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# COACHING PHILOSOPHY

The coaching method is based upon the following key components

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## THE CORE

### THE MATCH

The objective of the training session is to prepare players for competition. The game shows the tactical, technical, physical and psychosocial development of the player.

## FOUR COMPLEMENTARY COMPONENTS

### TACTICAL

This component helps the player fit into the team. Our aim is to create clever players, capable of adapting to the constantly changing circumstances of the game.

### TECHNICAL

All players in the team have to be individually competent and proficient in the most important skills for each position. For example, a central midfield player will need different techniques and expertise as compared to an outside back.

### PHYSICAL

Strong and resilient players will provide a significant advantage to the team. A tired player will struggle to think properly and is prone to commit more errors.

### PSYCHOSOCIAL

The human being is often affected by his/her emotions. We will train the players to use these emotions to their advantage and turn them into strengths and not weaknesses.



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## GENERAL TERMINOLOGY

Definitions for soccer-specific terminology

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**Tactic:** Individual or collective actions performed by a player or group of players to take advantage of an opponent, group of opponents or a team.

*Explanation:* The tactics are the tools to develop the strategy.

*Example:* Quick transition of the ball from one side of the field to the other.

**Strategy:** A general concept or idea agreed upon by the team at the beginning of the game with the intention to beat the opponents.

*Explanation:* The strategy relates to the formation and/or system used by the team.

*Example:* Defensive strategy - three strikers pressure up high and midfielders close down the opponents in central areas to prevent them from turning and attempt to regain the ball in the attacking half.

**Formation:** The shape of the team and distribution of the players on the field at the beginning of the game.

*Explanation:* This is usually expressed in three numbers identifying the number of players in the defensive, midfield and attacking lines.

*Example:* 4-3-3 – 4 defenders, 3 midfielders and 3 strikers.

**System:** A formation with specifications in the shape and/or roles for one or more players.

*Explanation:* The system combines the formation and strategy.

*Example:* 4-4-2 with diamond in midfield and outside backs moving up into wide areas.



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## COACHING CONTENT: TACTICAL

Aspects to improve game understanding

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### TACTICAL

#### 1. Attacking Principles

- › Creating Space
- › Support
- › Width
- › Depth
- › Overlaps
- › Diagonal Runs
- › Forward Play
- › Speed of Play
- › Switching Positions

#### 2. Possession

#### 3. Transition

#### 4. Combination Play

#### 5. Switching Play

#### 6. Counter Attacking

#### 7. Playing Out from the Back

#### 8. Finishing in the Final Third

#### 1. Defending Principles

##### BASIC

- › Mark
- › Press
- › Cover
- › Balance

##### ADVANCED

- › Tracking
- › Switching Places

#### 2. Zonal Defending

#### 3. Pressing

#### 4. Retreat and Recovery

#### 5. Compactness



## ATTACKING TACTICS

- **First Attacker** - The attacker with the ball.

Roles of the 1st Attacker
Penetrate when possible.
Possess when penetration is not possible.
Shoot, pass or dribble to penetrate.

- **Second Attacker** - Attacker(s) in immediate support of the first attacker.

Roles of the 2nd Attacker
Provide a passing option either behind, in advance or square to the first attacker.
Make diagonal forward runs to threaten the space behind the defense. (These can be decoy runs.)
Combine with the first attacker to penetrate.

**Note: See Mobility and Combinations on page 27.**

- **Third Attacker** - Attackers in distant support of the first attacker.

Roles of the 3rd Attacker
Make forward runs to increase the number of players in the attack.
Allows for the point of attack to be changed by providing distant support behind and square to the 1st attacker.
Unbalances the opponent's defense by creating wide and/or forward attacking options.

- **Attacking Shape** - The collective positioning of a team when attacking. The team takes up positions around the central players to provide height, depth and width. The bigger the attacking shape the more space there will be to attack.

<b>Height</b>	Organization of attackers ahead of the ball. Stretches the field and unbalances the defense. Creates a threat to penetrate
<b>Depth</b>	Organization of attackers behind the ball. Provides support to maintain possession. Provides defensive cover if the ball is lost.
<b>Width</b>	Positioning of attackers across the field in an attempt to unbalance or pull apart a compact defense.
<b>Linking Player</b>	Players positioned in the middle of the team shape. They help connect the two sides of the field and the top and bottom of the formation.

