

FOOTBALL DNA

**RETURN TO
TRAINING
GUIDE**

25 SOCIAL DISTANCE DRILLS

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ABOUT FOOTBALL DNA

Football DNA is the ultimate platform for coach and player development all in one place at www.footballdna.co.uk.

Developed by professionals involved in the game we all love, the website hosts over 700 top class quality videos along with a host of blogs, analysis & coach/player education information.

Available on footballdna.co.uk is a range of coaching drills & sessions that cover every position, topic, age and ability. Also on the site is hundreds of sport science, wellbeing & nutrition, features, analysis alongside our Individual Skills Program. We have everything you need as a coach or player!

New content is added to footballdna.co.uk every week keeping the library up to date with the latest trends in the modern game and continually evolving as the best platform on the market.

PLEASE READ FIRST!

At Football DNA we take the health and safety of coaches, players, parents & spectators very seriously.

Please read the following points before you start implementing anything in this guide:

- Adhere to local social distancing rules in your country!
- Strictly follow health and safety protocols as guided by your country & local football authority!
- It is the responsibility of the coach delivering the sessions to 100% comply with the COVID-19 guidelines.
- Check the latest advice before deciding whether the ideas in the following guide are suitable.

Football DNA Ltd takes no responsibility for any injuries or illnesses caused by the delivery of drills or information in this guide.

Guide Overview

- Every drill in this guide is NON-CONTACT, please consider the social distancing guidelines if players are waiting to join in.
- These drills are taken from www.footballdna.co.uk. Adapt to the level, numbers & age of your players for maximum outcomes. Real action videos of these drills can be watched online at www.footballdna.co.uk.
- Progressions on the drills have been left in so after the restrictions are LIFTED you can use these drills again with CONTACT.
- You can run drills side by side to prevent any form of waiting around and adapt the drill to the number of players you have. **PLAYERS WANT TO PLAY!**

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FOOTBALL DNA



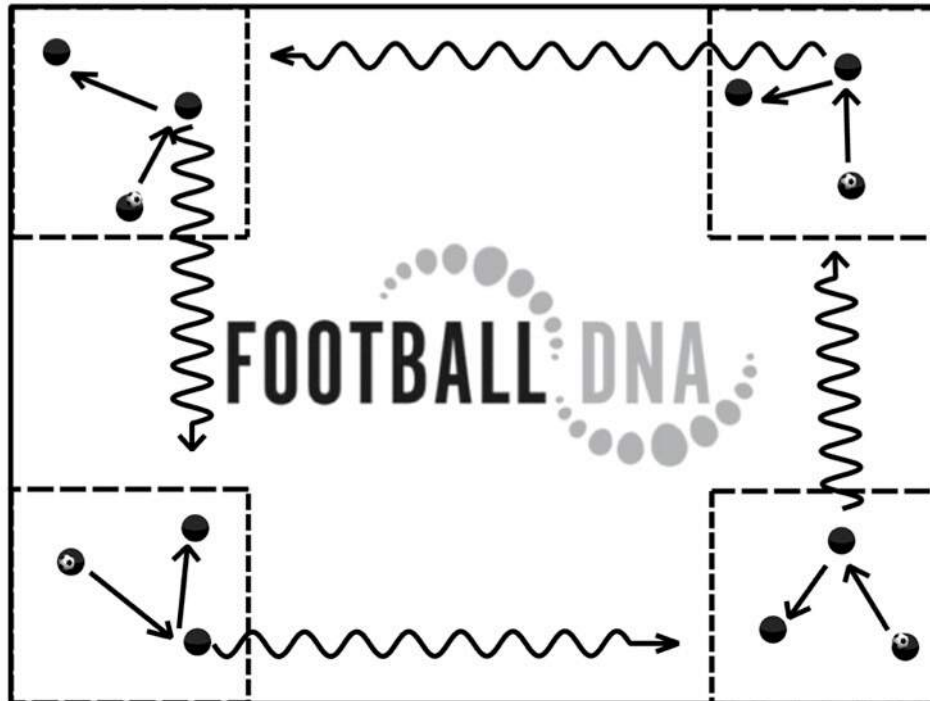
**BALL FEEL &
TECHNIQUE**

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ROTATIONAL TECHNICAL BALL FEEL

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** CONES, FOOTBALLS, 6 - 12 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

Players work inside a 10 x 10 yard square in groups of 3 with one ball between them. One player works and two act as servers with players performing a variety of technical actions such as volleys, half volleys, headers and passes. On the coaches command the player in action juggles the ball to the next group and then the next player to work takes over. This can be adapted to working with 2 - 4 groups of players depending on your numbers, for e.g - 3 groups can rotate in a triangle shape.

COACHING POINTS:

Footwork & Composure: Moving the feet quickly in between actions is important so the player can get into the best position possible to deal with the serve. Being on the toes and having good concentration will allow the player to respond quickly to the direction of the ball. Being in control of the body, with the help from good footwork will assist completing the action. Not panicking or rushing the action when the serve is played in will also enable the action to be performed successfully.

Juggling: Players must remain balanced and in control of the ball when juggling the ball. They need to make good contact with the ball to lift it upwards and keep repeating the action. They will need to stay relaxed and keep the ball in front of the body while looking ahead in the direction they are going. For more advanced players you can add in extra challenges like alternate feet, adding routines e.g foot, thigh, head.

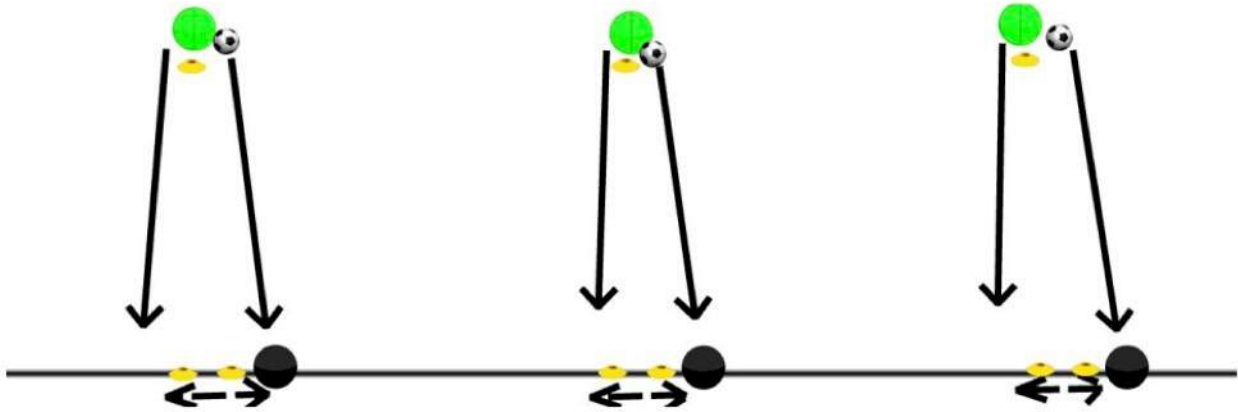
Service: When performing these actions, the player relies on good service to be able to execute the technical action. A double handed throw is encouraged for aerial actions at a good weight and direction. Concentration is needed on the passes to make sure they are directed and well weighted too even though at a short distance.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Change direction of juggle/dribble.
- Players dribble the ball to the next square.
- Add dynamic stretches in between ball turnover.

FOOTWORK BALL FEEL

COACH: JIMMY WALKER **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 2 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

Use an appropriate distance between players depending on age and ability for this setup of 2 players. Players have to focus on good movement and control of the ball. Although these look easy we cannot underestimate the importance of good ball roll and short passes which set up the play nicely for your team. A variety of technical actions can be used to progress the drills such as volleys, chest + pass, thigh + volley.

COACHING POINTS:

Warm Up: We have used cones to break the movement pattern up so the players have to exaggerate their movement before getting into shape to receive the various passes. Players can focus on good controlled movement getting their body's prepared. If it's being used as part of the main session you can put more emphasis on the pace of movement and passes.

Ball Control: Players must focus on ball control in tight areas, sorting their feet out early to get the ball under good control ready to make a pass.

Technical Execution: Players must concentrate on making a good short pass along the surface, with a good weight on the ball to allow their teammate the best chance to get the pass under control.

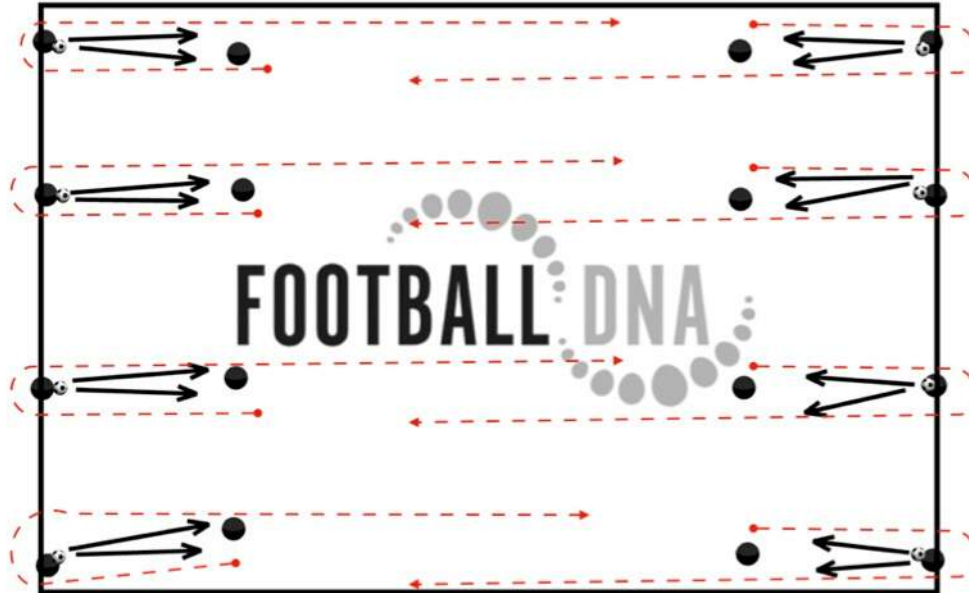
Creating Angles: Players must get used to making good angles to receive a pass from the teammate. They must be balanced allowing themselves to be ready to get the ball under control as early as possible on the back foot to turn out.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Use a variety of technical actions.
- To introduce some conditioning, players perform a 10 yard shuttle run behind them and back to continue.

TECHNICAL BALL FEEL & PASSING EXERCISE

COACH: SHAUN DERRY **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES , MANNEQUINS, HURDLES,
8 - 16 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

This progressive drill starts with 2 working players in the middle and 2 servers on the outside each with a ball in their hands. The 2 working players perform 2 technical actions from a server and then run around the back of that server. They then swap over to take a serve from the other server. Players work for 30 Secs - 1 minute then swap over. This drill has 6 progressions and can be used as an extensive warm up or a full technical practice.

COACHING POINTS:

Quick Footwork: Players between technical actions must adjust their body into a position to deal with the next serve, this means moving the feet quickly by being on their toes. This will allow them to adjust and deal with any poor serves that occur.

