

Movement off the ball

This session looks to improve co-ordinating movement off the ball so the player in possession has lots of passing options.

The aim of the players' movement and forward runs is to disrupt the opponent's defence and create gaps that can be exploited.



What you tell your players the session is about

1. Creating time and space to receive a pass.
2. Decision making on whether to pass or shoot.
3. Combining movement with passing to score goals.

Session planner

Warm up 10 mins	Session 10 mins	Developments 15 mins	Game 20 mins	Warm down 5 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls and cones	Players using disguise to lose their opponent and win the game. From <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 13
The session	Balls, mannequins, poles or cones and a goal	The player in possession shoots or passes
Development	Balls, mannequins, poles or cones and a goal	The player in possession makes correct decisions based on the best movement off the ball
Game	Balls, cones and two goals	The movement of the players and decision making on the ball combine to help create goal scoring chances
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



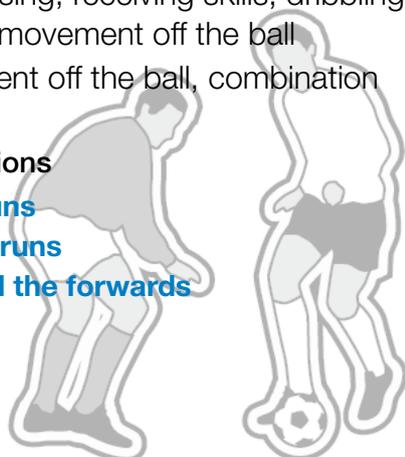
Where it fits

Individual skills: Passing, receiving skills, dribbling, shooting, crossing, movement off the ball

Team skills: Movement off the ball, combination play in attack

Related Smart Sessions

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- 59 [Runs beyond the forwards](#)



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What to think about

- A player's movement/run off the ball should be made to create 2v1 situations or to pull defenders out of position. This will give the player in possession more time and options with their choice of action.
- The player in possession must be decisive with the choices they make in order to reap the benefits of the player movement.
- The attack and movement off the ball should be at match speed to catch opponents by surprise.





Set-up

Create a 60 yards by 40 yards playing area with a goal at one end and a goalkeeper. Use mannequins, cones or poles as static defenders.



What you get your players to do

The central player passes to a wide player, who moves towards the ball to receive it, then dribbles towards the penalty area. Immediately, a deeper midfielder or full back makes an overlapping run on the outside. The wide player must now decide whether to shoot or show disguise and play a reverse pass for the overlapping runner to shoot.



What to call out

- "Play at top speed."
- "Run beyond the ball."
- "Make a good decision when you have the ball."



Development

Now add a third player to the attack to increase the options. The wide player dribbles inside and can shoot, play a reverse pass to the overlapping runner, or play a through pass for the third player to run on to and shoot. In this practice the overlapping player must cross the ball rather than shoot.



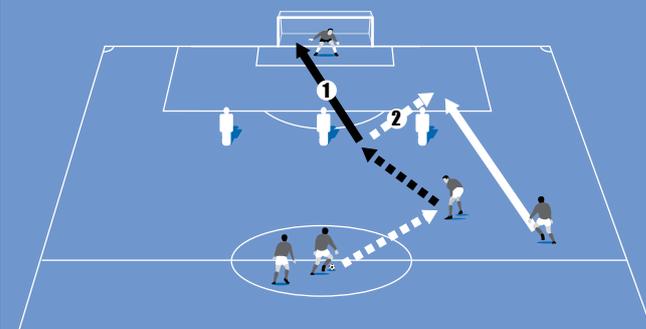
Game situation

Create a 5v3 situation on a 50 yards by 30 yards playing area. As the bottom picture shows, there are three stations of players. Station 1 is for the midfielders/defenders who work on a rotation. Station 2 is for the wide players and station 3 is for the strikers. Three defenders start on the pitch with one striker. The goalkeeper throws a ball out to the wide player, who dribbles forward. Immediately, three midfielders make forward runs to join the wide player and striker to make a 5v3 situation. If the defenders win the ball, they can counter attack and try to score.

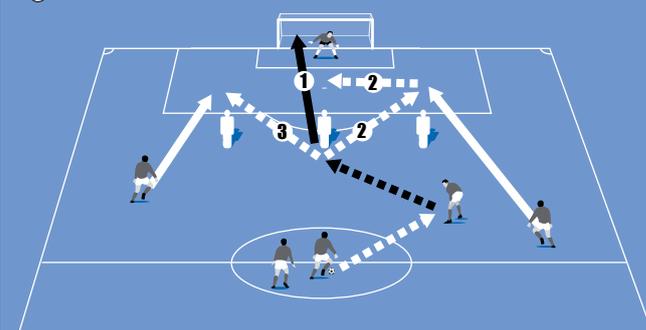
After each attack the midfielders become the new defenders and a new wide player and striker enter the pitch.

Movement off the ball

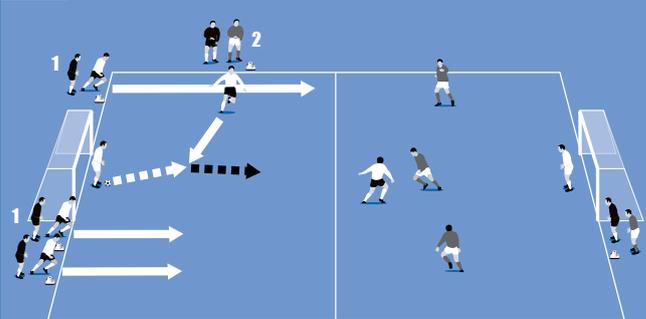
player movement \Rightarrow pass/serve $\square\square\square\Rightarrow$
 run with ball \dashrightarrow shot \rightarrow



An overlapping run creates a shooting opportunity (1) or the chance to make a reverse pass (2) for the runner.



The addition of a third runner increases the chance to shoot at goal or play through passes resulting in a shot or cross.



The wide player receives the ball and is joined by three midfielders to support the striker in a 5v3.