- **Possession** - A team working together to maintain control over the ball. Teams use periods of possession to rest their defenders, conserve energy, allow players to move forward into the attack and to build a rhythm to their passing. A team will attempt to maintain possession, moving the ball up and back and side to side, until they can find the appropriate moment to penetrate the opponent's defense. This is also known as "probing" the opponents defense.
- **Penetration** - The act of moving the ball past defenders. Penetration can be accomplished through shooting, passing and dribbling. The primary option for penetration should be to shoot when able. If shooting is not a viable option then the ball should be passed to a teammate that will have a better opportunity to shoot. If neither a shot nor pass is an option then the attacker should dribble the ball to create an opportunity to either shoot or pass.

<b>Penetrating Passes on the Ground</b>	A pass on the ground that penetrates through the gaps between defenders.
<b>Penetrating Passes in the Air</b>	A pass that penetrates by going over the heads of the defenders.

- **Possession vs Penetration** - The decision to either move the ball forward to penetrate or to move laterally or backward in an attempt to maintain possession.

<b>Factors that Influence the Possession vs Penetration Decision</b>
Score and Time Left in the Game
Number of Attackers vs Number of Defenders
Where the Ball is on the Field
Match Ups - Strength of Attackers vs Strength of Defenders

- **Changing the Point of Attack** - The act of moving the ball from one side of the field to the other, in order to find an area of decreased defensive pressure. The lateral movement of the ball to a space on the field with decreased pressure can be utilized to either penetrate or to maintain possession.
- **Counter Attack** - The immediate attack after the ball is won back from the opponent. The aim is to quickly attack the opponent before they can transition from their attacking shape to their defensive shape.

- **Mobility** - The movement of attackers off of the ball. It can also be described as playing without the ball. Mobility is used to unbalance and penetrate defenders.
  - **Mobility Used to Create Space For Oneself** - The use of positional adjustments (sometimes very small) so one can receive a pass away from pressure and have a better chance to penetrate.
  - **Mobility Used to Create Space For Teammates** - Forward and diagonal runs can lead to successful penetrating passes but the mere threat of penetration created by these types of runs distract and unbalance defenses. These distracting runs or *decoy runs* create space for a teammate that has the ball.
  - **Combinations** - Two or more attackers working together to penetrate the opponents defense.

Types of Combinations	
Wall Pass	A player with the ball passes to a teammate in a forward position then immediately sprints to a position behind the defense to get the ball back.
Take Over	Two attackers are crossing paths. The player with the ball allows the teammate to take the ball over and move it in the opposite direction.
Overlap	When a trailing attacker runs around and past a teammate with the ball in an attempt to receive a forward pass or to create a diversion.
Double Pass	A two player combination that includes a forward pass to the seconds attacker, then a return pass backwards to the first attacker, then finally a penetrating forward pass to the second attacker. This is also known as "up-back-through".
Three Person	Any improvised combination that includes three or more attackers.



- **Flank Play** - Any play that uses the wide areas of the field to penetrate. Attackers are more likely to find 1v1 match ups with less defensive cover along the flanks, thus making penetration down the field less complicated. The drawback is that the ball is far from goal and must be passed back into the highly defended area in front of the goal. Ultimately, flank play will give a team more scoring opportunities but there is a higher degree of technical difficulty associated with shooting and scoring balls crossed from the flanks.
  - **Crossing** - Passing from the flank to a teammate in front of the goal.
    - Crosses on the Ground - If a path to the target exists then crosses should be made on the ground. Crosses played on the ground are more accurate and easier to shoot by the player in front of the goal.
    - Crosses in the Air - When defenders stand in the path between the ball and the teammate in front of the goal, it becomes necessary to play a cross in the air. The ball must be played over the head of the defender and shot on goal with either the head or on the volley.

Target Areas for Crosses	
Near Post	To beat the GK to this spot, the cross must be <b>driven</b> low, in the air or on the ground.
Far Post	This type of cross needs to be <b>lofted</b> high enough to remain out of the reach of the GK.
Slot	This is a cross (usually on the ground) that is diagonally back, away from the goal to a trailing attacker. For this cross to be effective, it is important for the timing of the cross to be slightly delayed. The delay brings the first wave of attackers and their marking defenders closer to the goal thus opening up space for the trailing attacker to receive a slotted pass.



