

# Counter strike

Teams are at their most vulnerable when they lose the ball in the attacking third. This session will help your team to capitalise on these opportunities by making a quick fire counter strike when they win possession and the opposition's defence is vulnerable.



### What you tell your players the session is about

1. Breaking forward from defence.
2. Supporting a forward pass.
3. Counter attacking to score a goal.

### Session planner

Warm up	Session	Developments	Game	Warm down
10 mins	15 mins	15 mins	15 mins	5 mins

Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls	Players pass and then quickly react to collect a thrown ball. From <b>The Ultimate Warm-Ups Manual</b> , exercise 43
The session	Balls, cones and goals	The players are breaking forward at pace to score in a 3v1 situation
Development	Balls, cones and goals	The players are breaking forward at pace to score in a 3v2
Game	Balls, cones and goals	The team is adopting effective counter attacking tactics
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



### Where it fits

Individual skills: Passing, control, dribbling, shooting,

Team skills: Communication, combination play, attacking as a team

#### Related Smart Sessions

- 31 [Quick combination play](#)
- 53 [Counter attacking](#)
- 57 [Support forward passes](#)



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### What to think about

- Can the players interchange positions (overlaps or crossover runs) as this is harder to defend against than when running in straight lines?
- The ball must be passed forwards to maintain the speed of the attack.
- When counter attacking, it is important for some players to remain behind the ball. Otherwise, if the ball is lost, your team can then be vulnerable to a counter attack itself.





## Set-up

- Create a 50 yards by 40 yards playing area with a half way line two goals and goalkeepers.



## What you get your players to do

The goalkeeper throws the ball out to the defender, who passes the ball back to one of the onrushing three attackers.

The three attackers must then attack at speed in order to beat the defender in a 3v1 situation and score.

Progress by having the attackers combine and score against two defenders.



## What to call out

- “Break forward”
- “Keep the ball moving”
- “How quickly can you get a shot at goal”



## Development

If the attack is too slow, penalise them by introducing another defender who makes a recovery run from the halfway line.

Limit the attack’s touches or introduce a time limit for them to take a shot.

This should ensure quick movement of the ball.



## Game situation

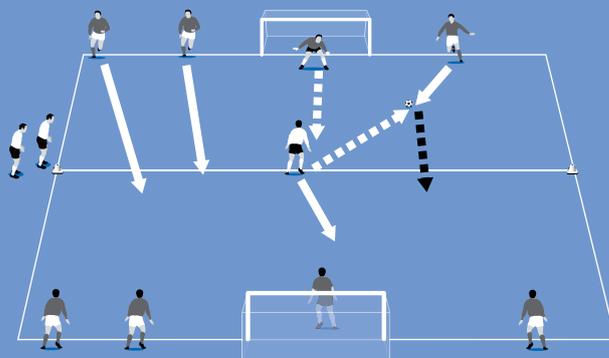
Play a normal game. Apply a rule that when defending, players can only tackle in their defensive half of the pitch.

This will force two scenarios. The teams will naturally drop deep off the ball, allowing space for a quick break on regaining possession.

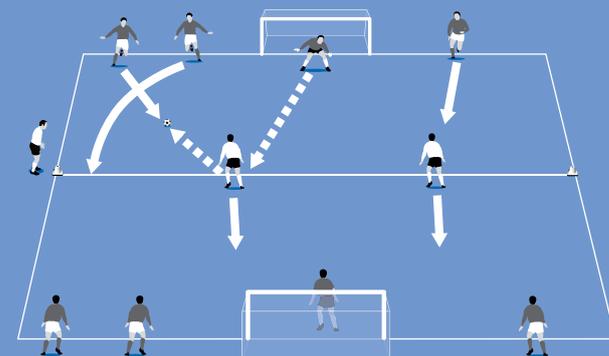
Also, the defenders winning the ball have the opportunity to attack quickly as they are not allowed to be tackled inside their own half of the pitch.

# Counter strike

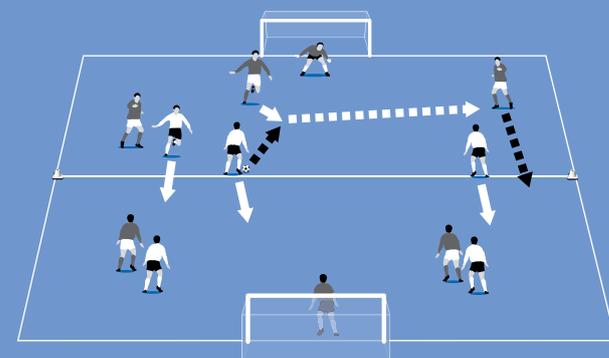
direction of run pass run with ball



The goalkeeper throws the ball to the defender, who passes to the attackers and then drops into the defensive half to defend a 3v1.



The practice is progressed by having two defenders.



Teams are only allowed to make tackles in their defensive half. This gives defenders the opportunity to make quick counter attacks.