at Cone C and Cone D.
- Ideally, the exercise is performed with one-touch passing, but a second touch is allowed if it helps maintain rhythm.
- Each variation is played for two sets of two minutes, with a 60-second rest period in between.
- After each repetition, players rotate to the next cone in the sequence: A-B-C-A-B-D-A.

VARIATION 1:

- The exercise begins with a pass from the player at Cone A to the player at Cone B, behind the mannequin. The player at Cone B opens their body and combines with the player at Cone C, executing a wall pass around the mannequin. Finally, the player at Cone C finishes by scoring in the small goal.
- Simultaneously, as the pass is made from Cone B to Cone C, a second ball starts following the same pattern but to the right, involving the player at Cone D.



VARIATION 2:

- The sequence begins with a pass from the player at Cone A to the player at Cone B, who then plays a wall pass around the mannequin. As the player at Cone B receives the third pass, the player at Cone D initiates a run behind the mannequin to receive the up-back-through pass and score.
- Additionally, a second ball begins as the player at Cone B plays a pass in behind for the player at Cone D. This ball follows an identical pattern on the left side, involving the player at Cone C.
- Throughout the exercise, players will develop their passing accuracy, movement off the ball, and understanding of combination play. The variations aim to enhance their decision-making, timing, and finishing abilities in different scenarios.

COACHING PROCESS

PASS QUALITY:

- Emphasise the importance of firm and crisp passes to teammates who are moving away from the mannequins and into open space.
- Encourage players to adjust the weight off their passes to facilitate the next action for the receiver.

OPPOSITE MOVEMENT:

- Instruct players to time their movements too synchronise with the passer's actions.
- As the passer takes their first touch behind the mannequin at Cone B, the players in the wide positions should fake a run in behind to create space away from defenders.

WALL PASS:

- Highlight the need for the player at Cone B to quickly change pace and offer support after playing the pass.
- Players at Cones C and D should execute a soft set and immediately change pace to make diagonal runs behind the mannequin, positioning themselves to receive a through ball and score in the small goal.
- Emphasise the importance of a well-weighted final pass into the space their teammate is moving into, allowing for a one-touch finish.

UP-BACK-THROUGH:

- Stress the significance of pass quality, weight, and timing of movements in executing the up-back-through combination.
- Initiate the move with a quick and sharp wall pass around the mannequin at Cone A.
- Instruct players at Cones C and D to maintain visual connection with the play and, as the player at Cone B moves behind the mannequin to receive the pass, encourage them to move towards the mannequin and then make a diagonal run behind it to receive the through ball.
- Explain that moving towards the mannequin creates a better advantage by freezing the defender and allowing for a better opportunity to receive in the space behind the defensive line.

By focusing on these technical aspects, players will improve their passing accuracy, movement off the ball, and execution of combination plays.



4+GK VS 4+GK +3 SMALL-SIDED GAME (PART 2)

This small-sided game focuses on applying wall passes and up-back-through combinations in a game-like setting. The pitch is divided into thirds, with two mannequins on each defensive third line.

- Teams are set up in a 1-3-1-3 formation when in possession, with three neutral players (N) acting as a centre-back, central midfielder, and striker. The defending team (Team B) adopts a 2-2 shape when out of possession.
- The game takes place in the central zone (Zone B) and teams aim to progress into their attacking zone through combination play and score a goal beyond the mannequin line, which serves as an offside line.
- When a team reaches their attacking zone, one teammate can join the attack while one defender drops, creating a 2v1 + GK situation for five seconds.
- Neutral players cannot join the attack in Zone A or C.

WAYS TO SCORE

- Connect five passes to earn one goal.
- Progress into the end zone through a wall pass or up-back-through combination and score within five seconds to earn three goals.
- Teams can accumulate up to four goals in a single possession by achieving both scoring criteria.
- After scoring a goal, the team that scored restarts with a new ball using the neutral player closest to their goal or one of their teammates.
- In case of a foul or ball going out of bounds, the opposing team begins with a new ball from the player nearest to their own goal.

This small-sided game encourages players to combine effectively, make use of wall passes and up-back-throughs, and showcases their ability to create scoring opportunities while maintaining possession and defensive organisation.

COACHING PROCESS

IN POSSESSION

POSITIONING TO CREATE TRIANGLES & DIAMONDS

- Emphasise the importance of maintaining the 3-1-3 formation to create triangles and diamonds on the field. The neutral players should provide depth and constant support, while the central neutral player plays a key role in linking play. The objective is to establish a solid attacking structure while in possession.

OPPOSITES

- Encourage the team in possession to utilise the concept of opposites by playing inside to then play outside or vice versa. This movement across the field forces the opponents to shift and creates space to exploit.



OVERLOAD ONE SIDE TO ATTACK THE OTHER

- Teach players to strategically connect passes on one side of the field to draw the opponent towards that side, creating openings and opportunities to attack on the opposite side.

WALL PASS

- Emphasise the use of quick wall passes to penetrate behind the defence and progress into the end zone. Defenders typically follow the ball, so well-executed wall passes can help the team advance into scoring positions or set up crosses for teammates. The neutral players play a crucial role in facilitating these wall-passing actions.

UP-BACK-THROUGH

- Instruct wide attackers to be prepared to receive up-back-through passes, particularly when the neutral players are combining centrally. The wide player on the opposite side should stay connected to the play, ready to support attacks and create favourable scoring opportunities.

2v1 + GK SITUATION

- When in the end zone, stress the importance of maintaining connectivity within the possession team. The wide player on the opposite side should be prepared to join the attack. In the five-second situations, emphasise quick actions such as crosses, wall passes, or shots to maximise scoring opportunities.