- **Runs to Receive Crosses** - The mobility in the goal box that allows attackers to successfully finish from crosses.
  - **Slot Run** - The forward-most attackers, making the near and far post runs, cause the defenders to drop deep into the space in front of their goal. This often leaves an area of undefended space in the middle of the goal box for trailing attackers to receive crosses for uncontested, one time shots.
  - **Near Post Runs** - Players initially located towards the back post make good targets for Near Post Crosses. They should attempt to out-sprint defenders to an open space around the near post to receive a driven cross.
  - **Far Post Runs** - Players initially located towards the near post make good targets for Far Post Crosses. They should arc their runs back and away from goal then in towards the far post.
  - **Timing of Runs** - Crossing and Finishing require near perfect timing due to the level of difficulty of the techniques being used and because of the intense level of defensive pressure found in the area in front of the goal. The flank attacker will look up for potential targets just prior to crossing. This is the precise moment when a potential target needs to sprint to an open space to receive the cross.
  - **Recycle Runs** - If an attacker completes a run (either near post, far post or slot) and the ball is not crossed, then he or she should loop back out of the goal box thus creating space for the next wave of attackers to make their runs.

## TRAINING GAMES















- **Technical-Functional Training Environment** - Small sided games in which specific situational tactics and skills are addressed. Each year, players will train in a specific match like situation (1v1, 2v1, 2v2 and 3v2, etc.). Players will master the skills and tactics (attacking, defending, individual tactics and small group tactics) involved in each situation through both a trial and error process ("The game is the greatest Teacher") and through subtle guidance from the coach.
- **Scrimmage** - These are games played toward the end of the training session. If the coach desires, conditions and restrictions can be applied to bring out the technical and/or tactical topics for the training session. Some portion of each scrimmage should be played without conditions and restrictions. This will allow the players to test their skills and decisions under conditions that will be closest to those found in the game.

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## KEY

Symbols to build practices and soccer movements

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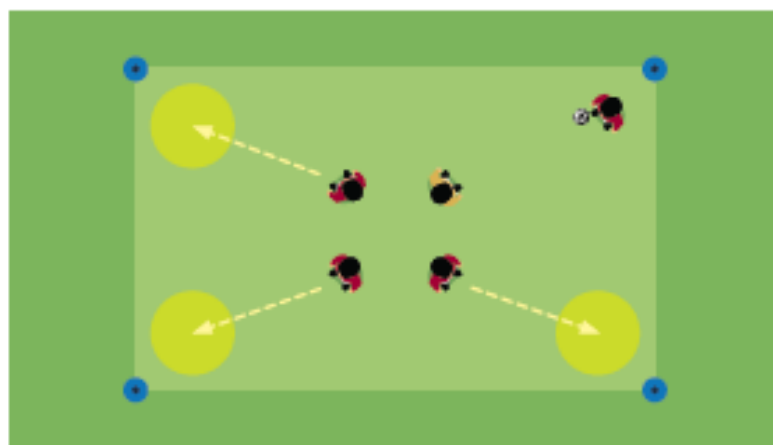
PLAYER SYMBOLS	OBJECT SYMBOLS	MOVEMENT SYMBOLS
 Goalkeeper	 Cone	 Trajectory of the ball
 Player with Ball	 Ball	
 Player without Ball	 Pole	 Trajectory of the player without the ball
 Coach	 Goal	
 Mannequin	 Ladder	 Trajectory of the player with the ball
 Neutral Player		