Composure: Performing the technical action requires players to relax and gain a feel of the ball. Being in a relaxed but focused state allows players to be composed. Concentrate on returning the ball back to the server and gaining good contact on the ball using the selected surface. Players should not rush their actions and take their time.

Weight & Quality of Pass: As the drill progresses, the importance of this coaching point increases. When combining as a pair, the servers pass must allow one touch play for the receiving player to bounce the ball off to their partner. If the pass is too hard, another touch will need to be taken meaning the combination is less effective. Using the instep to pass will allow greater control of the pass with good contact on the ball. The pass should still be firm to allow the receive to use momentum to pass first time.

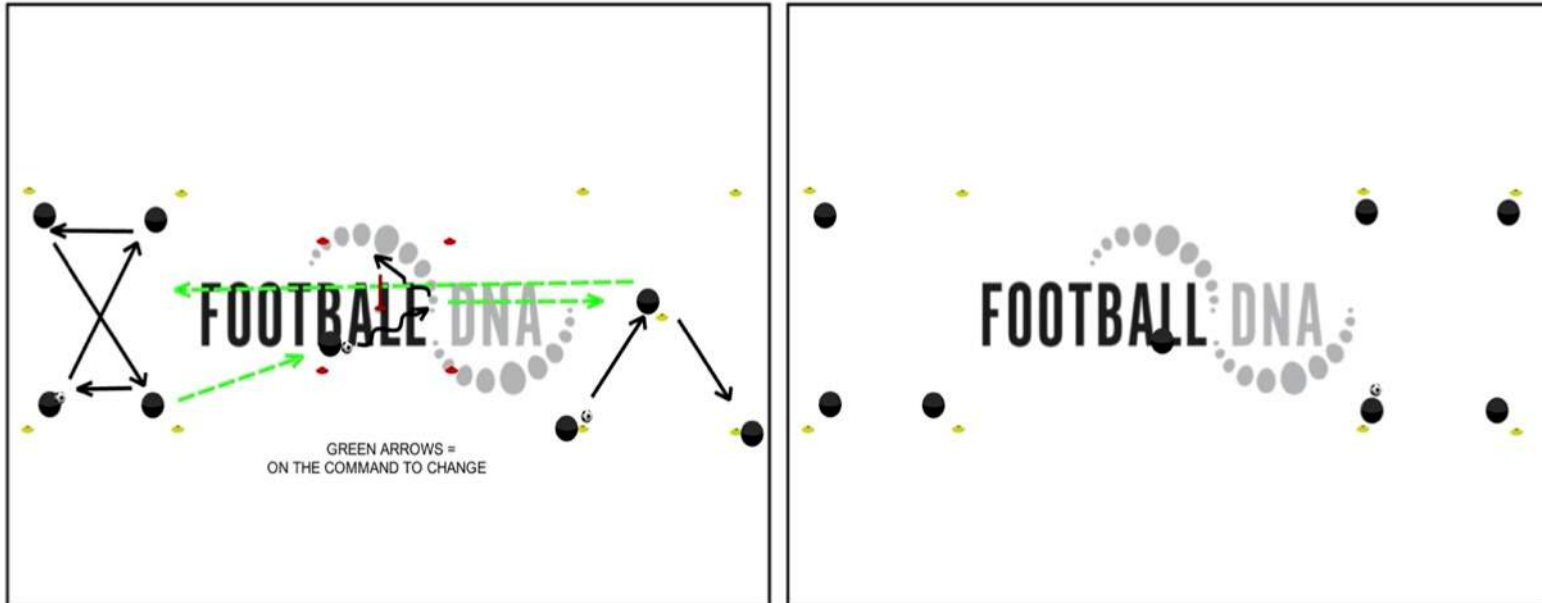
Agility, Balance, Coordination: Players must control their body being balanced when receiving serves. They must use their core strength to balance when performing actions such as outside volleys where they may need to stretch. Agility is needed when moving quickly to change direction around the server using short sharp steps.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Perform different technical actions - Outside Foot Volley
- Straight Swap between actions with Server 1 = Right & Left Pass Server 2 = 2 Headers
- Pass & Overlap Server swapping over with partner.
- Work in a 4 (2-3 Yards Apart) - 2 Servers 2 Players performing Right & Left Foot passes alternating between servers.
- 2 Players in the middle players work in pairs to combine one touch from server to server.
- Form a group of 8 - 2 Rows of 4 facing each other. Pass to the next player opposite, last player passes back to the start

MULTI TECHNIQUE PRE SEASON WARM UP

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 30 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 1 POLE & 8 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

This practice was used as a Warm Up, but can be used as part of the session further on or as a conditioning drill with higher intensity & distances. There are 3 groups of players all performing a different technique whilst interchanging between groups by running to the next group on the command. One group are passing and rotating within their grid, the second group has one working player performing multiple technique volley, pass, chest + volley. The remaining player is in the middle getting lots of touches and turning. On the command, the working/designated player then performs a run to the next group and carries the exercise on.

COACHING POINTS:

Footwork & Composure: Moving the feet quickly in between actions is important so the player can get into the best position possible to deal with the serve. Being on the toes and having good concentration will allow the player to respond quickly to the direction of the ball. Being in control of the body, with the help from good footwork will assist completing the action. Not panicking or rushing the action when the serve is played in will also enable the action to be performed successfully.

Weight & Quality of Pass: The group of 4 move the ball quickly and have the option to rotate within the square. When the drill progresses to creating combination play, the weight of pass needs to be good so players can pass first time to increase the pace of the move.

Variety of Touches & Turns: The middle player should look to get as many touches of the ball as possible and experiment with different turns and surfaces of the foot. Progress onto keeping the ball up in the air for the duration of the set.

Conditioning: This can also be deemed as a good physical workout with the runs in between being performed to a good speed and intensity. Full effort should be given for this run to get the maximum returns. If performing sprints, gradually progress the previous parts.

PROGRESSIONS:

- 1 Ball being used between the 8 players. The ball starts with the group of 4 passing the ball to each other, on the command they must play a diagonal pass from the back to the front for a runner (the player not passing the ball) to come onto the ball and run with the ball to the opposite end. The same combination is made at the opposite end but this time instead of running with the ball, the player steps out of the box and finds a pass (& follows) to the middle player who receives on the half turn to pass and follow into the next group. Progress to an overlap combination in the grids.

TECHNICAL BALL FEEL & PASSING EXERCISE

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 15 - 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES & 6 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

2 Groups of 3 working at opposite ends each with a ball. 1 player working on the middle cone performing technical actions as determined by the coach, volley, half volley, pass with inside/outside of foot. On the command players swap positions within their group to change the middle player who works for 45 secs - 1 minute. The technical action progresses to the ball being passed along the ground with a command from the coach to swap balls between the 2 groups with a pass. The third part is with both groups coming together working as a 6 passing the ball to each other creating angles to receive with the freedom to move inside the cones to play with variation.



COACHING POINTS:

Quick Footwork & Composure: Moving the feet quickly in between actions is important so the player can get into the best position possible to deal with the serve. Being on the toes and having good concentration will allow the player to respond quickly to the direction of the ball. Being in control of the body, with the help from good footwork will assist completing the action. Not panicking or rushing the action when the serve is played in will also enable the action to be performed successfully.

Weight & Quality of Pass: As the drill progresses to a group of 6, the weight of pass becomes important to allow the ball to be moved quickly in between players. Players should aim to have a maximum of 2 touches to keep the speed of the drill high. The pass should be aimed towards the back foot so the player can turn and play the next pass quickly.



Awareness & Concentration: Players need to be aware of their team mates position before passing them the ball. This means players constantly scanning being aware so they pass the ball into their feet. As the ball is being moved quickly, the concentration is also important to recognise player movements and the position of the ball in relation to where they are.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Different technical actions for e.g chest+volley, thigh + volley.
- Groups swap balls with a pass.
- 1 ball between group of 6 and perform a passing patterns with movement.



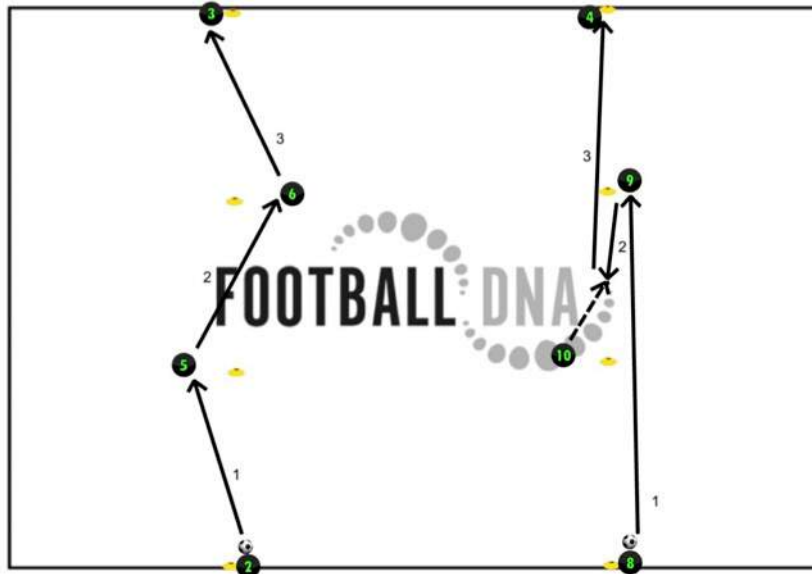
**PASSING &
RECEIVING**

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RECEIVING ON THE BACK FOOT

COACH: JIMMY WALKER **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 4 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

Groups of four working together, 10-12 yards apart which could again be adapted easily to suit the needs of your group. For this we have used cones to work 'off of' ideally we would replace the cones with mannequins to practice the movement as it would make the drill more realistic.

COACHING POINTS:

Receive on Back Foot: Players should try to practice controlling the ball on their back foot, making it easier and quicker for them to get on the half turn to make the next forward pass.

Creating Angles: Players should move off the cone/mannequin to receive the pass making the player harder to mark and getting a nice angle to receive. They should check multiple times to see if it is safe to turn out.

Weight & Quality of Pass: Players must try to pass the ball along the surface crisply to the target area, they must try to give a good weight on the ball allowing the receiving player to control the ball on the half turn.

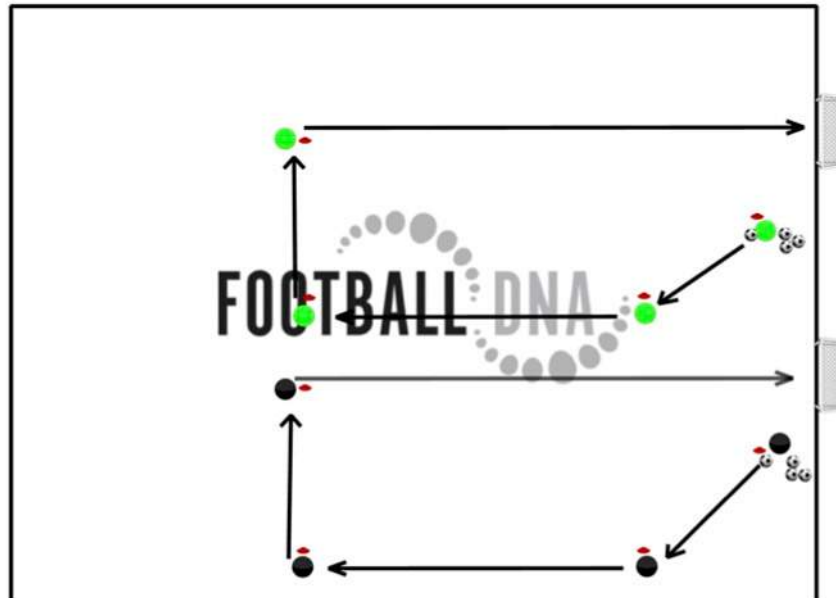
Timing: If the timing of the movement and pass are on sync it makes it very hard to play and defend against. Good combination play relies on the quality of timing, pass and speed to be successful.

