

## Midfielder/forward combinations

Midfield players have a variety of jobs to do during a match. One of these is getting forward to exchange passes with the forwards and create goalscoring opportunities.



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

1. Combination play in the attacking third of the pitch.
2. Passing and movement.

### Session planner

Warm up 10 mins	Session 15 mins	Developments 10-15 mins	Game 15 mins	Warm down 5-10 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls	Static and dynamic stretching, gentle running and ball work
The session	Balls, bibs, disc cones and a goal	Encouraging players to use their initiative in attacking situations
Development	Balls, bibs, disc cones and a goal	Encouraging players to use their initiative in attacking situations when under pressure
Game situation	Balls, bibs, disc cones and goals	Transferring skills practised in the drill to a match situation
Warm down	Balls	Gentle running, ball work, static stretching for longer and debrief Q&A



### Where it fits

Individual skills: Receiving, shooting

Team skills: Combination play, passing, defending in pairs

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### What to think about

- Encourage your players to use combination play and create chances to score. For example, try overlaps, one-twos, third-man running and decoy runs.
- Good movement, close control and quick, accurate, passing are all important in this drill.





## Set-up

- Use half a pitch, including a penalty box and a goal.
- Have three attackers v two defenders, plus a goalkeeper.



## What you get your players to do

The drill begins with 2v2 on the edge of the penalty area. A third attacker, the midfielder, is on the half way line. This player starts the drill by passing to their deepest lying team mate before sprinting forward to provide back-up or wide support.

The objective for the attackers is to combine and create a goalscoring opportunity either centrally or from a cross. The defenders cannot tackle to begin with, but can play offside.

Any attacking player can move to provide width to cross into the penalty box, but must do so with their first or second touch.

Rotate the roles within each team and also swap attackers and defenders.



## What to call out

- “Can you shake off your marker?”
- “Think about where you want to go with your first touch”
- “Attack the space”
- “Always have ‘a picture’ of what’s going on around you”



## Development

- Allow the defenders to tackle.
- Have one-touch crossing only.
- Introduce a third defender who makes a recovery run from the half way line once the attacking team has had, say, three touches.

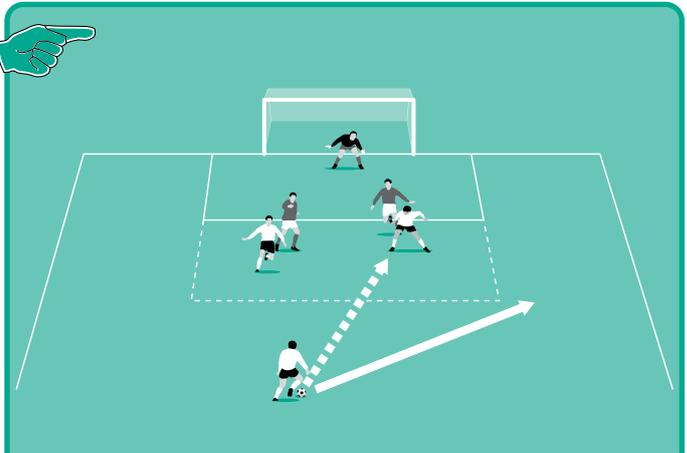


## Game

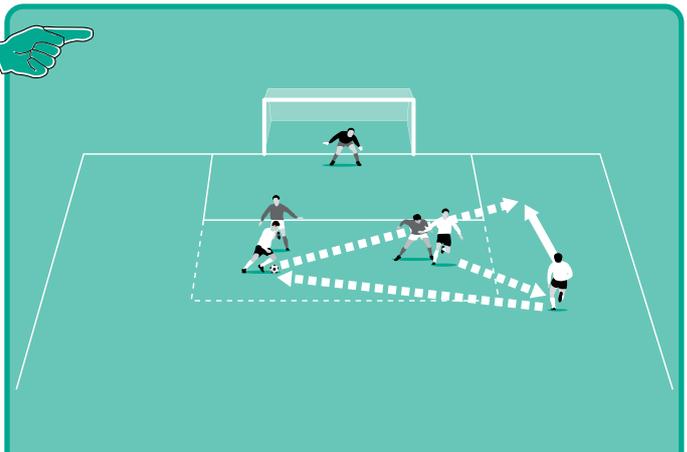
Play a 6v6 match with goalkeepers but condition both teams to play a 2-1-2 formation. Encourage the midfield player on both sides to join the attackers at every opportunity.

# Midfielder/forward combinations

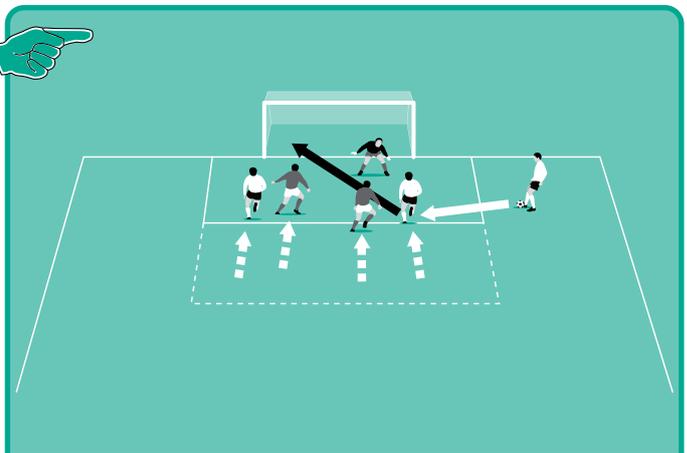
player movement  $\Rightarrow$  pass  $\square\square\square\Rightarrow$   
shot  $\rightarrow$



The midfielder passes the ball into the deepest attacking player and joins in the attack.



Between them, the attackers move the ball, creating space and time for a cross into the penalty box.



Anticipating the midfielder's cross, the other attackers move into the penalty box and are prepared to shoot.