## TACTICAL TERMINOLOGY

### Attacking – Tactical

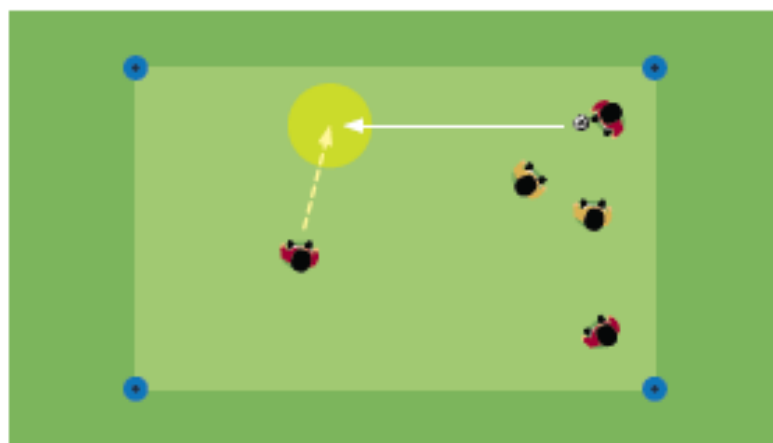
**1. Attacking Principles:** Basic individual or collective attacking actions for one or more players in order to create a team advantage for the attacker/s.

**1a. Creating Space:** The distribution of players into space to generate effective passing opportunities.



- *4v1 possession game where players move to wide areas to create passing options.*

**1b. Support:** Help offered by a teammate(s) around the ball with the objective of receiving the ball.



- *One player moves into space, closer to the teammate in possession of the ball with the purpose of creating a clear passing option.*

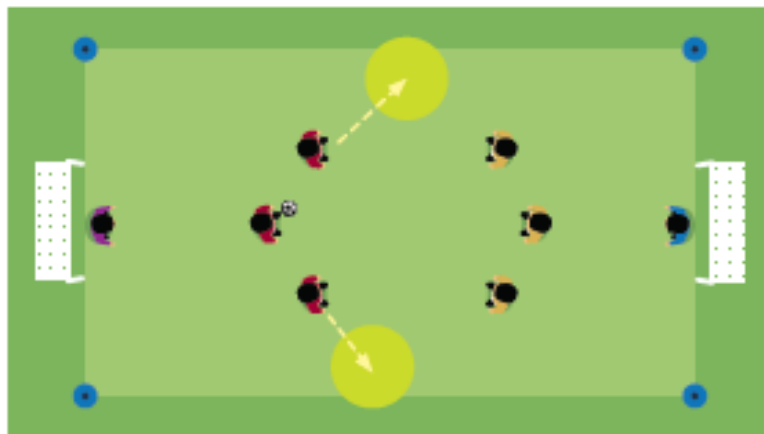
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## TACTICAL TERMINOLOGY

### Attacking – Tactical

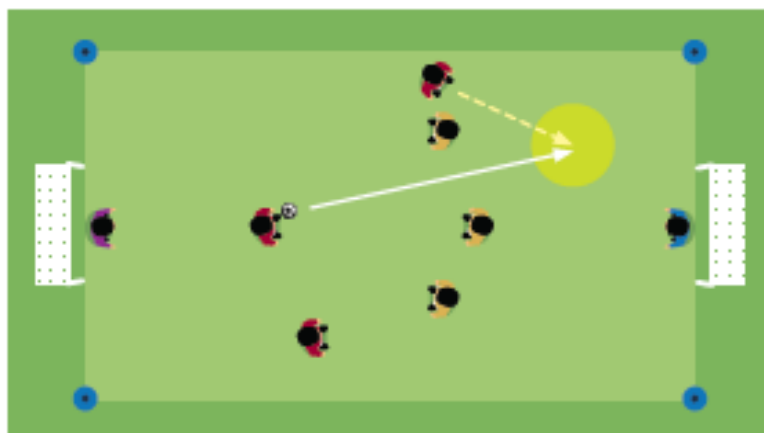
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**1c. Width:** Movement and distribution of attacking players to wide areas in order to create space and attacking options in a game context.



- *A player moves to the wide area to create space. The purpose is to make the opponent's defensive work more difficult.*

**1d. Depth:** Movement of a player or group of players into forward positions to generate attacking options in a game context.