PROGRESSIONS:

- End players pass to the furthest middle player who sets the ball to their partner to play out.
- Add some rotation between players.

PASSING COMBINATIONS COMPETITION

COACH: JOHN POTTER **DURATION:** 10 - 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 2 GOALS & 8 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

Two teams of 4 compete against each other to perform a sequence set out by the coach that finishes with a strike into the goal. Teams are playing against each other to see who can score first. Players pass and follow from cone to cone before the last player takes a touch out of their feet and strikes at goal. Once the player has had their shot, they move to the starting point & repeat the "race". You can use more players if you have a larger group, simply add more stations or another goal.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight & Quality of Pass: For the teams to be successful in this competition, players have to combine with each other allowing the next player to have a good first touch or play first time. If the weight of pass is too hard, it makes the ball harder to control and more touches may be needed which will slow the team down. The quality of pass is important as well being crisp & firm along the ground, not bobbling into the next player. The direction is crucial too with the pass being played onto their foot rather than to the side where the player has to move their feet across, again slowing the combination play down.

Speed of Play: With this being a competition to finish first, the speed of play has to be quick but also controlled. Moving the ball quickly from player to player relies on the quality & weight of pass but also excellent concentration to focus and be ready to receive the ball.

First Touch: When producing the combinations, the first touch of each player will be put under pressure. The player receiving the ball needs to be on their toes and slightly away from the cone to create the space for the pass & touch. The players should move their feet into position quickly and select which surface they want to use to control the ball. The final player of the move needs to have a good first touch that is on front of them so they can step onto the ball & strike into the goal.

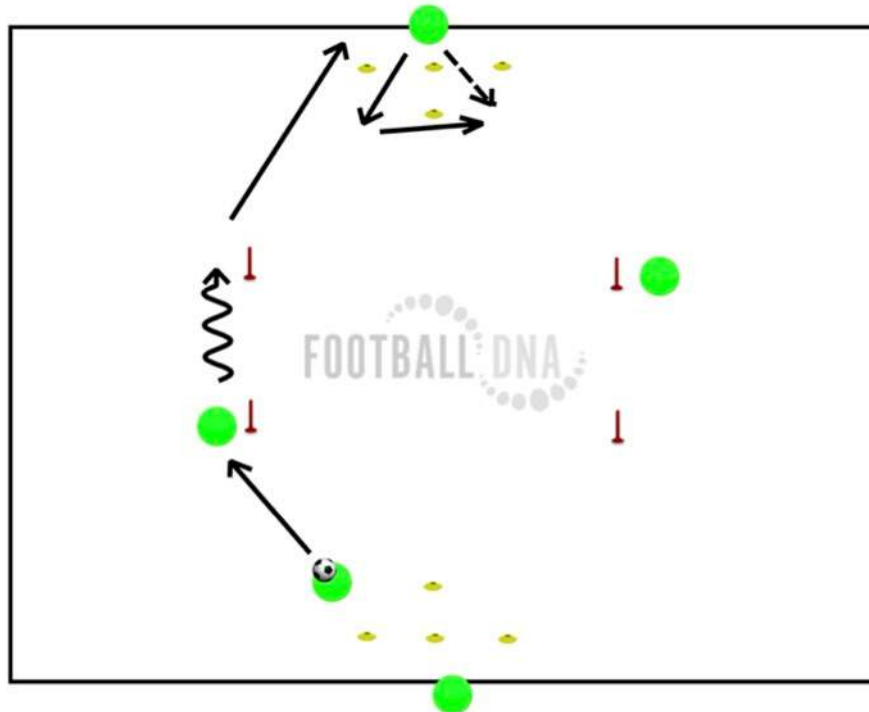
Execution of Finish: With having a good first touch into the space, the player should strike the ball as cleanly as possible with their selected surface. The surface could be the side of the foot or the laces. The coach could determine this before as a rule.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Add wall passes in before setting up the final player to strike into the goal.
- Work both sides to practise passing/receiving using both feet & striking the ball.

RECEIVING TO DRIBBLE OR PASS FORWARD & COMBINE

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** CONES, FOOTBALLS, POLES & 6 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

Working with a group of 6 players, one player at each end and a player on every pole (2 with a ball each). The circuit starts with the players on the ball dribbling out opposite ends and playing multiple wall passes before switching places. The next player then passes into the middle player who has created an angle to receive, turn and then perform a 1 v 1 move to drive out to the next end player. This exercise can be done with one or two balls depending on the amount of players you have. To progress, the 1 v 1 move is taken out and a direct pass from the middle is inputted.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight & Quality of Pass: To keep the flow and rhythm of the circuit going, the passing needs to be accurate and at a good tempo. The weight of passes when combining with the end players is crucial to produce those one touch passes. The pass when distributed into the middle player needs to be on the back foot to be able to turn out quickly and take the space in front.

1 v 1 Moves: When performing the 1 v 1 moves it should be replicated at match intensity. The moves practised need to be ones that would shift a defenders bodyweight and create space to accelerate into. Players should be encouraged to try as many moves as possible to give them more options when transferring to an opposed practise.

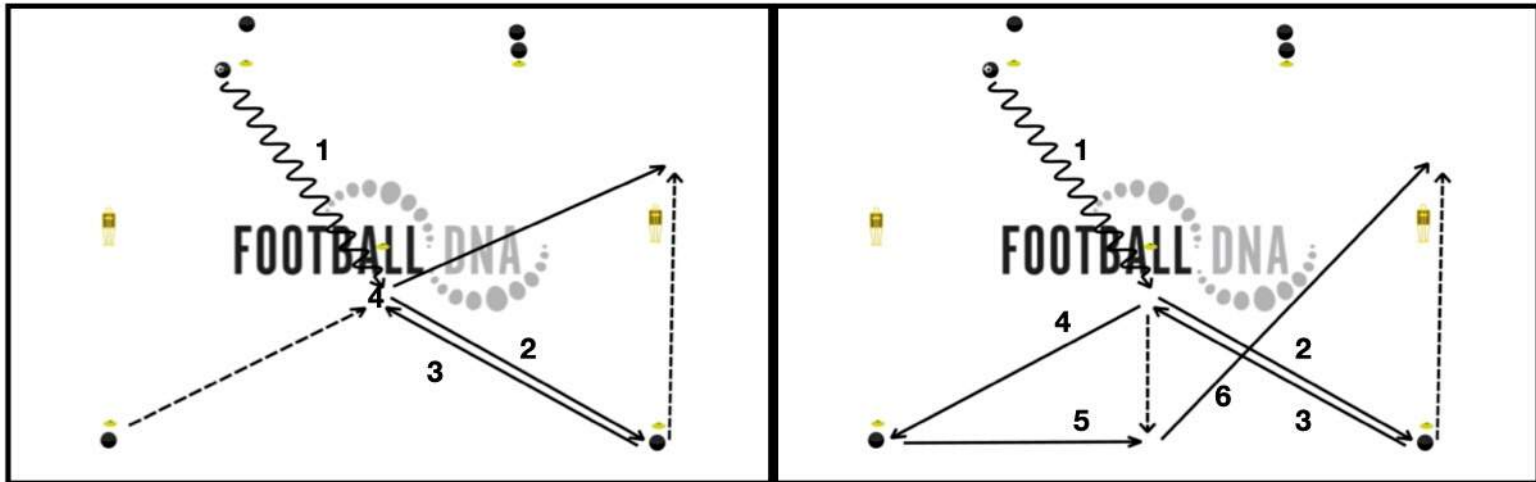
Movement to Receive & First Touch: The middle players need to produce good angles to receive the ball to turn and dribble or pass forward. The movement to receive should be started as the passing player takes their first touch, moving sharply and opening the body up. The first touch is also crucial for the middle player as the touch should be good enough for them to lose the "defender". They need to be in position ready on their toes so they can adjust to any misdirected passes.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Remove 1 v 1 move and increase intensity of movement.
- Add a wall pass with the middle player.

PASSING WITH PENETRATION

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** CONES, FOOTBALLS, & 6+ PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

A passing exercise with the objective of leading into a penetration practice afterwards. This exercise develops the ability for a midfielder to drop in and play forward to a full back or winger switching the play from side to side or playing in behind for a run. The first part of the move replicates a centre half stepping in and overloading midfield to find a team mate on the angle. As the exercise progresses different combinations and movements are developed, these can be flexible and adapted.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight & Quality of Pass: Circulating the ball requires a high level of concentration on the delivery of the pass making sure it is firm along the ground to allow the receiver to have a good first touch without having to deviate their position. The weight is also critical so the pass can be controlled easily or a first time set can happen.

Body Shape: This is important for the player who checks off the middle cone to receive on the half turn on the first progression. They need to quickly open up their body as they step off the cone after setting/passing the ball. The ball should be controlled using the back foot to play quickly into the next player.

Timing of Movement: This applies for the "full back/wide player" running onto the penetrating through pass. If they go too early they will be ahead of the ball and either have to check back and receive slowing the move down or will completely be missed out. The moment to set off is just as the player before receives the ball arriving onto the ball carrying on in their stride.