OUT OF POSSESSION

AGGRESSIVE DEFENDING

- Emphasise a zonal and aggressive defensive approach, with the team adopting a 2-2 shape without the ball. Encourage players to press aggressively and force the opponents to the wide areas, aiming to regain possession quickly. Wall passes and up-back-throughs can be used as defensive triggers to launch counter-attacks.

TRANSITIONS

DEFENSIVE TRANSITION – COUNTER-PRESS

- After losing possession, emphasise the importance of a swift counter-press to regain the ball and create space for attacking opportunities. The player closest to the ball should initiate the pressure, with other players forming a second defensive line and providing cover.

OFFENSIVE TRANSITION – COUNTER OR POSSESSION

- When possession is regained, encourage immediate attacking intentions through passing combinations aimed at scoring. If the defending team is well-organised and covers spaces effectively, instruct players to secure possession, move the opposition, and then attempt to penetrate beyond the mannequins to create scoring chances.



6+GK VS 6+GK +2 SMALL-SIDED GAME (PART 3)

This small-sided game focuses on the application of wall passes and up-back-throughs in a more complex and game-like setting. The game is played with 6 outfield players and 2 goalkeepers on each team.

- The teams will adopt a 2-1-2-3 formation when in possession and a 2-3-1 formation when without the ball.
- The playing field is divided into three horizontal zones: A, B, and C. Zone B is the area where possession is played, with the attacking team aiming to progress into Zone C using wall passes and up-back-through combinations. The defending team seeks to build into Zone A.
- Two neutral players (N) participate in the game, occupying the #8 and #10 positions. They are restricted to Zone B and must be positioned in opposite vertical zones within that area.
- When the attacking team enters either Zone A or Zone C, three attackers and two defenders are allowed to join the attack, creating a 3v2 +GK situation for five seconds.

SCORING

- One goal is earned by connecting five consecutive passes.
- Three goals are earned by progressing into the end zone (Zone C) through a wall pass or up-back-through combination and scoring within five seconds.
- A team can earn up to four goals during a single possession - five passes followed by a successful progression into the end zone.

ADDITIONAL RULES.

- After a goal is scored, the team that scored starts a new attack with their defenders.
- If the ball goes out of bounds, the opposing team begins with a new ball and their defenders.
- The lines marking the end zones serve as offside lines.

This small-sided game encourages players to apply their understanding of wall passes and up-back-throughs in a dynamic and competitive environment, promoting effective possession play, creativity in attack, and strategic defensive decisions.

COACHING PROCESS

IN POSSESSION

POSITIONING TO CREATE TRIANGLES & DIAMONDS:

- Emphasise the importance of maintaining the 2-1-2-3 formation to create triangles and diamonds on the field. The neutral players positioned centrally between the lines should focus on linking the play, while the wide players (#7, #11) and the striker (#9) provide width and depth. Encourage players to maintain good spacing and angles to facilitate effective passing options.

OPPOSITES:

- Teach the team in possession to utilise the concept of opposites, such as playing inside to then play outside, or vice versa. This movement forces the opponent to shift from side to side, creating gaps and spaces to exploit in the defence.



OVERLOAD ONE SIDE TO ATTACK THE OTHER:

- Highlight the strategy of overloading one side of the field to draw the opponent's attention and then quickly switching play to attack the other side. Encourage players to connect passes on one side to attract defenders and create openings for attacks on the opposite side. For instance, the team could initiate a sequence on the top left before transitioning to the bottom right, creating a numerical advantage, like a 3v1, against the centre-back.

WALL PASS:

- Emphasise the use of quick wall passes to penetrate the defensive lines and progress behind the opposition. Encourage players, especially the neutral players, to actively participate in linking these wall-passing actions, creating opportunities for forward movement and goal-scoring chances.

UP-BACK-THROUGH:

- Instruct wide attackers to be prepared for up-back-through passes to exploit the space behind the defence, particularly when the neutral players receive a set pass from the striker (#9). Stress the importance of maintaining a connection between the wide players and the striker, ensuring they are ready to support attacking moves.

3v2 +GK SITUATION:

- In the end zone, emphasise the importance of maintaining connectivity among the players in possession. The wide player on the opposite side should be prepared to join attacks along with the striker (#9) to create a numerical advantage, like a 3v2, against the remaining defenders and the goalkeeper. Encourage quick decision-making and execution of actions such as crosses, wall passes, or shots to maximise scoring opportunities within the five-second time frame.

OUT OF POSSESSION

AGGRESSIVE DEFENDING:

- Instruct the team without the ball to adopt a 2-3-1 defensive shape, focusing on aggressive and coordinated defending to regain possession quickly. Encourage zonal defending principles, pressuring the opponents to the wide areas, and initiating intense defensive actions to disrupt their build-up play.

DEFENSIVE TRANSITION – COUNTER-PRESS:

- After losing possession, emphasise the importance of an immediate and coordinated counter-press to regain the ball. Encourage the player closest to the ball to initiate pressure, while the players behind them act as a second defensive line, ready to press and provide coverage. Promote a proactive mindset and swift reaction to win back possession as high up the field as possible.

OFFENSIVE TRANSITION – COUNTER OR POSSESSION:

- Once possession is regained, emphasise the importance of quick passing combinations to initiate immediate attacks and create goal-scoring opportunities. Encourage players to assess the defensive positioning of the opposing team and make decisions based on whether a direct counter-attack or controlled possession-based build-up is more advantageous. Prioritise securing possession and manipulating the opposition before attempting to progress beyond the mannequins to score.