- *A player moves forward with the purpose of receiving the ball closer to goal.*



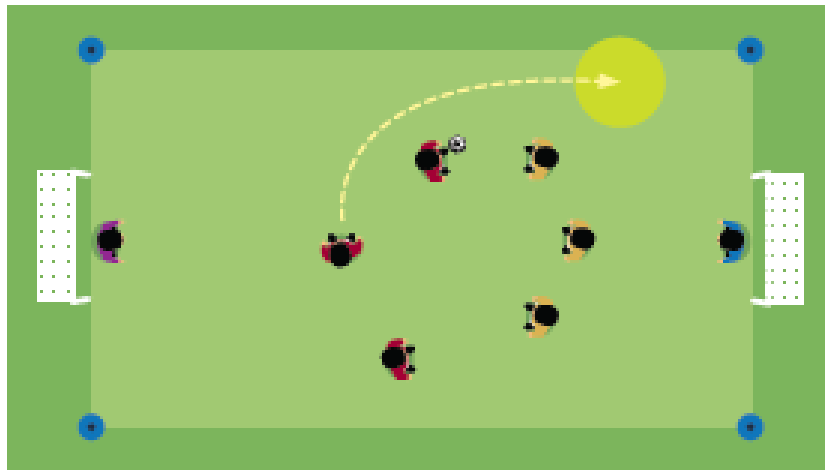
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### Attacking – Tactical

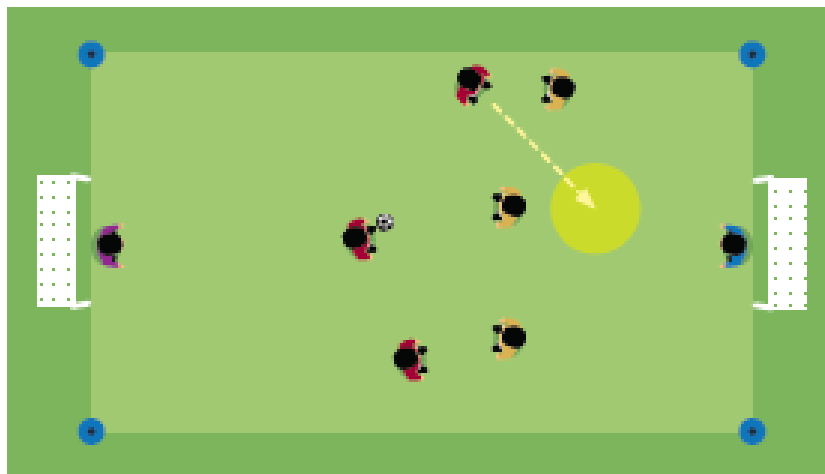
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**1e. Overlaps:** Movement of a teammate from behind the player in possession of the ball to forward positions in order to generate a passing opportunity or advantage for the team.



- *A central midfielder runs forward from behind the winger to create a passing option.*

**1f. Diagonal Runs:** An attacking diagonal movement forward into space, generally in front of the ball, to create a passing option.



- *A wide player makes a diagonal movement forward with the purpose of creating a passing option.*



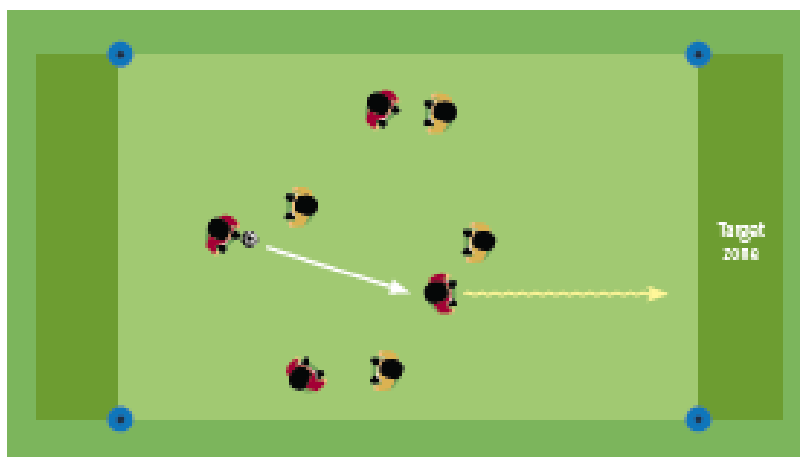
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### Attacking – Tactical