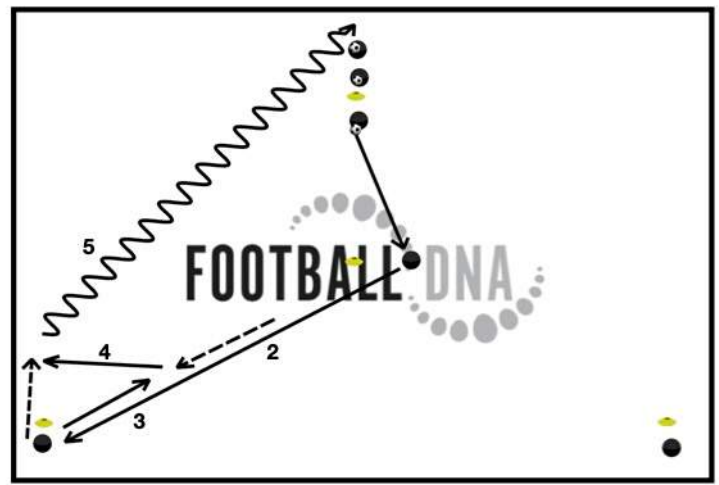
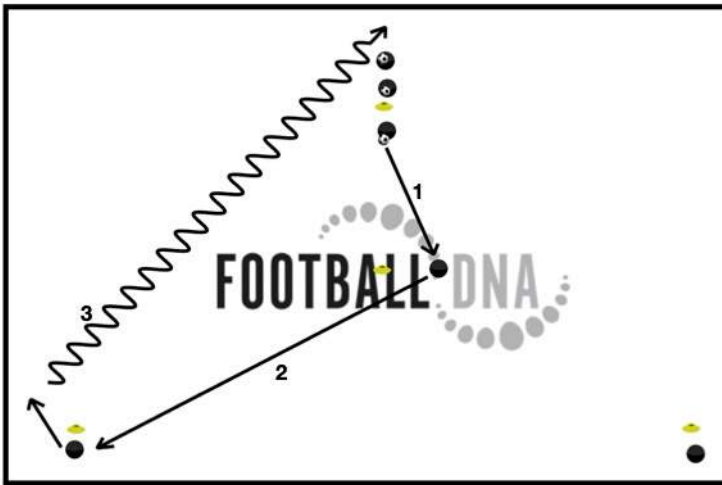
Speed of Play: The movement and passing needs to be quick and sharp replicating match tempo. This relies on the ability of players to play one and two touch when required. Movement that is well timed will keep the speed high along with clean and well directed passes into the next player.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Add different combinations & movements.

Y PASSING PATTERN COMBINATIONS

COACH: NICK GREEN **DURATION:** 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 6 PLAYERS



OVERVIEW:

Mark out a Y shape using 4 poles spaced 10 yards apart from each other with 3 players on the starting point and one player on each of the remaining poles. The ball starts at the bottom of the Y with the first pass being into the next player who has checked off to receive to play out to either of the next players. The receiving player then drives the ball back to the starting point. Work alternate sides.

COACHING POINTS:

Movement to Receive: The first player receiving the pass in the middle needs to check away from the pole to create the space to control the ball on the back foot opening up to pass forward to the next player. Before making their movement, players should check their shoulder 2-3 times scanning the area to see if their space to turn into. Players receiving the other passes should also pull away from the pole to create the space. With the progressions, double movements are needed from the top end players. These need to be sharp and well timed so they are coming onto the ball rather than standing still for too long.

Weight of Pass & Quality of Pass: The combination play always depends on how accurate and well weighted the balls are passed. The weight is so important to play one touch and eliminate players from the game with wall passes. If passes are too hard to control another touch is needed slowing the combinations down. The accuracy is so important so players don't need to change direction to control the ball but also play safe side. Passing safe side in some combinations are needed to protect the ball from the defender and then check in behind them. This is to the foot furthest away from the defender making it hard for them to intercept.

First Touch & Drive: The top end players need to use the pace of the pass to push the ball into the space in front to then step onto the ball and attack the space ahead. A side foot touch is recommended with a big surface area making a strong connection with the ball. The foot should be angled into the direction the player wants to go. As soon as the touch has been made, they need to accelerate quickly using good sized touches with the laces remaining in control of the ball.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Different passing combinations.
- Add in a goal behind the starting point for a finish after each move.



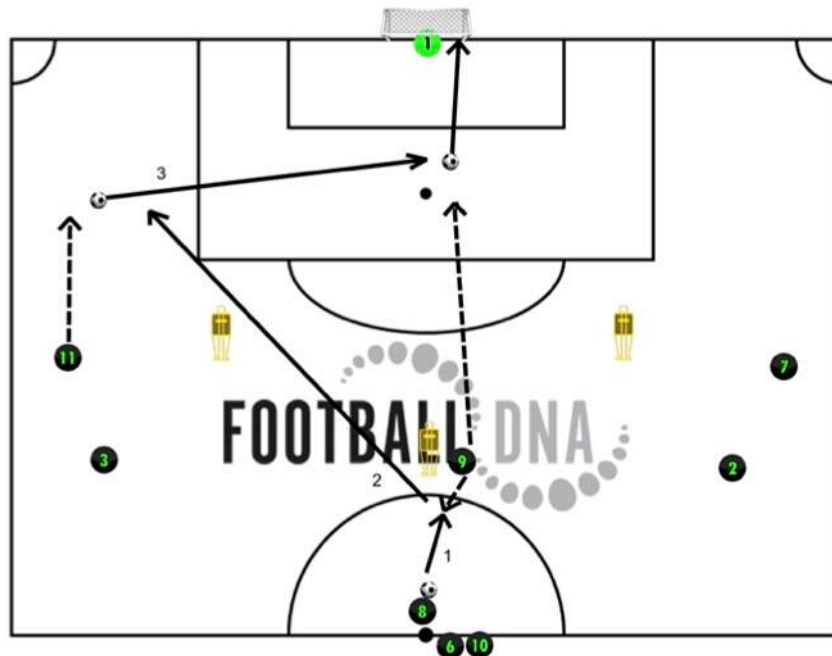
**CROSSING &
FINISHING**

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CROSSING & FINISHING

COACH: MATTHEW ETHERINGTON **DURATION:** 10 - 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, 3 MANNEQUINS, 1 GOAL & 4 PLAYERS+ 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Using half of the pitch, set out 3 mannequins 2 being full backs and the other a centre half who has been dragged short. The move starts with a pass into the centre forward who moves in front of the mannequin to receive and play a through ball to the wide player. The pass should go inside the full back for the wide player to stay onside with their run and deliver first time if possible. By this time the forward should make the box and finish.

COACHING POINTS:

Movement to Receive: Before the centre forward receives the first pass, they should perform a movement that drags the centre half towards the goal to create the space in front to take a touch and play a through ball. Aim is to get in front of the centre half and prevent them from pinching the ball by keeping on the foot furthest away from them, This can be practised more the introduction a real defender replacing the static mannequin. The pass from the midfielder player would then need to be safe side and would encourage the use of the body from the centre forward to hold off the defender.

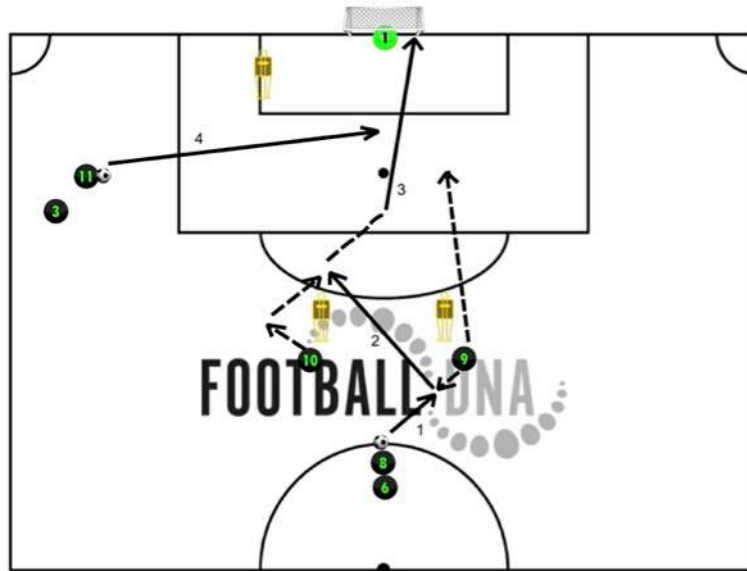
Quality & Weight of Pass: After a good first touch that prevents the defender from pinching, the forward needs to make good contact on the ball with their selected surface so the pass makes it to the wide player and doesn't risk getting cut out. If the pass is of good weight and into the wide players path they will be able to cross first time speeding the attack up.

Timing of Runs: The wide player receiving the through ball needs to stay onside and not start their run too early. If the run is well timed it will also mean the full back will have less time to read the pass and chance of intercepting to counter attack. The other run that is important is the centre forward's. After executing the through ball, they must quickly attack the box and arrive onto the ball rather than waiting for the cross to come as they would be marked in a match scenario.

Execution of Cross & Finish: Finally the execution of the cross is very important to setup a finish on goal. The selection of cross should match the centre forwards movement and distance from the crosser. If towards the back post a lofted cross could be used and the technique of striking under the ball should be used. Or for a cut back cross a firm side footed cross would be appropriate for a first time finish. The centre forward should aim to make good contact with their selected surface on the ball and direct it away from the goalkeeper. The centre forward will have to judge the pace of the cross for the amount of weight to put on the finish.

COMBINATION PLAY TO CROSS & FINISH

COACH: MATTHEW ETHERINGTON **DURATION:** 15 - 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 1 GOAL, 3 MANNEQUINS & 4 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Using the final third of the pitch, this drill combines a shot from outside the box and a finish from a cross. The pattern starts with the midfielder passing into one of the centre forwards. After showing good movement to receive in front of the defender they then pass into their partner for a shot from outside the area. After the shot, the wide player takes a touch out of their feet and delivers a cross into the two centre forward's.

COACHING POINTS:

Movement to Receive: Before the centre forward receives the first pass, they should perform a movement that drags the centre half towards the goal to create the space in front to take a touch and play a through ball. Aim is to get in front of the centre half and prevent them from pinching the ball by keeping on the foot furthest away from them, This can be practised more the introduction a real defender replacing the static mannequin. The pass from the midfielder would then need to be safe side and would encourage the use of the body from the centre forward to hold off the defender.

Quality & Weight of Pass: After a good first touch that prevents the defender from pinching, the forward needs to make good contact on the ball and slide a pass for their partner to finish within 2 touches before reaching the edge of the area. Great care should be taken with the timing of the pass to keep their partner onside.

Timing of Runs: The other centre forward needs to hold their run until their partner is just about to make contact with the ball to remain onside. The forward can perform good movement by pulling off the mannequin and then darting into the space created and taking a positive first touch to setup the finish.

Execution of Cross & Finish: Finally the execution of the cross is very important to setup a finish on goal. The selection of cross should match the centre forwards movement and distance from the crosser. If towards the back post a lofted cross could be used and the technique of striking under the ball should be used. Or for a cut back cross a firm side footed cross would be appropriate for a first time finish. Movement from the 2 centre forward's should be convincing and done at pace to replicate match scenarios. The centre forwards should aim to make good contact with their selected surface on the ball and direct it away from the goalkeeper. The centre forward will have to judge the pace of the cross for the amount of weight to put on the finish.

