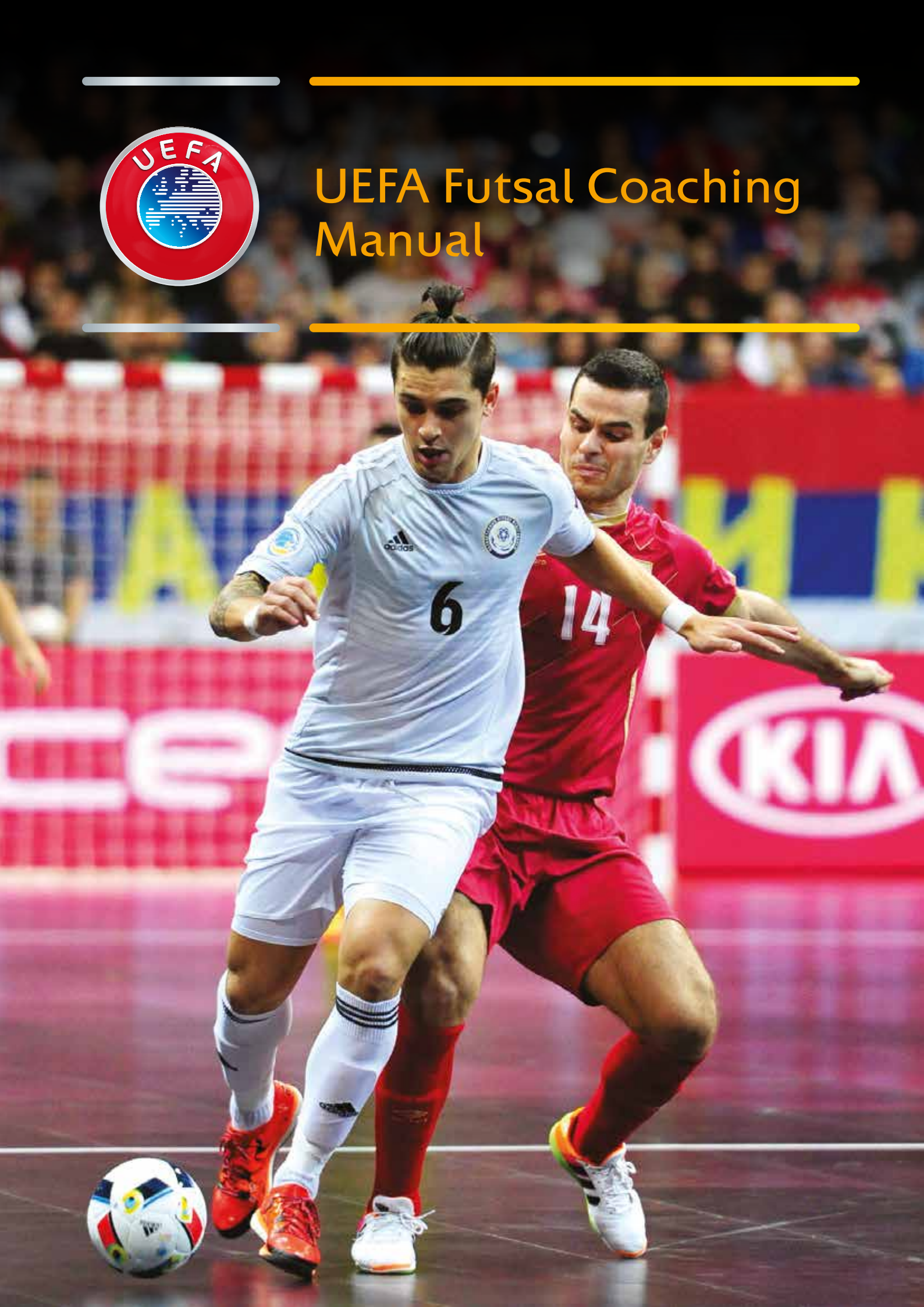


UEFA Futsal Coaching Manual

UEFA FUTSAL COACHING MANUAL

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION 7

THEORY UNITS

1. Football knowledge 9
1.1 The sport of futsal 10
1.2 Basic terminology 11
1.3 Basic concepts 13
1.4 Stages of player development 16