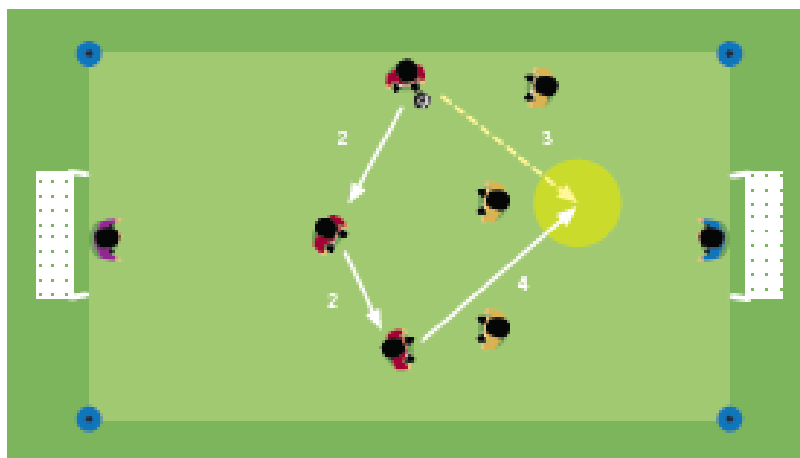
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**1g. Forward Play:** An effective and efficient movement of the ball towards the attacking end or goal.



- *A central defender passes to a central midfielder or forward who is unmarked, thus transferring the ball to the attacking end.*

**1h. Speed of Play:** Quick ball-movement which creates an advantage for the attacking team over the defenders.



- *Players from the same team pass the ball quickly in one, two, or three touch play, keeping the ball away from the opponents.*



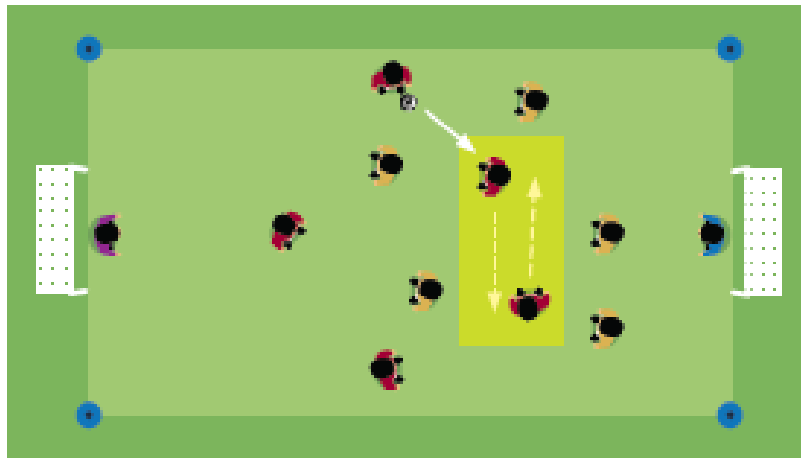
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### Attacking – Tactical

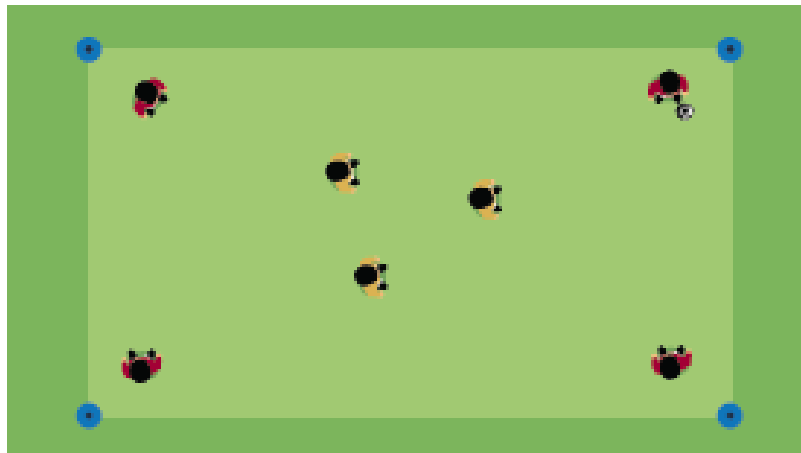
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**1i. Switching positions:** An exchange of positions by two players of the same team, generally ahead of the ball, to take advantage of the defending team and generate a passing option.



