

Possession and —●— switch of play

Session overview

Part 1: passing circuit – possession and switch of play

Part 2: possession-based game – 5V5+2

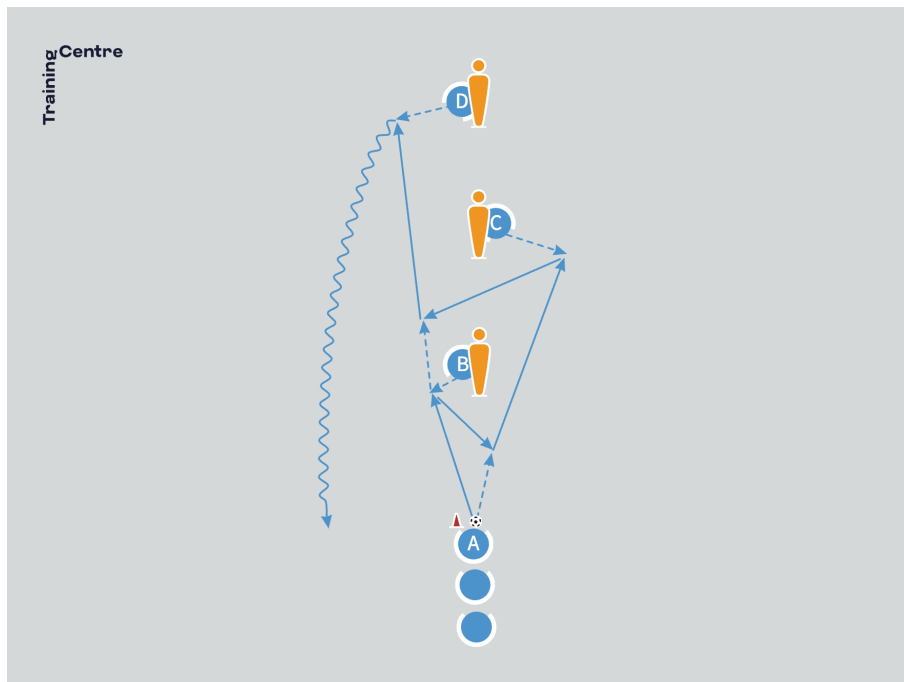
Part 3: 11v11 – zonal circulation under pressure

Key coaching points

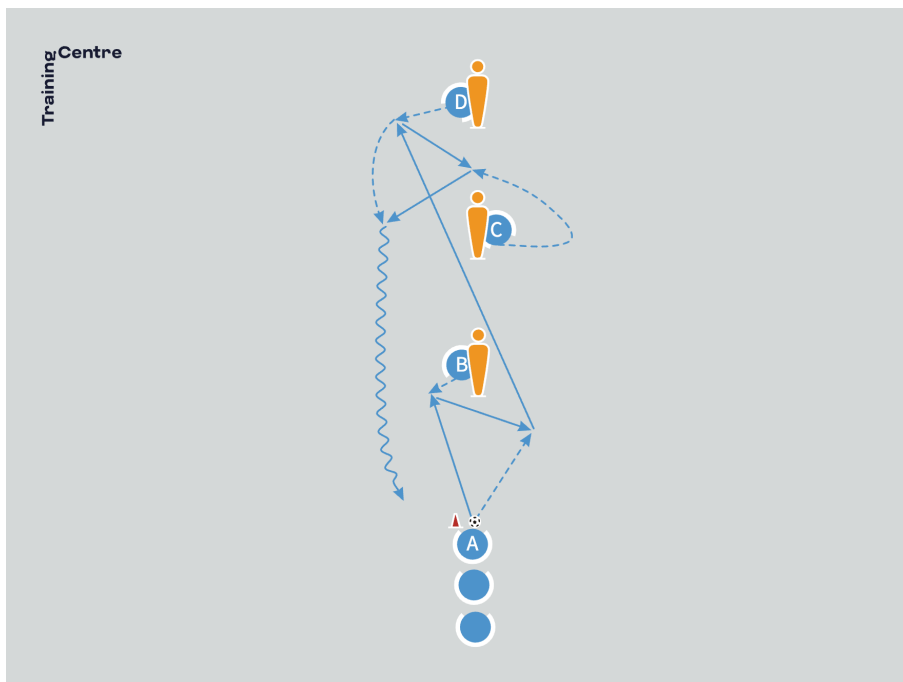
- Constantly seeking information, when in and out of possession, will help players to understand where to move in order to receive the ball and the ideal body posture in order to move play on quickly.
- Create diamond and triangular structures to effectively open up passing lanes and to move the ball through the thirds. A player should always occupy the central areas.
- Firm, incisive and quick passes are required for a team to be able to move the ball into the final third and take advantage of spaces in the defensive lines.
- Width and depth are important factors to develop so that players can stretch the opposition and make the pitch bigger.
- The players should use constant communication and indicators with their team-mates to show where passing lanes have been or can be created.
- If a player is unsure about what is behind them, they should play forward whilst their team-mates should help them by indicating the best passing option.

