



The Importance of Space

Category: Tactical: Functional

Difficulty: Moderate

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Description

GOAL: Get players to learn the importance of space.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Players are to look for space and move to space to gain advantage.

KEY QUALITIES: Pass, movement, and vision of the field.

SKILL ACQUISITION: Ball Mastery: Being able to be comfortable with the ball; Being able to receive short and long passes; setting up for return passing; Being comfortable with both left and right feet; **Vision:** Being able to look up to see where to place the pass; **Movement:** Being able to see the space that is available and move to space. Being able to lead the pass into space in order to run onto the ball.

Warm-Up (20 mins)

OBJECTIVE: After making a pass, touch a cone on the outside to make space and move back to a new space.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Players are to make one touch passes to players inside the circle and move to a cone before returning back to the inside of the circle to look for another pass.

ORGANIZATION: Set up a circle as shown with cones positioned on the outside. Depending on the number of players, you may need to set-up more than one circle to help prevent player congestion in the circle and allow for free-flowing one-touch passes and moving. All players are to start inside the circle. One ball is in use. Player starting with the ball will make a one-touch pass to another player inside the circle (as shown in #1). After making the pass, the player will immediately move to a cone on the outside of the passing area, touch it, then move to a new space (as shown in #2). The player receiving the pass, will make a one-touch pass to another player (as shown in #3) and then also move to the outside to touch a cone and immediately return back into the circle to a new space (as shown in #4).

PROGRESSION- A simple progression of this drill is to pass to space for the player to run onto instead of passing to feet. This requires players to have vision of the field in order to know where to place the next pass.

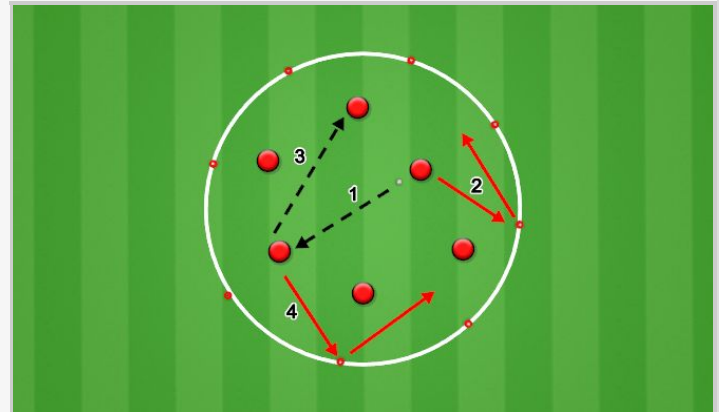
RULE: Keep the ball moving with one-touch passing. If a bad pass is received, the player is not to force a bad pass to keep it one-touch. Player is to get control of the ball first and make a good pass. Players should avoid passing to players that are standing right next to them or closely in front. This is meant to challenge players to make good crisp passes and then move to a cone. When a player comes back into the circle, they are not to stand and wait for the pass but rather move within the circle until a pass presents itself to them. This is to avoid players standing still. This drill is to encourage movement. In a game, a player standing still is easy to mark, defend, or gain an advantage over.

KEY WORDS: Keep eyes up to look for space to move and/ or pass to.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: Q1- Why do we want players to not merely stand still when they get back into the circle? **Q2-** Why do we want to avoid the very short easy passes to players standing next to us? **Q3-** What happens when a player moves to the outside to touch a cone from where they were inside the circle?

ANSWERS: A1- Players that stand still are easy to mark and have the opposition have the advantage over the player who is standing and not ready. The game is always moving therefore players need to get used to seeing space and moving to space when they don't have the ball. **A2-** In a game, making very short passes allows the opposition to pressure the area in numbers. Passing using all the space available spreads the press out making it more difficult to defend. **A3-** The create space by leaving the space. This allows a player to now use that area that is available.

Note: If a player is standing still calling for the ball, make a rule that they will not be eligible to receive the pass. The focus of this drill is moving to space and making space.

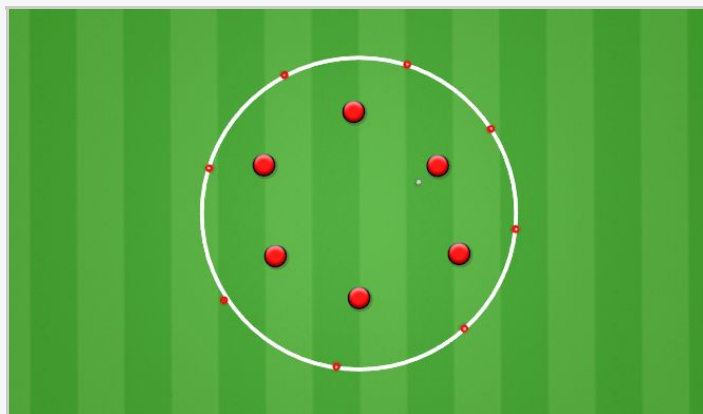


Learning Objectives

	Technical (20%) - One-touch passing, - Being able to pass the ball with correct weight and direction
	Tactical (20%) - Viewing the field and moving to space, - Leaving space for other players to use for advantage
	Physical (20%) - Quick movement, - Balance, - Coordination, - Running, - Agility
	Psychological (20%) - Understanding the importance of space, - Successfully being able to make a pass and then move to space, - Being able to keep up with the movement of players and the ball
	Social (20%) - Communication, - Encouraging others on, - Recognizing players making good movement/ passes