2. Team leadership and management 19
2.1 The role of the coach 20
2.2 The various phases involved in player training 22
2.3 Leadership and team-building 26
2.4 Planning and programming of training 28

3. Teaching methodology and methods 39
3.1 Pedagogical principles 40
3.2 The training session 43
3.3 Designing drills 47
3.4 Coaching styles 50

PRACTICAL UNITS

1. Technical/tactical 55
1.1 Introduction to tactics 56
1.2 Tactics in futsal 58
1.3 The principles of futsal 68
1.4 Technical ability 77
1.5 Group tactics 91
1.6 Playing systems 115
1.7 Set-pieces 128
1.8 Specific training for goalkeepers 136

2. Physical preparation 145
2.1 Introduction 146
2.2 Characteristics of futsal 148
2.3 Warm-up/stretching 152
2.4 Endurance 156
2.5 Speed training 159
2.6 Flexibility 161
2.7 Strength 163
2.8 Coordination 165
2.9 Recovery 166
2.10 Conditioning training drills 168

3. The coach's responsibilities 187
3.1 Organising and leading coaching sessions 188
3.2 Game management 190

BIBLIOGRAPHY 197

INTRODUCTION

UEFA began expanding its futsal coach education activities in late 2012 with the introduction of the UEFA Futsal B licence. A series of workshops were held to familiarise the national associations with licence criteria and tailor-made support was provided to help get courses off the ground. This support is ongoing and UEFA is constantly looking for ways to develop it further.

With that in mind, and in response to feedback and requests from the associations themselves, European football's governing body tasked its futsal working group with the production of this UEFA Futsal Coaching Manual. It is designed to serve both as a unique resource for associations that are implementing UEFA Futsal B licence courses and as a guide and a source of technical inspiration for futsal coaches working at all levels of the game.

The UEFA Futsal Coaching Manual was produced under the direction and guidance of four-time European champion coach José Venancio López Hierro, without whose hard work and commitment the project would not have been possible. This comprehensive guide to futsal coaching also includes input from fellow Spaniard and two-time FIFA Futsal World Cup winner Javier Lozano Cid and former European champion Roberto Menichelli of Italy.

On behalf of UEFA and the wider European futsal community, I would like to thank everyone who was involved in the production of this invaluable resource, which I hope you will find both useful and enjoyable.

Ioan Lupescu

UEFA Technical Director

Legend

- Player, blue team
- Player, red team
- Player, yellow team
- Player, green team
- Goalkeeper

- Joker, blue team
- Joker, red team
- Joker, both teams

- Player direction
- Ball direction (shot)
- Ball direction (throw)

- Starting position
- Intermediate position
- Final position

- Coach
- Player

THEORY UNITS

1. FOOTBALL KNOWLEDGE

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

1.1 THE SPORT OF FUTSAL

1.1.1 A brief history of futsal

Futsal originated in Uruguay in 1930, the brainchild of a teacher by the name of Juan Carlos Ceriani. The word itself is a contraction of the Spanish term *Fútbol de Salón*, which means 'indoor football'. The sport emerged from Ceriani's desire to give children who had no access to outdoor pitches the opportunity to play football on basketball courts. He found a solution to the problem he had identified by utilising smaller playing areas.

Borrowing and adapting rules from other indoor sports such as basketball, water polo and handball, Ceriani established the format and dimensions of the playing area, the number of players, game duration, and the rules pertaining to goalkeepers, among other regulations. The new sport caused a sensation in Uruguay, whose football fans were still on a high after their country's triumphs at the 1928 Olympics and 1930 FIFA World Cup. It was not long before futsal spread quickly across the rest of South America.

Over the subsequent decades, futsal has gradually developed into a global sport. While similar to football, it also shares certain characteristics with other team sports, and the result is a game that is unique.

Futsal requires a high rate of active participation and motor engagement on the part of the players, which makes it an excellent means of developing skills among children. It enables them to stay constantly involved in the game – directly or indirectly – and build up the amount of time they spend engaged in useful practice (or intense practice), which is why the sport is also regarded as an excellent training tool for football.

