

Diagonal runs

Like any good movement off the ball in the attacking third, diagonal runs, either from central areas to the flank or vice versa, should have one of two effects. They should put the player receiving the ball into a dangerous position and create space for somebody else by drawing away a defender.



What you tell your players the session is about

1. Movement off the ball to create space.
2. Combination play.

Session planner

Warm up 10 mins	Session 10-15 mins	Developments 10-15 mins	Game 15 mins	Warm down 10 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls, bibs and disc cones	Static and dynamic stretching, gentle running, ballwork, handball – throw, catch and move
The session	Balls, bibs and disc cones	Learning how to make diagonal runs
Development	Balls, bibs and disc cones	Practising combination play skills
Game situation	Balls, bibs, disc cones and goals	Implementing diagonal runs in a game situation
Warm down	None required	Gentle jogging and stretching, debrief, Q&A



Where it fits

Individual skills: Receiving

Team skills: Passing, combination play, communication

Related Smart Sessions

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- 21 Passing through midfield
- 73 Defending when outnumbered



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What to think about

- Attackers must play with their heads up to watch each other's movement.
- Players must slant their runs behind the defender.
- They must run with intent.
- Visual and vocal communication must be used.
- Emphasise playing a straight pass, as well as the timing and weight of the pass.
- The timing of the run.





Set-up

- Set up an area approximately 40 yards by 15 yards. Mark out two 5 yards by 15 yards zones a third of the way from either end. This will create three larger zones of 10 yards by 15 yards with the narrow zones in between.
- Ten players.



What you get your players to do

Have a passive defender in each of the small zones, which they can't leave. The remaining players pair up at one end with a ball. The first pair combines to reach the opposite end by using a diagonal run to pass each defender in turn.

The attempt can be played at a slow pace but must be non-stop. The attackers cannot run backwards and must not allow the defenders to touch the ball.

Once the first pair passes the first defender, the second pair begins.

Repeat the drill from the opposite end. Make sure to rotate defenders.

To progress, get attackers to increase the pace.



What to call out

- "Good movement"
- "Call for the ball"
- "Time the pass"



Development

Make defenders active and encourage your forwards to use a diagonal run. They can also use any other type of combination play (e.g. overlap).

Make it competitive. Each team gets points for successfully getting past a defender. They also get points for stopping progress when defending. Award bonus points for teams successfully using the diagonal run.

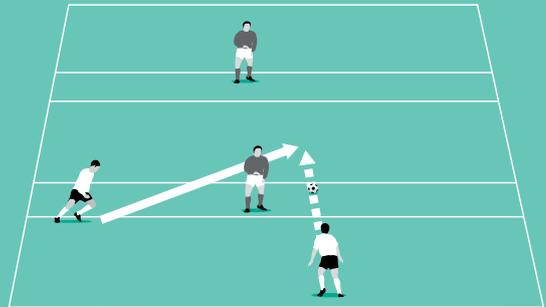


Game

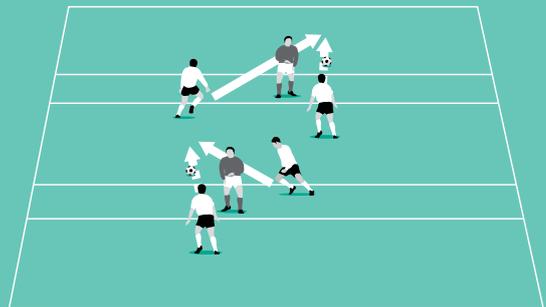
Play a 4v4 with two goals and goalkeepers. Encourage your players to pass and move to stretch the opposition. Every so often, temporarily remove a player from one team and encourage the other team to exploit the overload situation.

Diagonal runs

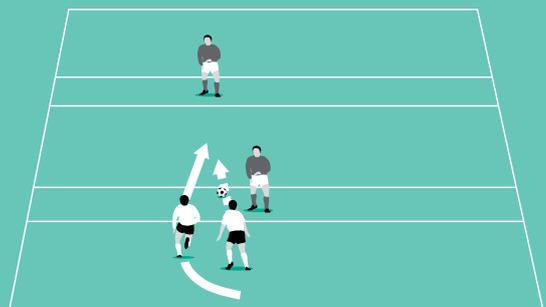
pass  player movement 



The first attacking pair use straight passes and diagonal runs to get past the passive defenders in the narrow zones.



Once the first pair passes the first defender, the second pair begins.



When developing the skill, encourage the attackers to use other techniques such as an overlap to get past the defenders.