PROGRESSIONS:

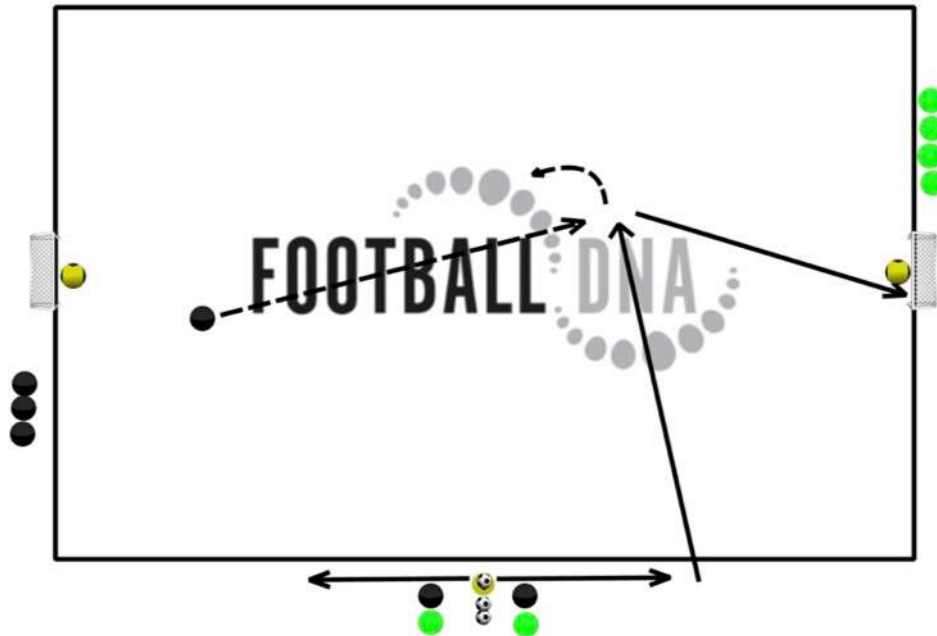
- The first centre forward can choose to pass to their partner or take a touch and finish.
- Add in 2 real defenders to become active for the cross.

How to make it easier:

- Remove the first pass, the centre forward passes through to their partner to finish.

2 TEAM CROSSING & FINISHING COMPETITION

COACH: JIMMY WALKER **DURATION:** 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, BIBS, 2 GOALS
10 PLAYERS & 2 GK'S



OVERVIEW:

Set out an area using the width and length of a penalty area with two goals either end. Divide the group into two teams with 2 players being crossers on the outside and the remaining players stationed by the side of their goal. The move starts with a server passing the ball "down the line" for a cross to happen with one player from the team running to attack the ball. Once they have had their shot, they turn and then try to score in the other goal with another cross from the second crosser. This can progress to working in pairs & threes with the addition of defenders.

COACHING POINTS:

Movement: Attackers need to display good runs to create space for themselves to finish. A run for the defender (back post) to then dart across into the front post area is a good movement to replicate. When working in pairs, attackers need to work together with differing runs to confuse defenders creating space. Crossover movements and staggered runs will do this. Attackers need to make sure they don't make the same runs and fill different areas of the goal.

Quality of Cross: The crosses need to be game realistic with good pace on the delivery that they wouldn't be cut out especially when working unopposed. With the distance close in, a lot of side footed crosses can be used opening up the surface to punch the ball into the attacker. Good control on the cross is needed to apply the correct weight of cross and accuracy for the attacker to have a good chance of scoring. When the defenders come in, crossers will need to make more decisions to either pick out a runner to feet or to cross into an area for attackers to meet the ball. Before crossing the ball players need to be balanced and composed to give themselves the best chance of a successful cross.

Execution of Finish: Lots of the finishes will be close in with less reaction time so attackers need to be ready and on their toes to apply the correct type of finish. As the ball is travelling they need to assess the pace & direction to get into position to finish confidently. They need to select the surface and try to make a strong connection on the ball. Sometimes if the cross has enough pace on it, a small touch may be all that's needed. Different types of finishes will be included with the addition of defenders, like toe pokes or outside of the foot getting across the defender.

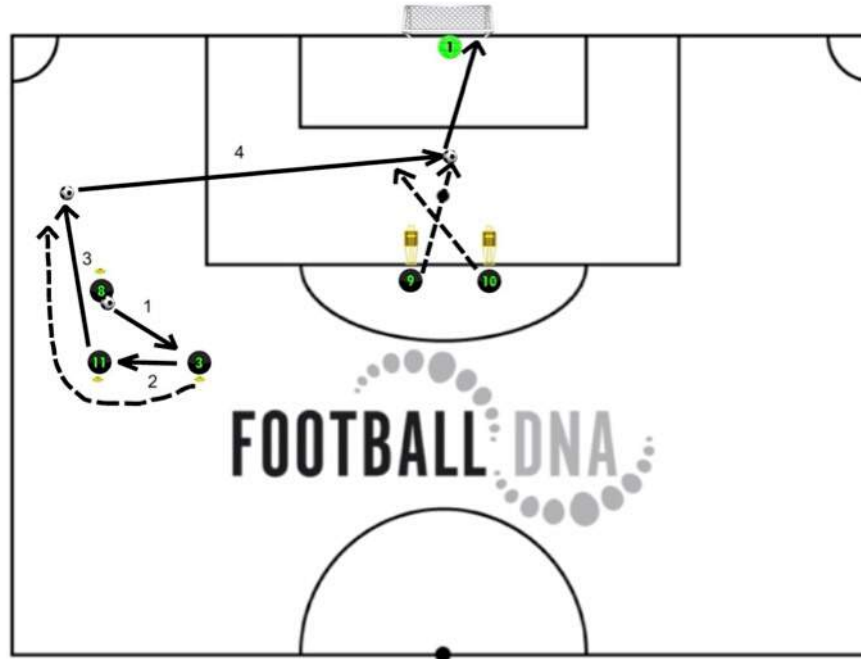
Defending Crosses: Even though mainly focusing on attacking, defenders are also important in this being able to read the cross to adjust position and deal with the delivery. Defenders need to be on their toes and ideally in an open body position to see the ball and the attacker. The first aim to get good contact on the ball and clear the ball as far away from the goal as possible. If on their toes and alert, they can be first to the ball ahead of the attacker. As a defender, we don't want the attacker to get in front as this gives them more control on a finish.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Add in defenders to make 2 v 1, 2 v 2.
- Expand the area for crosses from wider zones.

OVERLAP RUN TO CROSS & FINISH

COACH: STEVE LOVELL **DURATION:** 15 - 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, MANNEQUINS, CONES, 5 PLAYERS & 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

The move starts in the wide area with 3 players combining to produce an overlap movement & cross for the 2 centre forwards to finish. The 3 players rotate positions so a different crosser is used each time giving enough time to rest in between reps. This drill could be used on both sides of the pitch at the same time if you have enough players.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight & Quality of Pass: When combining players should aim to play quickly using 1 & 2 touch max. The weight & quality of pass for the overlapping player to cross is important. The overlapping player wants the ball to be put into space so they can cross on the run first time or take a touch and cross.

Execution of Cross: The crosser should look to put good pace on the cross giving the finisher good momentum to use the pace for the ball to direct an attempt at goal. The decision on what type of cross to use is important and this will depend on the movement of the forward. A cut back will require a low pass directed with some disguise. A cross towards the back post will require some loft by striking under neath ball.

Centre Forward Movement: The forwards should look to practise different movement patterns to give them more options in games. They should look to fill the frame of the goal with one going across the front post and the other towards the back post as an option crossing over prior. A further option is for a cut-back finish with one forward running towards the goal to distract the defender giving more space for the 2nd forward.

Execution of Finish: The final part of the drill requires quality and accuracy to produce an attempt on target. The player that finishes the move off should try to get good clean contact on the ball and select the surface they wish to use early to enable quick footwork into position.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Work both sides of the pitch.
- Add in a defender to create a 2 v 1.



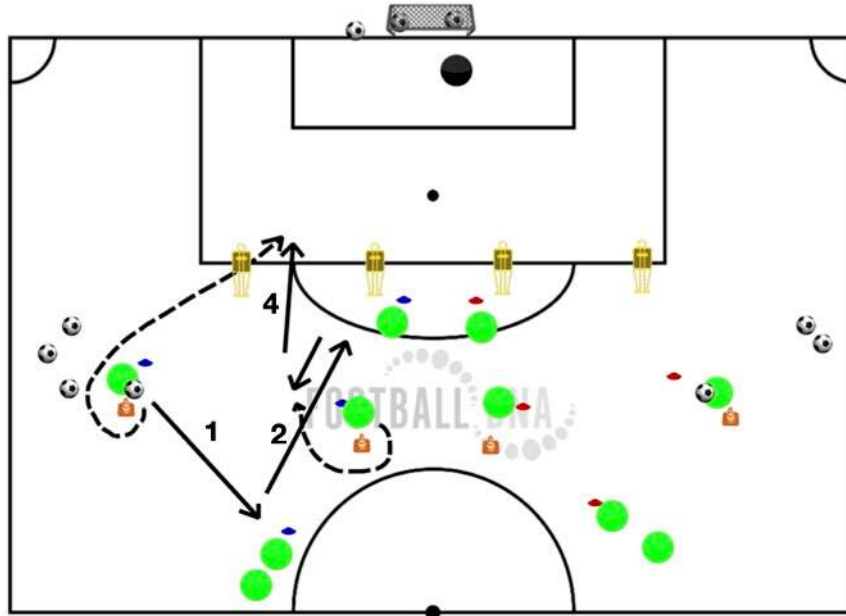
**ATTACKING
PLAY TO A
FINISH**

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COMBINING IN THE FINAL THIRD TO FINISH

COACH: JACK ROSS **DURATION:** 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, MANNEQUINS
1 GOAL, 4 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

A combination drill that can be used to develop the movement of a #7/11 or a midfielder runner to get in behind the back 4 and score with a through ball inside the opposition centre & full back. 4 mannequins are set out across the 18 yard area "D" with the full backs just outside of the posts. The pattern starts with a #7/11 passing back to a central midfielder player who passes into the #9 to set back for the #10 to play a through ball for the run of a wide player. This can be adapted with the formation you play. Cones are used to help players with the runs they should make and the timing.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight & Quality of Pass: To enable the combination play to be effective, the passing needs to be crisp and sharp to keep the speed of play high to replicate match speed. To do this, the passes need to be well weighted allowing one touch play to easily happen while carrying out the pattern. Side foot passes with a good contact area are recommended to give control to the weight and direction of pass. The through balls also need to be high quality for the forward to maintain their stride pattern without having to move away from the goal to finish reducing the angle.

Speed of Play: Every pass & movement has to be at match speed for the combination play to break the defensive line. If the movements don't match the speed of passing everything will be out of sync. Players have to focus on the combinations and remember the steps mentally allowing them to produce the pattern with effect. Young players may take longer to grasp these patterns, but with practise they will pick them up quickly.

Timing of Movement: The movement of every player in the patterns are crucial for the combination play to be a success. If someone is too late with their movement the pass will be missed. If too early, the player would become marked in a match situation and the move would break down. Just before the pass, is when the players should make their checked movement around the pole. The #7/11 needs to also time their run to stay inside running on the blind side of the defender (mannequin) making their movement as the ball is travelling to the the #9.