Warm-Up Animation (20 mins)

Note: It's important to keep the ball moving and not stopping for too long. This drill is meant to be active with lots of movement of the ball and players. Note, there is not a lot of small passes to players that are positioned close to the ball. Again, when players move out of space, this is now an opportunity for a player to move to the space to receive a pass.



Creating Space 5 v 2 (30 mins)

OBJECTIVE: Get the ball from one end zone to the other by playing the ball into a supporting player in the middle zone.

PLAYER ACTIONS: Players inside the middle zone are to move into space to receive a pass and make a pass to the other end zone to complete the sequence.

ORGANIZATION: Set up the field as shown with 8-cones marking out 3-zones. You may need to set-up more than one field depending on the number of players to keep every player active. Each zone is to be approximately 6-8 feet in width and approximately 24-feet in length. In each of the end zones is an attacker. In the middle zone, 3 attackers and 2 defenders. Play starts by the coach passing the ball to an attacker in one of the end zones. The attacker must now make a pass to a supporting attacker in the middle zone who in turn completes a pass to the attacker in the opposite end zone to complete the attacking sequence. Defenders are passive defenders (not challenging the ball).

PROGRESSION- The defenders become active defenders to create complexity and urgency in the exercise.

RULE: Attackers in the middle zone are to move throughout the space. No standing still. Attackers are to try and lead the passer to where they would like the pass to be made in order to quickly release the ball to the other attacker in the opposite end zone. The initial stage, defenders are to move to create a problem for the attackers to solve but are not to engage and tackle. Once players are used to the exercise, move to the progression where the defenders can now be active and try and gain possession of the ball. Players on end, opposite to the ball, should be in motion as well. This ensure they are engaged and are following the movement of the ball.

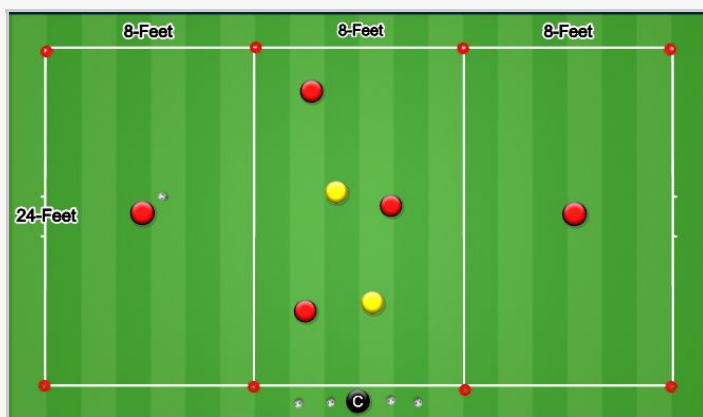
Players in the middle zone are to use no more than two touches to keep the game moving with pace. Coach can also award points for each time the ball moves from one end zone to the other as well as when the defenders win the ball during the progression stage of the drill.

KEY WORDS: Keep eyes up to look for space to move and/ or pass to.

GUIDED QUESTIONS: Q1- Why do we want to follow the path of the ball?

ANSWERS: A1- Players that are following the play of the ball are more likely to be ready should the ball need to be played to them. Players are typically more physically ready, and mentally ready because they are engaged in the game (we refer to this as the player being 'switched on').

Note: If a player is standing still calling for the ball, make a rule that they will not be eligible to receive the pass. The focus of this drill is moving to space and making space.



Learning Objectives



Technical (20%)

- Ball control, - Making one-touch/ two-touch passes



Tactical (20%)

- Movement throughout the space, - Trying to lead the passer to make a pass into space that the attacker can move onto the ball to play quick passes



Physical (20%)

- Running, - Balance, - Coordination, - Agility, - Quick movements, - Physical contact with defenders



Psychological (20%)