1.1.2 What is futsal?

Futsal is a collaborative/adversarial team game in which players are required to adapt to a changing, dynamic environment; one in which they have a restricted amount of time and space in which to make decisions and carry out actions that will provide solutions for their team. Futsal entails a high level of motor engagement and intense practice, with the tactical aspects (in terms of perception and decision-making) crucial to the effectiveness of each element of play.

Sports can be categorised using a variety of different approaches. However, in narrowing the focus, it is clear that the core definition of futsal is that it is **a team sport involving teamwork and opposition** (or cooperation and opposition), as there is a constant interrelation between opposition players and cooperation between team-mates in all elements of play. This correlation between teamwork and opposition occurs simultaneously, both when a team is in possession and not in possession, i.e. during any phase of attacking or defensive play.

Futsal is, therefore, a highly tactical team sport that is based on teamwork and opposition, and involves social and motor skills. The aim of the motor-ability process is to achieve efficiency in the elements of play (i.e. the ability to overcome specific problems). Game play is a tactical activity. Scenarios must be correctly recognised and analysed, and decisions taken in order to overcome problems posed. These decisions must be supported by the appropriate motor skills and then executed correctly in order to produce an effective outcome.

1.2 BASIC TERMINOLOGY

When it comes to gaining an understanding of futsal, the most important aspects to consider are:

- **The playing area:** a shared and standardised space on a 40x20m court, where the direction of play is determined by each of the two goals.
- **The format:** the playing area is shaped by the simultaneous collaborative actions (involving team-mates) and adversarial actions (involving opponents) in which players participate. Futsal is a five-a-side game that allows rolling substitutions using other players who start on the bench. This format helps to energise participants and raises the intensity of the game. Players can come on and off the court as often as is deemed necessary. This means that the five players on each side are continuously involved and have a significant influence on the play.
- **The focal point:** the main focal point of the game is the ball; it is the main driver of play, around which the entire game revolves. All of a team's actions are contingent upon whether or not they have possession of the ball.
- **The duration:** the time in futsal is actively controlled, with the chronometer only running when the ball is in play. When play is stopped as a result of a situation provided for in the rules of the game, the chronometer is stopped. Matches consist of two equal periods of 20 minutes, though this is optional in some competitions. In knockout matches, in the event of a draw after 40 minutes (full time), two extra periods lasting five minutes each are played (extra time).
- **The rules:** futsal matches are regulated and shaped by the Laws of the Game.
- **The objectives:** the objectives for a team clearly differ when it has possession of the ball and when it does not (i.e. whether it is attacking or defending). **Attack:** holding onto the ball; advancing with the ball; finishing on goal/scoring a goal. **Defence:** regaining possession of the ball; preventing the opposition from advancing/scoring a goal.
- **Conditioning abilities and motor communication:** these are the physical basis of the elements of play.
- **Technique:** the execution of the various elements of play.
- **Tactics:** a series of elements that utilise the available options and analysis of game situations with a view to achieving the specific objectives of the game.

Taking into account the role of all of the above factors, it is clear that futsal is a dynamic and intense sport that involves **teamwork and opposition**, with a restricted amount of **time and space** available to execute the various elements of play, which is why **awareness and decision-making** (tactics) are more important than other factors. The game takes place on a 40x20m playing surface, where all of the available space has an active influence on the game, as it is **played across the entire court** and any free space may be occupied.

Futsal is a highly tactical sport and one which has a significant cognitive component. It relies in turn on physical and technical aspects for the execution of elements of play. The most decisive technical skills are **ball control** and **passing**, which have a direct impact on the socialisation aspects of the game, as well as **shooting**, given the high number of finishing options that occur during a match.

One of the sport's main features is **speed/accuracy**, as the restricted time and space available means that all the phases involved in the element of play

(awareness, decision-making and execution) must be performed in accordance with the speed of the game and must also be conducted with the necessary accuracy in order to be effective.

As far as **physical aspects** are concerned, futsal is a sport characterised by short- and medium-term bursts of intense effort. It is a game where the rules allow for rest periods for players, where the shortage of time and space create moments of maximum intensity, where strength and speed endurance work are crucial to maintaining a high **tempo**, and where appropriate physical preparation is essential if players are to adequately recover from the constant effort they have to put in.