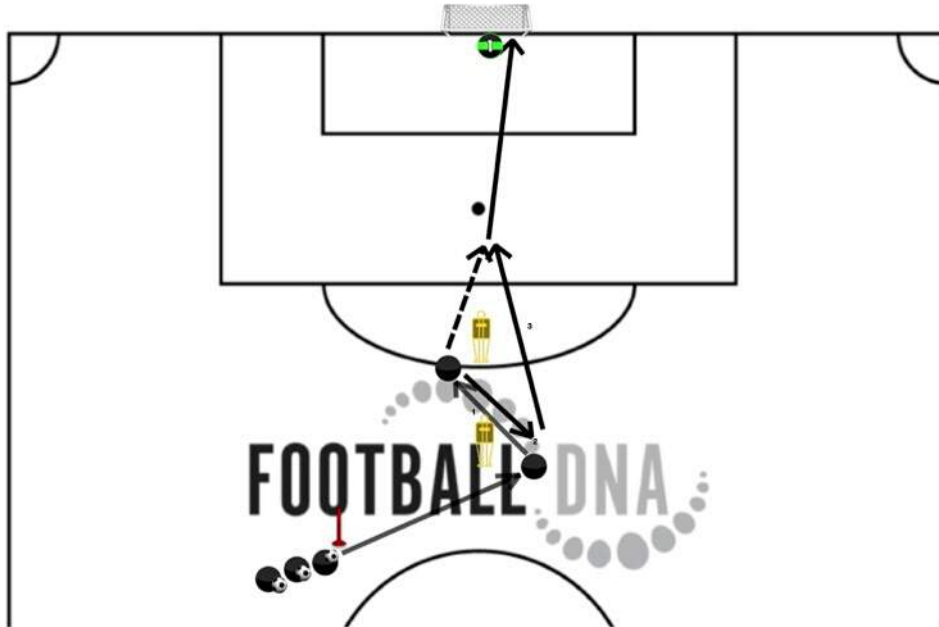
Execution of Finish: The finish will be first time from a well weighted through ball. The finisher will need to control their shot with direction into the corners of the goal. A side footed strike will be appropriate or a well controlled laces driven across goal. Whichever the type of finish, players will need to make good contact on the ball and be assertive with their choice putting the right amount of power behind the shot. Disguised finishes will be good to use here too.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Add different combination patterns.
- Must be one touch play.
- Add in full backs overlapping for the #10 to play wide & cross for runs of combining players.

COMBINATION PLAY WITH THROUGH BALL FINISHING

COACH: JIMMY WALKER **DURATION:** 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, MANNEQUINS, 1 GOAL ,
4 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Players produce combination play to make a finish from a through ball 1 v 1 against the goalkeeper. The ball starts at the first cone and is passed into the next players feet who has checked off the mannequin to receive. They then play a wall pass with the next player to produce a through ball finish. To progress another finish can be added with a crosser. Further combinations can be developed with the addition of a wall pass on the first ball.

COACHING POINTS:

Quality of Combination Play: The passing has to be well weighted to allow one touch wall passes to occur. If the passes are wrapped in too hard another touch will be needed which slows the combination down. The weight of the through ball is also important as it can't be too close to the goalkeeper to come out and smother. The first pass should be aimed at the back foot for the player to pass forward and the second pass needs to be played "safe side" for the wall pass as if a defender is marking the attacker.

Movement to Receive: Before receiving a pass on the combination play, players need to check off the mannequin with a double movement to create the space for the ball to be delivered. The attacker needs to display good movement when coming onto the cross to finish. A run in two different directions would work well feinting to go towards the back post to then get across the front post.

Crossing Quality: The delivery is so important to allow a good attempt at goal from the attacker. They should aim to recognise the movement from the attacker to then select the right technique to accurately cross. A ball towards the front post may a firm pass across the ground or a ball aimed at the back post will need to be lofted and far enough away from the goalkeeper.

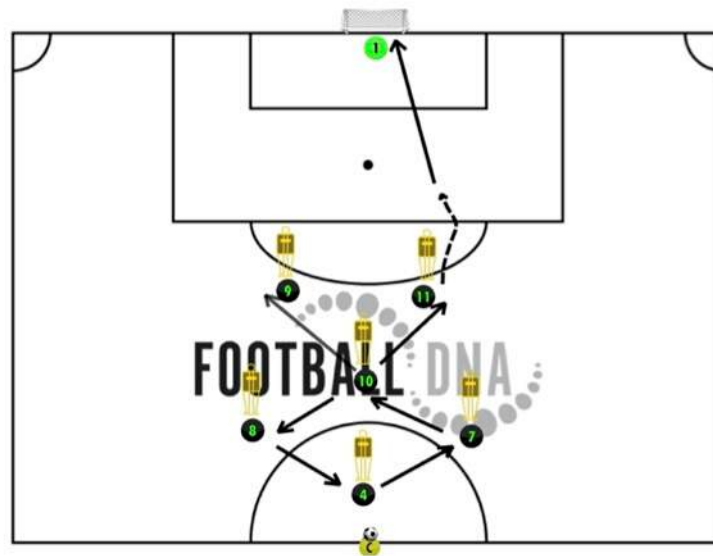
Execution of Finish: The through ball finish should be aimed towards the corners of the goal. Players should be confident and assertive when they step onto the ball striking cleanly with the selected surface. A side foot technique will give more control on the shot with a bigger surface area. Attackers should experiment different types of finishes like a chip or going round the goalkeeper if they come out too far. Also attackers can disguise the finish with the eyes or a feint of the body.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Add a finish from a cross from one side of the pitch. After finishing the first shot, the attacker runs around the mannequin before receiving the cross.
- Different combination patterns.

PASSING & FINISHING IN A 4-4-2 DIAMOND

COACH: RYAN SEMPLE **DURATION:** 15 - 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, 1 GOAL, 4 MANNEQUINS & 6 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Layout is in the shape of a midfield diamond with 2 centre forwards becoming active when the coach commands to play into them. The purpose of the drill is to practise passing & receiving within the diamond shape with some rotation. Midfield players pass the ball to each other within shape 1 or 2 Touch then wait for the command to play forward into the centre forwards who then finish on goal.

COACHING POINTS:

Movement off The Mannequins to Receive on Half Turn: Before receiving the ball, it is vital the receiving player checks away from the mannequin to give them room in front to play. This space created will give a signal to the passer to play onto the back foot as they know they have enough space & time away from the defender. The movement can be as simple as quickly taking a small step forward towards the mannequin and then back pedal a few yards.

Weight & Direction of Pass: To keep the flow of the drill and passage of play the weight of pass needs to be on point. To have good combination play needs a mixture of 1 & 2 Touch. The weight of pass will determine if another touch is needed or you can play first time. With no pressure as it's an unopposed drill the pass should be aimed at the back foot with the purpose of the receiver turning out. The final pass could be a through ball to a centre forward so the weight needs to be good so the Goalkeeper doesn't think about coming off their line to smother.

Rotation of Positions: Within a diamond shape it is promoted that players can rotate (switch positions with one another). This creates space for the player receiving the ball. For example if a #10 is marked they could rotate with #8 to shift defenders which will open up space for either to receive. In this drill it is unopposed to practise this but to improve rotation, its recommended adding opposition to progress this drill.

Centre Forward Movement to Receive & Finish: When the ball is being passed around in the diamond shape, the two centre forwards should be constantly ready to receive and finish on goal. When the players in the diamond are about to attack & the coach has shouted a command the centre forwards should look to replicate realistic movements off the mannequins acting as centre half's such as double movements to run off the back shoulder.

PROGRESSIONS:

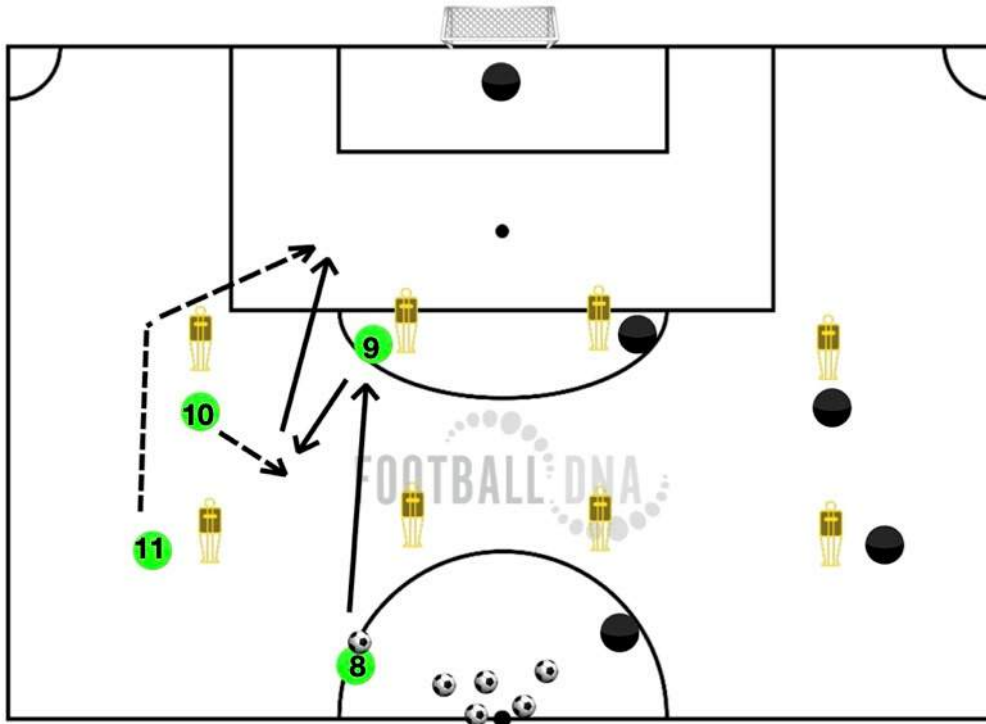
- Look to add opposition players in gradually for e.g 2 Centre Half's to mark 2 Centre Forwards, give the opposition a target to score in e.g 2 small goals.
- Add in Full Backs to attacking team to promote attacking with width and delivering crosses into the 2 Centre Forwards.

How to make it easier:

- Allow more touches on the ball.
- Players decide when they are ready to play forward into the 2 centre forwards.

FRONT 4 COMBINATIONS TO FINISH IN A 4-2-3-1

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, MANNEQUINS, 1 GOAL,
4 PLAYERS & 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Based on a 4-2-3-1 formation playing against a 4-4-2. The aim is to rehearse 3 different patterns to penetrate behind the defensive back line. Using just over a third of a full size pitch, layout 2 banks of 4 mannequins. On each side of the pitch have a #10 + 1 Wide Player. The #9 can work both sides or rotate depending on the amount of players you have. The move starts with two central midfield players passing across to each other to then pass forward into the first player. The combinations worked are: Into #9, Set #10 to Play through for #7/11, Into #10, Set #7/11 & Pass through for #9, Into #11, Wall Pass with #10 Pass through for #9. Any spare players can stand on mannequins and rotate in/out.

COACHING POINTS:

Quality of Pass: To produce the quick combination play using one and two touch requires the passing to be well weighted and accurate. Passes that are hit too hard will make one touch passing very hard to perform. The accuracy is also crucial so players don't have to move too far or stretch, everything needs to be into feet or into their path to step onto. The final pass through for the finisher also needs to be well weighted and directed so it's kept away from the goalkeeper.

Movement Off the Ball & Timing: Different patterns of play are introduced as the session goes on and it is important the movements are well timed for maximum benefit. If players make a movement in behind too early they would be offside in a match situation, something we don't want to develop here. If the wide players step into the pitch too early as well they will become static and make it predictable for defenders to intercept or go and mark them. All movement needs to be done in one movement and quickly in line with the ball.

