

LEVEL: Advanced

TOPIC: Defending counter-attacks

24x24 Yard grid divided in to four smaller squares of 12x12 yards - players working in 3s with a ball. Each player has a number 1-3. The players pass and move inside of their square. Coach will shout a number and this player will become the defender in a 2v1. The objective is for the team of two to play passes and keep the ball away from the defender. The defender is trying to win the ball back. You can then

progress to have the defenders cross to the next grid.

Make it easier - decrease the size of the area

Make it harder - increase area

36x24 yard grid with a goal at one end - two small counter-goals at the other. Three attackers will attack the goal, against two defenders who will try to gain possession then aim for the smaller goals. The defender starts with the ball and serves it to the attackers and the game starts. You can manipulate your numbers based on the level of your players, for example; 3v3, 4v2, etc. You can also allow an extra defender to enter the game if the starting defenders can delay for ten seconds.

Make it easier - Make grids smaller Make it harder - Make it a 3v1

TECHNICAL

TACTICAL

36x24 yard field - Divided in to three equal rectangles 12x24. Divide your players in to three teams and assign them to a rectangle which they must stay inside. The players in the middle rectangle are the defenders to begin with. Play the ball to either end team and instruct them to connect five passes. One member of the defending team may enter to try and win the ball. If the teams connects five passes then they play the ball to the other end team and repeat the process. If they do not connect five passes then they switch with the middle team and become the defenders. You can progress the game and allow the defenders in the middle to block the through pass.

Make it easier - ask for more passes from the attackers Make it harder - make the area bigger

Small-sided game, we suggest 5v5 but try to keep all players engaged. We suggest no goalkeepers and the use of small goals to encourage accuracy. In order to create plenty of coaching moments we suggest setting your formations to have equal attackers and defenders on each team, for example: 2-1-2 or you can add in an all-time-attacking player. We always advise that you should allow time for players to enjoy the scrimmage without any conditions.

Make it real -

- 1) Assign positions
- 2) Set a formation
- 3) Help players understand their role

FIRST COACHING POINT - MAKE PLAY PREDICTABLE

COACHING POINTS

Explain to your players that they can turn a 2v1 in to a 1v1 if they approach the ball correctly - they should approach the ball from the side where the second attacker is - this will cut off the passing option. At this stage the attacker with the ball must either pass or try to dribble towards the open side. The defender is trying to make the play predictable.

## FIRST COACHING POINT - APPROACH

The defending player should engage the ball while also taking a line of approach that cuts off the pass to the supporting player.

SECOND COACHING POINT - SECOND DEFENDER
The second defender should stay behind defender one.
They should choose a position about 8-10 yards behind
defender one where they can affect the play if defender
one is beaten or if they ball is passed.

FIRST COACHING POINT - SPACIAL AWARENESS

An out-numbered defender should try to delay the attacker with the ball while also minimizing the chance of the ball being played to a supporting attacker. Successfully doing this will turn a 2v1 in to a 1v1.

SECOND COACHING POINT - SPACIAL AWARENESS

The defending Player must be aware of where the end lines are - the defender should try to force the attacker towards these lines to take away space. The waiting defenders in the middle should read the cues of the first defenders intentions.

## COACHING SUMMARY

Try to find instances in the game to freeze the play when your coaching points are relevant. Keep your freeze short and concise - try to find opportunities when a player fails to use their approach and position to dictate the direction of play for the attacker. Some examples:

- 1) An attacker is allowed to come inside the field and connect passes
- 2) A defender is easily beaten by not preparing to chase back
- An attacker is allowed to advance 15+ yards without any pressure

DIAGRAM





