

The target man

“Target man” is the term used to describe a centre forward who is able to hold the ball under pressure and then pass back to supporting players. This session includes three simple practices to develop target players.



What you tell your players the session is about

1. Developing the use of a target man.
2. Bringing team mates into the game.
3. Making forward runs and passes into the final third of the pitch.

Session planner

Warm up 10 mins	Session 15 mins	Developments 15 mins	Game 15 mins	Warm down 5 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls	Players pass and go to another ball. <i>From The Ultimate Warm-Ups Manual, exercise 73</i>
The session	Balls, cones, goals	The target man holds up play in order to set up the midfielder for a shot at goal
Development	Balls, cones, goals	The players are making forward passes and runs to support the target man
Game	Balls, cones, goals	The target man holds off the defender and brings the midfielder into the game
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



Where it fits

Individual skills: Passing, control, turning, shooting, strength to hold off the defender

Team skills: Communication, combination play

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What to think about

In every game, your team will spend a period of time under pressure and defending their goal. Therefore, when the ball is cleared it's important that you have forwards that can hold on to the ball, allowing team mates to get up the pitch.





Set-up

- Create a 60 yards by 40 yards area with a goal at either end.
- Split the playing area into three zones by creating end zones 15 yards from both goals.



What you get your players to do

The players make a forward pass into the target man who must hold the ball, wait for the players to make a supporting run and then lay the ball off for the player to shoot at goal.

The target man must ensure he follows in the shots for any rebounds off the goalkeeper.



What to call out

- “Show yourself as a target”
- “Hold the ball and wait for support”
- “Bring team mates into the game”



Development

In a small-sided game, each team nominates a target man that goes inside the opponents' end zone. The remaining players play an even numbers game in the central zone.

The aim of this game is for players to make a forward pass into the target man and then run into the end zone to receive a lay off and shoot at goal.

Defenders can track back with the midfielder to try and block the shot.



Game situation

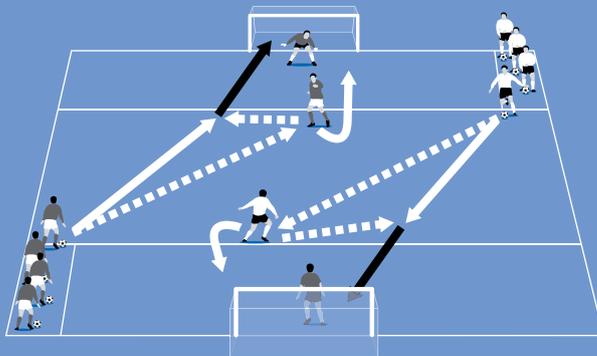
While still playing a small-sided game, place a defender in each end zone.

The target man must hold off the defender and keep the ball until a midfielder runs into the end zone to make a 2v1 situation.

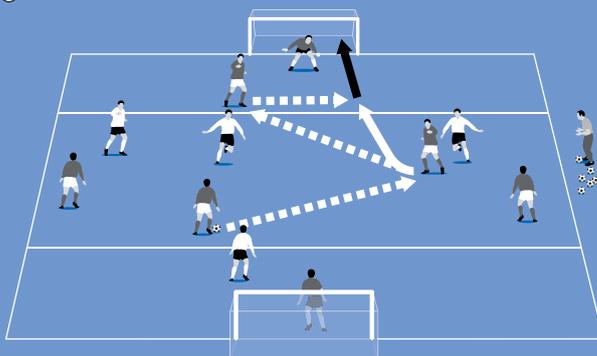
Finally, play a normal game.

The target man

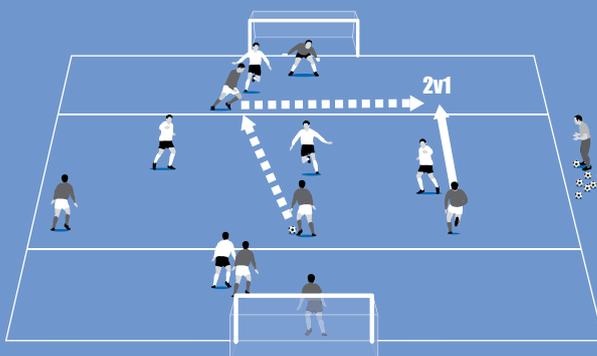
direction of run \Rightarrow pass $\square\square\square$ shot \rightarrow



After receiving a pass, the target man must set up the supporting midfielder for a shot at goal.



The midfielders must pass to the target man and run into the end zone to receive a pass and shoot at goal.



The target men now have defenders marking them. Can they still hold on to the ball? Can a midfielder make a forward run and create a 2v1?