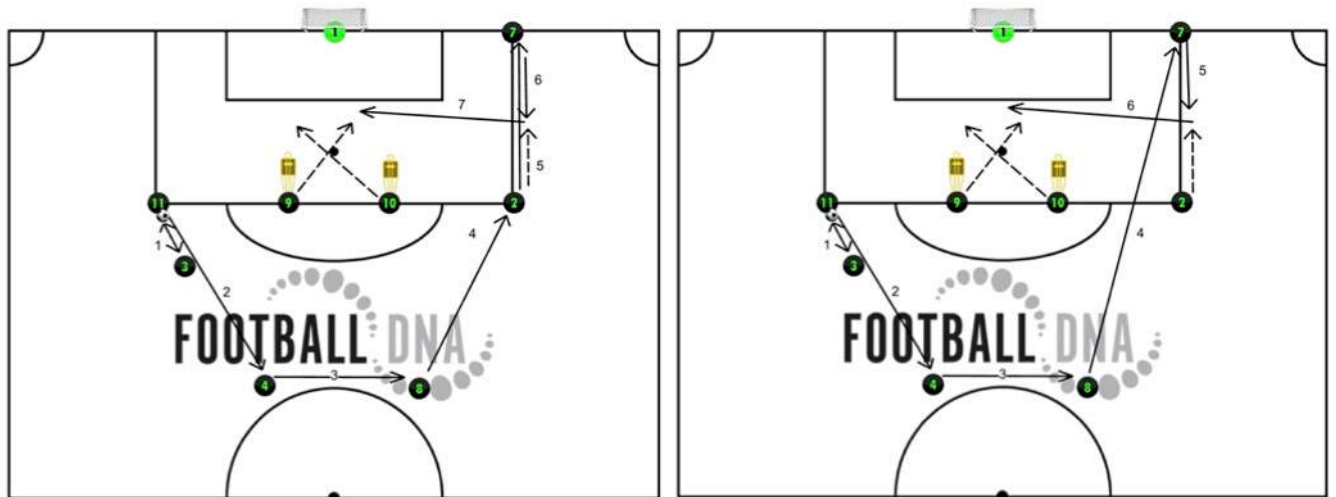
Execution of Finish: The through ball finish should be aimed towards the corners of the goal. Players should be confident and assertive when they step onto the ball striking cleanly with the selected surface. A side foot technique will give more control on the shot with a bigger surface area. Attackers should experiment different types of finishes like a chip or going round the goalkeeper if they come out too far. Also attackers can disguise the finish with the eyes or a feint of the body.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Work both sides of the pitch.
- Make it a competition against the two teams.

SWITCHING PLAY TO CROSS & FINISH

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** - 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, 2 MANNEQUINS, 1 GOAL & 8 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Using just over a third of the pitch, the aim is to switch the play from one side of the pitch to other by playing through 2 central midfielders & 2 centre forwards. The drill is focused on switching play quickly with 2 touch maximum if possible. This drill is excellent for working with the midfield & attacking Unit but could also include full backs to practise crossing in the final third.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight & Quality of Pass: During the switch of play the passing between players needs to be on point to enable a quick switch of play. If the switch isn't at a quick enough pace it will allow the opposition to recover and block the space for the full backs and wide players. For the switch of play to happen quickly, players should take no more than 2 touches when in possession. This is achieved by good ball control and appropriate weight & direction of pass that sets up the next one. When wide players are passing to the central midfielders they should aim to pass onto their back foot so they can turn out and switch the play.

Centre Forward Movement: Once the ball has been switched wide by the central midfielders, the centre forwards & wide players need to make effective runs into the penalty area to lose markers. To do this the forwards could perform a double movement which is one run for the defender to drag them out of position creating a space for the forward to run into the space left. It is also important that one of the forwards attacks the front post area where the first defender would be situated. The wide player from the opposite side is encouraged to break into the box to add another number. The forwards should fill the frame of the goal.

Quality of Cross & Finish : The whole drill relies on a quality end product which is a cross & finish. To deliver good crosses, the technique should be appropriate for the type of cross needed. The cross will depend on the movement of the forwards. For lofted crosses, hung up to the back post players should look to make a good connection under the ball slightly leaning back. Sometimes a side foot cross to the front post area is best for the run across the front. If the cross is good, it will allow the forward to perform a first time finish with a surface the forward has selected.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Longer pass from Central Midfielder into Wide Player on the byline.
- Centre Forward can decide to set it back to central midfielder or play straight out to the wide player.
- Maximum 2 Touches

How to make it easier:- Miss the pass into the Centre Forward out and play into the wide players instead, Allow unlimited touches.



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CREATING SPACE TO FINISH EARLY

COACH: NICK GREEN **DURATION:** 15 - 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, POLES, 1 GOALS
3 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Using the penalty area dimensions, this finishing exercise comprises of 2 finishes. The first finish comes from a pass onto the attackers back foot who has checked away from the pole to take a touch and then finish. Then they back pedal towards the penalty spot to receive a pass from the side to touch and finish. The exercise progresses to combination play with the first finish via a wall pass. The distances can be adapted if working with younger players using the appropriate sized area dimensions.

COACHING POINTS:

Quality Of Pass: To allow the attacker a chance of having an opportunity to score within two touches and early, the service has to be good. This means the passes being firm and crisp along the ground. A bobbled or slow pass will reduce the tempo of the exercise and it will become unrealistic. Strong side foot passes with the inside part of the foot are recommended. The pass accuracy is also crucial so the attacker doesn't have to alter their footwork too much and can touch and finish quickly inside the area. The through ball pass needs to be well weighted and accurate to keep away from the goalkeeper.

First Touch: This is so important to allow the attacker to finish the move off. If the first touch on the first attempt is too wide it will be harder to score from a narrower angle. The touch needs to be directed in front of them and onto the finishing foot to give them enough space to produce a clean strike. If the touch is too small it will get caught underneath them and the attacker will need an extra touch to setup the finish.

Movement To Create Space: The attacker needs to check away from the pole (defender) to create the space in front of them to receive the first pass onto the back foot. As the exercise progresses, attackers need to quickly get off the mark once they have returned the wall pass but then stay onside as well to finish the through ball. The second finish requires good footwork, staying balanced and in control of their movement to arrange the feet to control and finish. Players should always keep eye contact with the ball.

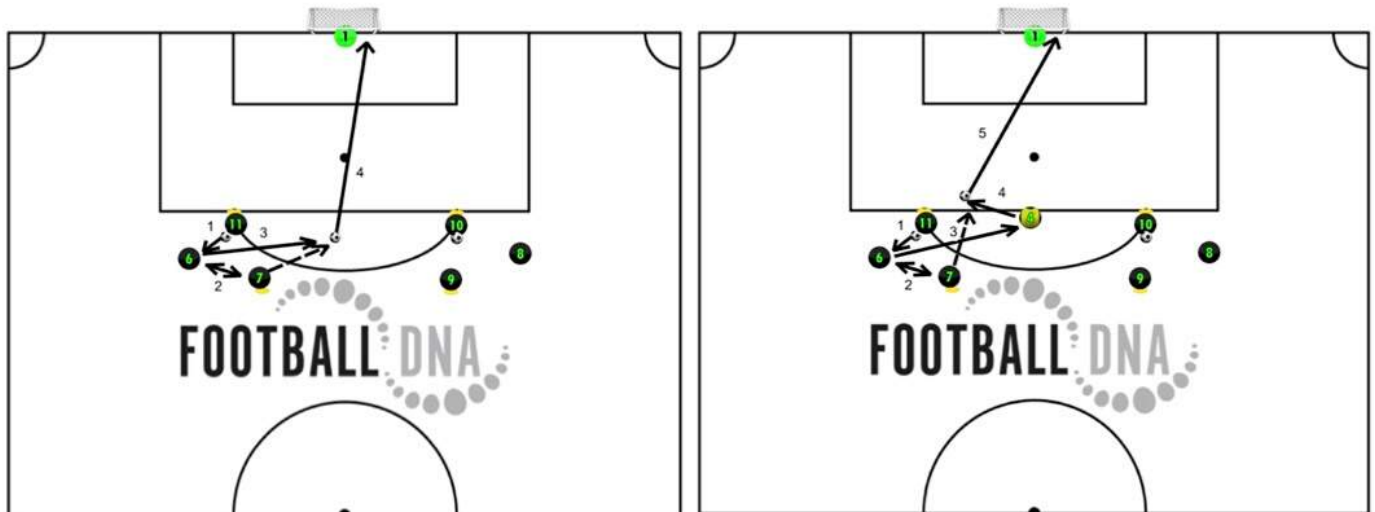
Execution Of Finish: The attacker needs to be confident when in front of goal committing to each finish. The first finish could be either with a side foot or the laces. Whichever is used a good connection is needed, making strong contact with the surface and directing towards the corners of the goal. The second finish which is closer in may be more suited to a placed side foot finish giving good control.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Add in a wall pass at the starting point for a through ball finish.
- First time finish from the side pass.
- Add in a defender to make it a 1 v 1 & finishing exercise.

FINISHING WITH MIDFIELD RUNNERS

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 10 - 15 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 1 GOAL & 4 PLAYERS
+ 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

A finishing drill that produces some combination play around the edge of the box to setup a through ball to finish on goal typically for a midfielder. Working just outside the box, 3 players combine together to play a pass just in front of the deepest player to run on and finish. P1 passes to P2 then to P3 who then plays a wall pass with P2 to run and finish at goal. The 3 players rotate positions after the shot on goal and repeat the process.

COACHING POINTS:

Weight of Pass & Set: For the 3 players to combine quickly and keep the ball under control, passes should be weighted correctly to play first time. This will help the midfielder judge the timing of their run. The pass to setup the runner needs to be into their path so they don't have to break stride and slow down delaying the pace of the attack.

Eyes & Head Up: The player that is finishing on goal should keep their eyes up and be judging the pace on the ball and the position of the goalkeeper. The player passing the through ball should be aware of the space the runner wants the ball to be played into. The finishing player may prefer the ball on a specific foot and may use the hand to point into the direction.

Timing of Runs: The run from the player finishing needs to be well timed so they are arriving on to the ball not breaking stride. This will keep the pace of the attack and give less time for a recovering defender. If the player gets on top of the ball they will have to take an extra touch to get the ball out of their feet slowing them down.

Execution of Finish: The most important action of the drill, after the well timed run and well weighted pass the player finishing should use the correct type of finish to score the goal. This may be a laces' finish smashed past the GK or a side foot finish into the corner. Players should aim to score in the corners from such a central position.