Futsal involves **attacking situations** (when one has possession of the ball) and **defensive situations** (when one does not), and the switch from one to the other can probably be regarded as the most important aspect of the game. This is the part of the game in which the most dangerous situations and goal-scoring opportunities arise, resulting from a momentary lack of defensive organisation and the fact that rational occupation of space is often lacking as a result of the sudden change in the objective of play. These situations are known as **transitions** (attacking and defensive).

It is also worth pointing out that the size of the playing area enables the creation of potential scoring opportunities from set-piece situations in the opposition half (corners, kick-ins and free-kicks). It is fair to say, then, that set-pieces play an extremely important role in the game.

The main objective in defence is to **regain possession of the ball**. The position in which this takes place is also important. To this end, teams will defend a certain space with the aim of making life difficult for their opponents as soon as possession is regained. This can be achieved in a variety of ways: by applying pressure in the opposition half; by adopting an open three-quarter court defence; by adopting a half-court defence; or by setting up a closed defence. It goes without saying that winning the ball back in the opposition half can quickly lead to a scoring opportunity and that if possession is regained using a closed defence, there will be sufficient space in which to launch a counter-attack.

The main objective in attack is to **score a goal**. The best way to achieve this is to engage in an attacking transition, which is what makes the game so dynamic. Faced with organised and well positioned defences, teams have to build their attacks; this can either take an elaborate or more direct form.

Players can be categorised according to the positions they occupy on the court, namely the **goalkeeper, defender, wingers**, and **pivot**. Some players can adapt to various positions on the court (**all-round** players), while others are **specialists**: pivots, with specific attributes and aptitudes; players who are particularly adept in 1v1 situations; players with specific technical skills or outstanding physical abilities, etc. It is important to note that the types of player in a team or their precise characteristics will determine the way the team plays. If, for example, the team has a pivot, it can adopt a 3-1 system, while if it has players who are skilled in 1v1s, it can deploy a 2-2 formation in certain situations, etc.

Although futsal is a team sport, when it comes to analysing one's own team, the opposition, or indeed the way in which any team plays, one must always take into account the **individual actions** of players and the negative or positive impact that these can have on the game.

1.3 BASIC CONCEPTS

1.3.1 Game situations

Attacking transition

- **Opening up:** the initial offensive objective/ action once possession has been regained.
- **Counter-attack:** an attacking move where a team advances on the opposition goal quickly to create a scoring opportunity before all the opposition's players are in a position to defend.
- **Fast attack:** an attack launched at speed when the four opposition players are behind the ball but are not organised defensively, with the attacking team seeking to gain an advantage as a result.

Positional attacking play

- **Bringing the ball out under pressure:** a positional move against a high pressing defence, where the prime objective is to hold onto the ball and advance.
- **Positional attack:** an attacking play executed against a positional half-court defence or a closed defence and in which the team in possession attempts to build an attack, developing a move that will break down the opposing defence and ultimately create goalscoring opportunities.
- **Special situations – 5v4 attack:** a positional situation where a team attacks with a numerical advantage by having the goalkeeper or flying goalkeeper join an attack in the opposition half. The Laws of the Game allow for such game situations.
- **Special situations – 4v3 attack:** a specific positional situation brought about by the sending-off of an opposition player, with the opposition being a player down for two minutes, as per the Laws of the Game. This leads to 4v3 positional attacks, and even 5v3 in some situations, if the goalkeeper or flying goalkeeper joins the attack.

Attacking set-pieces

- **Corners:** set-pieces in which play is restarted with a corner kick. Taken in the final third of the court, these plays always provide options to finish a move.
- **Kick-ins:** set-pieces in which play is restarted with a kick from the touch line, at the exact point where the ball went out of play. Kick-ins close to the opposing goal offer genuine options to finish a move, while kick-ins in the middle of the court can be used for the same purpose, or in order to launch a positional attack. Kick-ins from further back, meanwhile, can be used to relieve pressure when the opposition is pressing high up the pitch or to launch a positional attack if the defence is sitting further back.
- **Free-kicks with a wall:** set-pieces in which play is restarted from the spot where an infringement was committed by the opposing team. Such free-kicks can provide a direct finishing option (direct free-kicks) as well as any number of indirect finishing options (from direct as well as indirect free-kicks), with goalscoring opportunities being more likely to arise when they are close to the goal. When such free-kicks are taken from further out, play is restarted with the intention of launching a positional move.
- **Free-kicks without a wall and kicks from the second penalty mark (10m):** when one side commits a sixth accumulated foul, the other team is awarded a direct shot on

goal without a wall. Depending on the place where the sixth foul was committed, free-kicks without a wall can be taken from the location of the foul or from the second penalty mark.