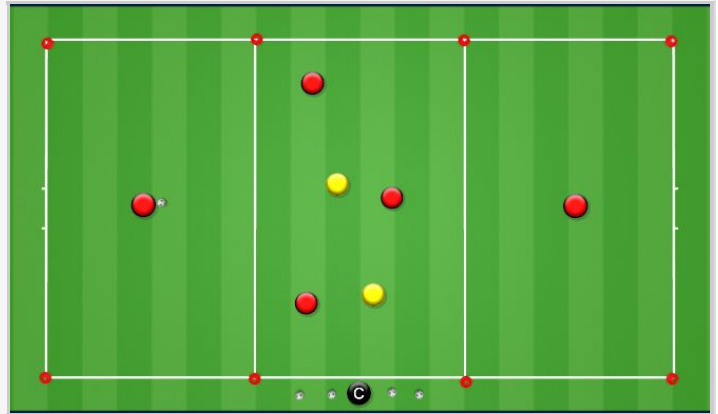
- Completing passing sequence from one end zone to the other, - The challenge of being able to play around the pressure of the defenders, - Winning points








Social (20%)

- Communication, - Team-work, - Encouraging teammates

Note: The attackers in the middle zone should try and lead the passer. This means by their body position, movement, or hand signals, should try and lead the passer to make a pass into a space that the supporting attacker can run onto and then play a quick pass into the opposite end zone. This helps with speed of play and makes it more difficult for the defenders to gain an advantage.



Learning Objectives

	<p>Technical (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ball control, - Making one-touch/ two-touch passes
	<p>Tactical (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Movement throughout the space, - Trying to lead the passer to make a pass into space that the attacker can move onto the ball to play quick passes
	<p>Physical (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running, - Balance, - Coordination, - Agility, - Quick movements, - Physical contact with defenders
	<p>Psychological (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completing passing sequence from one end zone to the other, - The challenge of being able to play around the pressure of the defenders, - Winning points
	<p>Social (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication, - Team-work, - Encouraging teammates

OBJECTIVE: Score a goal on any of the two small goals positioned in the center using pass and movement focus.

PLAYER ACTIONS: 5 attacking players will try and score a goal while being pressured with two defenders and the goals protected by a goalkeeper.

ORGANIZATION: Set-up the field to be approximately 45- 50 feet x 24 - 30 feet. Coach to set-up additional field depending on number of players or rotate players in the attacker and defender roles as needed. Position two small nets in the center as shown, back-to-back facing outward. Play starts by the coach passing the ball to an attacker. The supporting attackers will move into space to be an option for receiving the ball, keeping on moving into optional space depending on ball movement. Defenders will pressure the play as active defenders. Attackers will try and score on either net while being pressure and an active goalkeeper looking to guard both nets from being scored on. If defenders win the ball, one point. If the attackers score a goal, two points.

PROGRESSION- Add another defender to the game to make it harder to pass the ball around.

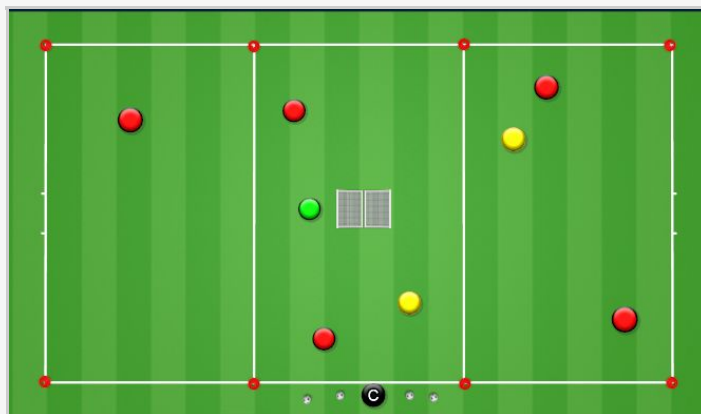
RULE: Players are not to be standing still. This is a focused session on moving to space, creating space, and passing into space. If the one goal is not accessible for a goal, shift the play around in order to gain the advantage and look to score on the other goal.

KEY WORDS: Communication, quick play, move to space quickly for option on receiving the ball.






GUIDED QUESTIONS: Q1- If we need to switch the play from one side to the other, what is important for players to remember?

ANSWERS: A1- As the ball is being played to the other side, we need to have players quickly supporting the play in order to be in an advantage position to potentially receive a pass and score.

Note: Using the small nets makes it more difficult to score. The goal of the session is to get players to understand the importance of seeing space, moving to space, and creating space.



Learning Objectives

	<p>Technical (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passing the ball, - One-touch/ Two-touch, - Being able to dribble with the ball, - Close ball control
	<p>Tactical (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking for space to move into, - Creating space for attackers to take advantage of, - Combination plays to score goals
	<p>Physical (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running, - Balance, - Coordination, - Agility, - Physical challenge with defenders
	<p>Psychological (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competition, - Keeping control of the ball/ not rushing and losing possession, - Success of scoring goal
	<p>Social (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication, - Celebrating scoring/ making defensive play to win ball

Animation 6

Note: Add another defender to add a level of challenge if the attackers find it too easy to pass and move into space. This allows for more problems to be present for the attackers to solve.