PROGRESSIONS:

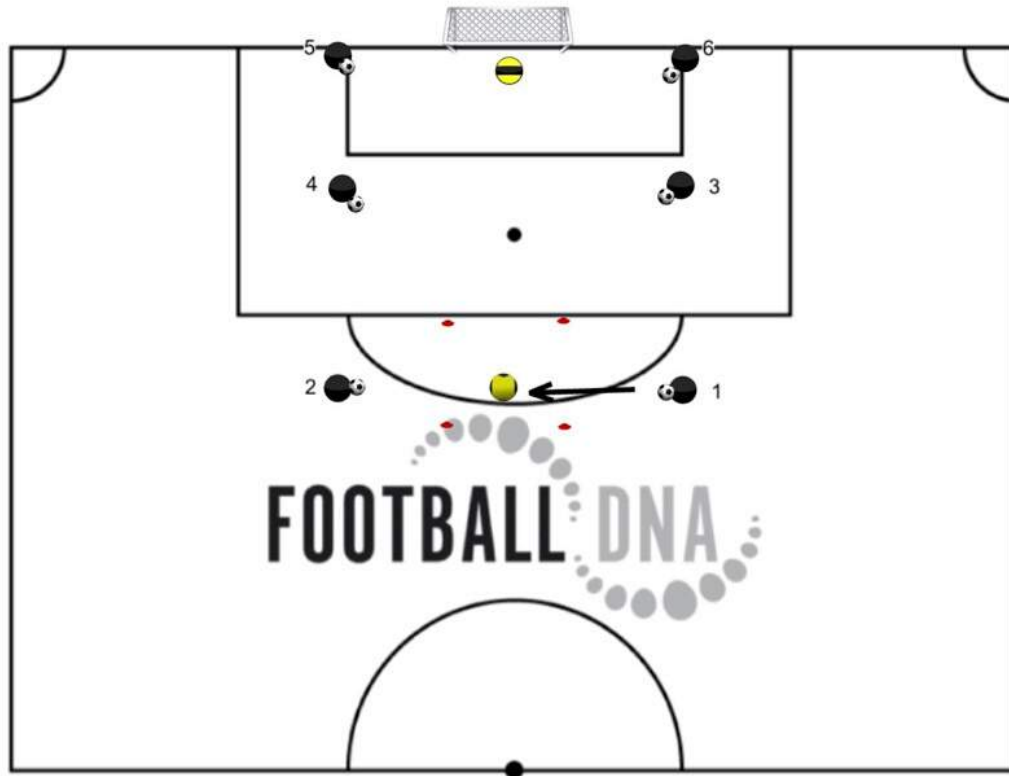
- Add a bounce player to add an extra pass on the edge of the box.
- Finish from different angles using the corners of the box.

How to make it easier:

- Start closer to the goal to make the finish from inside the box.

DNA 6 ANGLE FINISHING CHALLENGE

COACH: JIMMY WALKER **DURATION:** 15- 20 MINUTES **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, 1 GOAL, CONES & 7 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

In a square area of 5x5yards marked out with cones, ideally flat cones, starting 1 yard inside the 18 yard box. 6 players each with a ball, 2 on a square angle for a two touch finish past the GK from inside the square, the next 2 players on a slight angle for the ball played towards the square for a first time finish. The last 2 players on the by-line for a cut back clipped serve for a header/volley at goal. The player trying to score has to get into the square before each serve is played, trying to score as many goals as possible from the six serves. If there is a tie the player completing the six serves in the fastest time wins or you could have a sudden death' play off.

COACHING POINTS:

Creating Angles & Space: Move quickly away from the ball in the square to create space and a good angle to control the ball to step onto the finish.

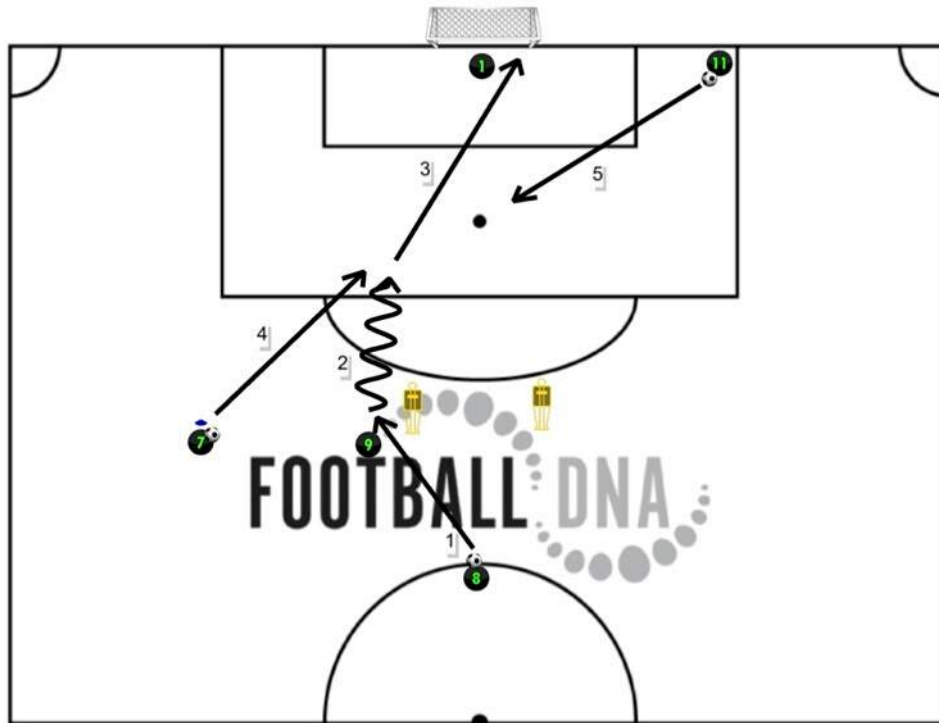
Stay Balanced: Be balanced around the square whilst getting into a good position quickly, ready to control the ball to get the shot off.

Good Control: Focus on manipulating the ball where you want it to be ready to take the shot from the optimum angle.

Execution to Finish: Concentrate on a good connection and body shape over the ball to place the ball into a good area of the goal giving a better chance to score.

MULTI PHASE FINISHING EXERCISE - THROUGH BALL, BACK TO GOAL, CROSS

COACH: GAVIN STRACHAN **DURATION:** 15 MINS **EQUIPMENT:** CONES, FOOTBALLS, MANNEQUINS, 1 GOAL & 4 PLAYERS + 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

Multi phase finishing exercise which attempts to work on different types of finishes. The first phase is finishing a through ball. The second phase is receiving with back to goal, turning and finishing and the third phase is finishing from a cut back. There are slight variations in the movement for the progressions, but the setup and focus remains the same. Rotate the 4 players around after each set.

COACHING POINTS:

Angle of Runs: The centre forward's movement needs to produce good angled movements throughout the exercise. The first movement to receive needs to be sharp and at pace to get the defender off balance. The second finish is back to goal, so the forward should line themselves up with the passer central to the goal on an angle. For the third finish the forward needs to return to the edge of the box and then stay central for a cut back finish opening the whole goal.

1st Touch: A positive first touch is needed for the first finish that moves towards the goal, to create a better angle. A touch away from goal will narrow the angle down making the finish much harder. When receiving back to goal, can the forward produce a feint and then have a good first touch that again gives them the majority of the goal to aim at. The touch needs to be fairly close but enough space to produce a strike at goal using the full range of technique.

Hitting the Target: The first aim is to make the goalkeeper produce a save that stretches them either winning a corner or allowing the forward to score from a rebound. The forward needs to make good contact on the ball for all three finishes but may need to select a different type of finish for each. The first finish will require more power striking from around the edge of the box with the laces. The 2nd & 3rd finish, could be performed with a side foot placing the ball towards goal.

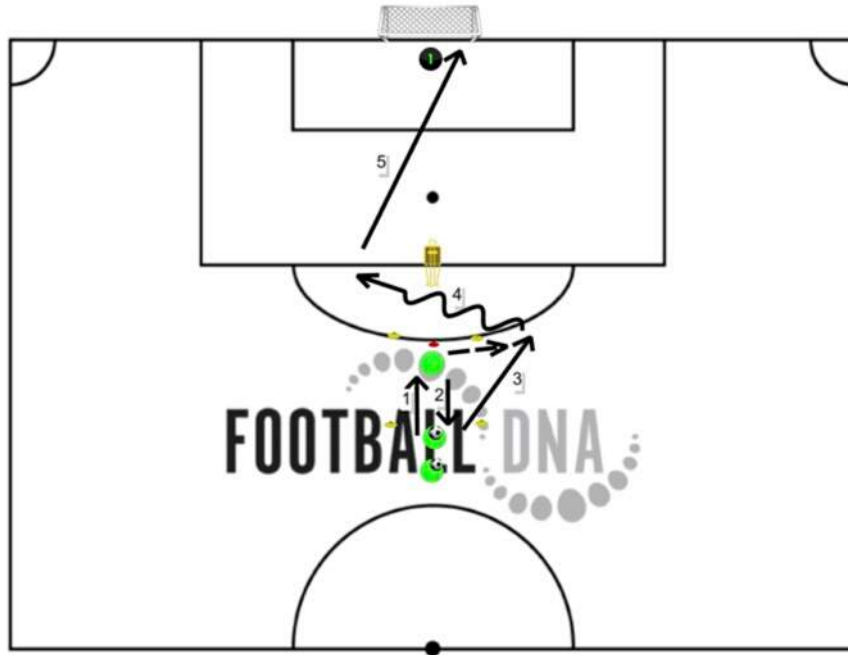
Reactions after Each Phase: The exercise needs to be done at full intensity, replicating match realistic movements and tempo. As soon as one phase has been completed, the transition has to be quick. All players need to concentrate especially the servers proving good passes to the forward allowing them the best opportunity to score.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Vary movements on through ball or add a combination.
- Designate receiving techniques with back to goal (outside of foot, sole of foot)
- Aerial finishes from cross.

ADVANCED SHOOTING DRILL

COACH: STRACHAN FF **DURATION:** 10 - 15 MINS **EQUIPMENT:** FOOTBALLS, CONES, 1 GOAL & 3 PLAYERS & 1 GK



OVERVIEW:

This shooting setup introduces players to movement before receiving & producing combination play before finishing after a 1 v 1 situation. The attacker starts by creating space with a check away movement to the cone and back before playing a wall pass and then creating an angle to receive. After receiving, the attacker takes a good first touch into the space, beats the mannequin and strikes at goal.

COACHING POINTS:

Movement to Create Space: The attacker should perform a sharp double movement before the wall pass, creating space to receive at an angle afterwards. The angle created should be done so it results in having an open body shape to receive on the back foot, but also being aware of the space behind.

Weight & Quality of Pass: The first pass into the attacked needs to be well weighted to allow a first time pass back to the server. The second pass should be of good quality to allow an easier first touch using the pace on the ball to turn and attack the mannequin 1 v 1. A side foot pass would be appropriate for both of these.

First Touch & Acceleration: The attackers open body shape will a better first touch into the space as they are already on the half turn. The first touch should be sharp and in front so they can accelerate onto the ball and generate pace for the 1 v 1 keeping momentum for the finish.

Execution of Shot: The most important action of the drill, after the well timed run and well weighted pass the player finishing should use the correct type of finish to score the goal. This may be a laces' finish smashed past the GK or a side foot finish into the corner. Players should aim to score in the corners from such a central position.

PROGRESSIONS:

- Finish using both feet.
- Work in Pairs with one player starting on the mannequin coming off to play a wall pass once the attacker is turned.



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