- *Right and left strikers exchange positions to distract the attention of defenders and create a passing option.*

**2. Possession:** Passing the ball repeatedly between players on the same team.



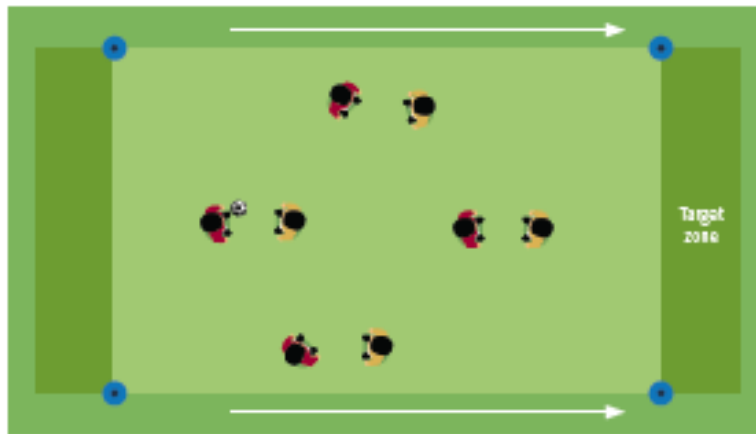
- *4 players from the same team keep the ball away from the opponents.*



## TACTICAL TERMINOLOGY

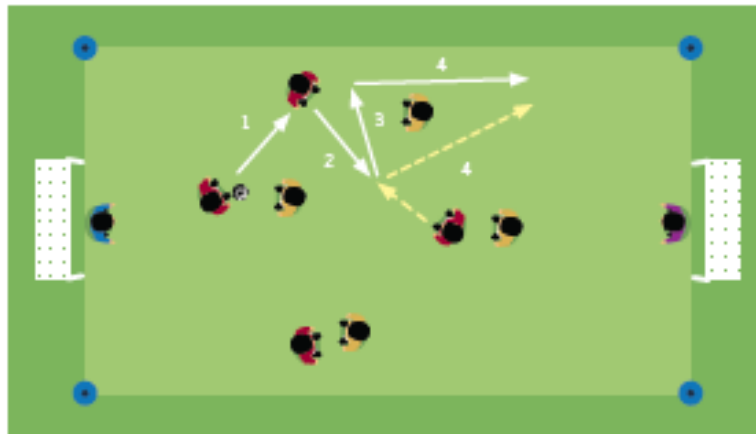
### Attacking – Tactical

**3. Transition:** The action of transferring the ball collectively as a team from the defensive end to the attacking end.



♦ *Collective effort to move the ball from the defensive side of the field to the attacking end.*

**4. Combination Play:** Quick and effective movement of the ball by two or more players from the same team.



♦ *Action that involves three players with quick movement of both the ball and players with the purpose of eliminating defenders.*

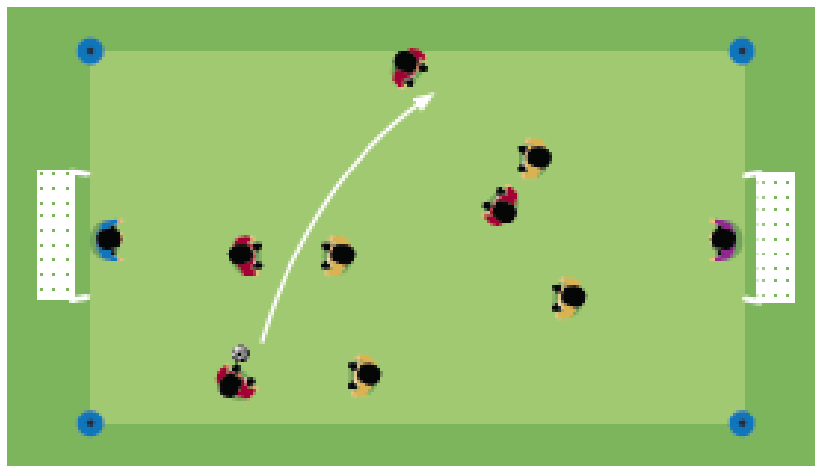
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## TACTICAL TERMINOLOGY