PART 1: PASSING CIRCUIT – POSSESSION AND SWITCH OF PLAY

This first warm-up exercise is designed to prepare the players for the subsequent exercises, while introducing technical aspects that will be the key principles throughout the entire session. The objective is for the players to be able to create passing lanes by using the third player as well as combinations. To do this successfully, they need to play passes firmly and with precision, and adjust their body positioning so that passing sequences can be completed with efficiency.



Basic sequence – the players move the ball through the stages by opening up passing lanes to receive it.



Variation 1

Organisation

- Position 3 mannequins in a straight line and 12m apart from one another.
- Mark out a starting point 12m in front of the first mannequin.
- Position 1 player per mannequin.
- Position the remaining players at the starting point with the balls.

Explanation

- The ball starts with player A.
- Player B indicates where the pass is to be played by moving to either the left or right of the mannequin.
- Player C has to move in the opposite direction to which player B moved. If player B went to the left, player C must move to the right and vice versa.
- Player D moves in the opposite direction to player C.
- Player A passes into player B.
- Player B returns the pass to player A, who then passes to player C.
- After laying the ball off, player B should move in front of the mannequin.
- Player C lays the ball off for player B.
- Player B then passes to player D.
- When player D receives the ball, they take it back to the starting point.
- Once player D receives the ball, the sequence restarts.
- Each player has to move to the next station – for example, player A moves to station B and so on.

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- Player D moves in the opposite direction to player C.
- Player A passes to player B.
- Player B returns the ball to player A.
- Player A then passes through to player D.
- At the same time, player C should move in front of the mannequin.
- Player D lays the ball off to player C.
- Player C makes a return pass.
- Player D takes the ball back to the starting point.
- Once player D receives the ball, the sequence restarts.
- Each player has to move to the next station – for example, player A moves to station B and so on.

Variation 2

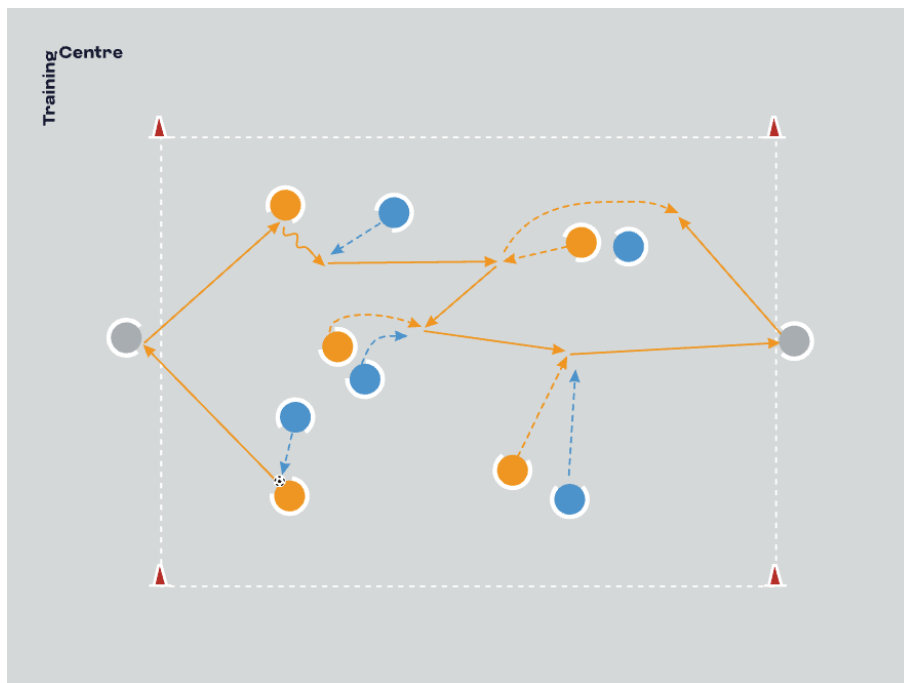
- Players can now decide which of the two passing options they wish to initiate.
- Players must communicate their passes at all times to ensure that their team-mates can move accordingly.

Coaching points

- Players should communicate with each other at all times to ensure that they are aware of their team-mates' next movements.
- Passes and lay-offs need to be precise and firm for the passing sequence to run efficiently.
- Movements to offer passing lanes should be done with the right timing between team-mates.
- When moving away from their mannequins, players should scan for information and position their body so that they can receive the ball well and then pass in a quick motion.
- Once a pass has been made, the players need to be quick to move in front of their mannequins to receive return passes.
- In Variation 1, player C should be treated as if they were being marked by an opponent and the passing lane should be directly into player D.
- The ball should always be moving and the players should prevent play from becoming static by continuously getting into position to receive and play.

PART 2: POSSESSION-BASED GAME – 5V5+2

In this second exercise, Adrián Sánchez introduces a 5v5+2 possession-based game that is focused on improving a player's ability to create passing lanes so that they can progress the ball into the final third more effectively. Excellent mobility, constant communication, the seeking of information and quality passes are all key principles towards achieving this objective.



5v5+2 – by opening up passing lanes, the orange team can successfully progress the ball from one side to the other.