### Attacking – Tactical

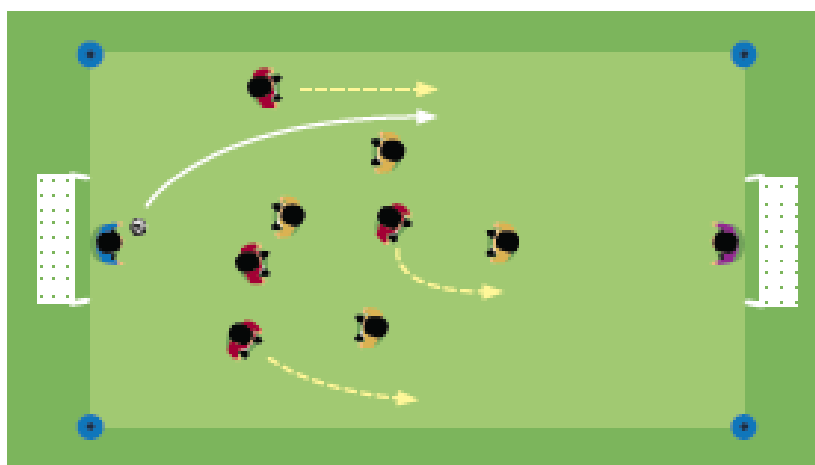
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**5. Switching Play:** The transferring of the ball from one part of the field to another, generally from one wide area to another, in order to disorganize the defense and create an advantage over the opponents.



- A long pass from right-wide player to left-wide player with the purpose of disorganizing the defense and facilitating forward movement of the ball.

**6. Counter Attacking:** Fast and effective vertical transfer of the ball when possession has been regained in order to surprise and take advantage of the defenders while they are still disorganized.



- A long pass from the goalkeeper to the left-wide player when possession of the ball is regained, gives the attacking team an advantage over a disorganized defense.



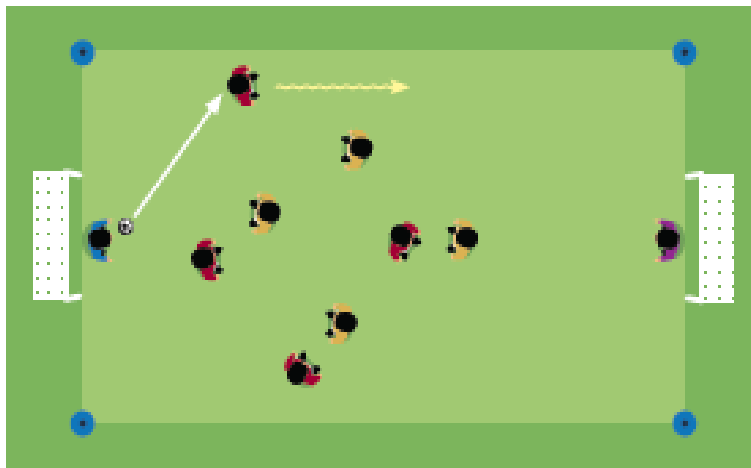
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### Attacking – Tactical

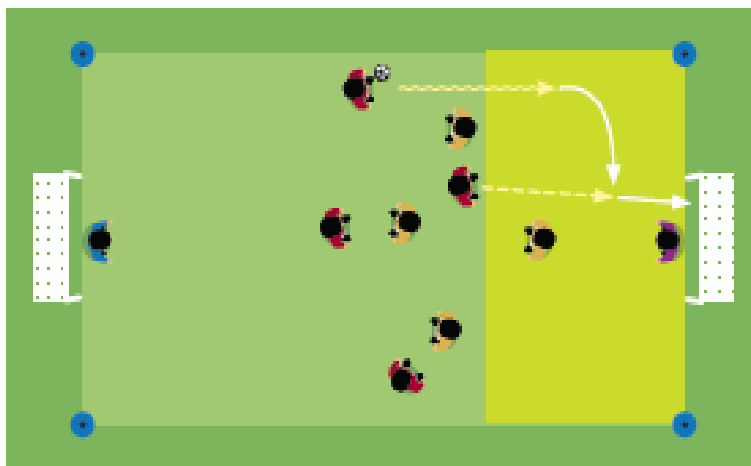
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**7. Playing out from the back:** The collective action of transferring the ball from the defensive third to advanced attacking areas.



- The goalkeeper passes the ball forward into the defensive third to the left back. The left back dribbles or passes the ball forward.

**8. Finishing in the final third:** The collective actions in the final third of the field with the objective of creating a goal scoring opportunity.



- The left-sided player dribbles to the final third and crosses the ball, looking for a teammate to finish and score.