Organisation

- Mark out a 25x30m area.
- Organise the players into 2 teams of 5 inside the area.
- Position 2 support players on either side of the area.

Explanation

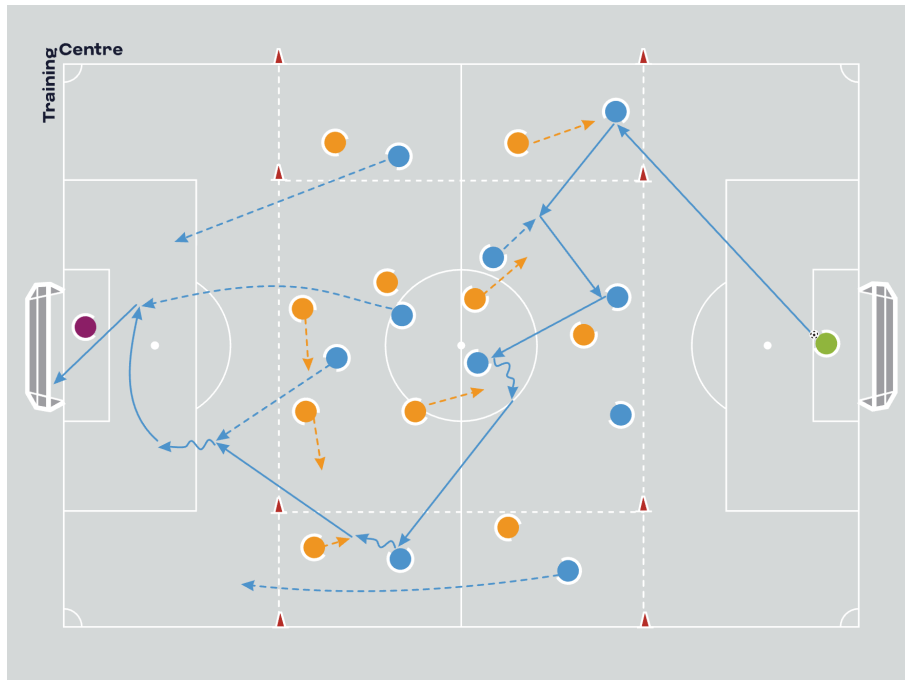
- The team with the ball has to keep possession.
- The team out of possession has to try and win the ball back.
- If the team in possession progresses the ball from 1 support player to the other, they score 3 points.
- If the team in possession makes 10 consecutive passes, they score 1 point.
- Limit direct passes from 1 support player to the other.

Coaching points

- The team in possession should always look to develop a diamond shape during construction so that they can open up passing lanes.
- Rather than play predictable square passes, a player needs to drop in and occupy the central area at all times to open up triangles and passing options.
- By focusing on creating triangles and diamond shapes, the team in possession will be able to progress the ball through the thirds more efficiently.
- Players need to use the width and depth of the area to create spaces and offer short, medium and long passing options.
- When a team loses possession, they must immediately press the opposition to win it back.

PART 3: 11V11 – ZONAL CIRCULATION UNDER PRESSURE

Cristian Flores leads this final exercise, which revolves around the circulation of the ball in an 11v11 game. The players must rely on the principles that they learnt in the previous exercises so that they can progress the ball through the three central zones and switch play quickly. By combining with the third player, the teams will be able to create better passing lanes.



11v11 game – the blue team progresses the ball through each of the three central zones before scoring.

Organisation

- Use a full-size pitch with 2 full-size goals.
- Position 1 goalkeeper in each goal.
- Organise 2 teams into a 4-1-2-3 formation.
- Mark out a 40x52m central zone.
- Mark out two 14m-wide lateral zones.

Explanation

- The players from each team start in their allocated positions on the pitch.
- The objective is for the team in possession to progress the ball through each of the 3 central zones.
- If a team successfully moves the ball through each of the 3 zones before scoring, they score 5 points.
- If a team scores but has not played through all 3 central zones, they score 1 point.
- If the team in possession breaks into the final third, the defensive line is not allowed to follow or stop them. They cannot go past the offside line.
- Once the attackers get into the final third, they should try to finish past the goalkeeper with intent and as quickly as possible.

Variation

- Defenders can now drop back into the final third and prevent the opposition from scoring.

Coaching points

- When number 11 has the ball on the wing, the opposite winger (7) should get into the space between the centre-back and left-back. Number 9 has to make a run in front of or behind the centre-back and number 8 needs to break through the defensive line and into the area.
- If the ball is with the other winger (7), they should initiate a 1v1 situation, and number 9 should drop in between the defenders and look to link up with number 7. At the same time, number 10 has to move into number 9's previous position and get in behind the defence, whilst the opposite winger (11) has to make an "L" shaped run inside.
- When the opposition's attack carries the ball towards the defenders, 1 defender needs to engage the ball carrier and force them to pass sideways or backwards. The remaining defenders should drop and cover their team-mates.
- If the ball cannot be progressed on one side of the pitch, the team in possession should look to play a pass inside and then switch play.