- **Penalties:** taken from the 6m penalty mark, penalties are awarded for offences committed inside the penalty area.
- **Kick-offs:** used to start play from the centre spot at the beginning of both halves (and periods of extra-time) or after a team has conceded a goal. Kick-offs can sometimes be used to launch rehearsed moves with the objective of scoring a goal.

Defensive transition

- **Balance and buying time in defence:** defensive actions undertaken at the moment that possession is lost with the objective of preventing the opposition from making an attacking transition.
- **Dropping back:** the action of moving back quickly, when possession is lost, to occupy a defensive position left vacant during the attack.

Positional defence

- **Pressing defence:** a defensive system whereby pressure is put on the opposition in their own half with the objective of regaining possession of the ball, and, at the very least, preventing the opposition from advancing.
- **Positional defence:** a half-court or a closed defence whose prime objective is to prevent the opposition from developing play and moving into the final third, where the defending team waits for the appropriate moment to regain possession or force the opposition into giving the ball away.
- **Special situations – 4v5 defence:** a defensive system adopted when facing a 5v4 attack.
- **Special situations – 3v4 defence:** a defensive system adopted when facing a 4v3 attack and brought about when one of the defending team's players has been sent off.

Defending set-pieces

- **Defending corners:** defence of corner kicks taken by the opposition.
- **Defending kick-ins:** defence of kick-ins taken by the opposition from the touch line.
- **Defending free-kicks with a wall:** defence of free-kicks from the spot where the offence was committed, provided that the defending team has not committed five previous fouls in the period in question (see below).
- **Defending free-kicks without a wall and kicks from the second penalty mark:** defence of free-kicks from the spot where an offence was committed or from the second penalty mark if the defending team has committed five previous fouls in the period in question. In this case, only the goalkeeper can defend the free-kick, although the other players must be alert to the possibility of the ball rebounding back into play.
- **Defending penalties:** defence of penalties awarded to the opposition and taken from the 6m penalty mark.

1.3.2 Styles of play

Understanding the main objectives of the game and of the different situations that can develop in a futsal match will help us to identify different styles of play adopted by teams to suit their own particular approach to the game:

- A style of play based on applying **pressure** and attempting to **regain possession of the ball** in the opposition's half of the court, with the defensive objective of preventing them from advancing, so that when the ball is won back, the team with the ball can seek to finish an attack directly and quickly. This style of play requires an aggressive approach when defending against the player in possession, with the defending team occupying space in a disciplined manner to maintain a high pressing defence. Teams that seek to regain possession in this way normally also like to retain it once they have done so.

- A style of play based on **containing** the opposition by adopting a **positional half-court defence**. In this style, the constant aim is to avoid being over-run or letting the opposition get close to goal. The main defensive objective here is to prevent goal-scoring situations and to hit on the **counter-attack** once possession has been regained or the attacking team loses the ball. The defenders position themselves in one half of the court and attempt to prevent the opposition from advancing into the final third.

- A style of play based on closing down space near the goal, using a **closed defence** that performs as a unit to avoid conceding goals, while attempting to take advantage of any space left unprotected by the attacking team by hitting them on the **counter-attack**. The opposition players are allowed to advance without any difficulty, with defensive work focused on preventing the opposition from finishing an attack.

- A style of play based on **developing a positional attack**, with considerable work going into building play using core individual and group concepts that enable possession to be retained and the team to advance. In this style, possession of the ball is key to all attacking and defensive play, the idea being that 'if we've got the ball, you can't attack'. Defensive balance is required, while the player on the ball must be supported at all times. This style is well suited to teams whose play is characterised by great movement off the ball.

- A style of play based on **direct attacks**, characterised by limited time spent on the build-up and a concerted effort to avoid losing the ball in dangerous situations. Teams adopting this style do not regard possession of the ball as crucial, and try to keep risks to a minimum when they lose it. As long as any loss of possession is 'controlled', there is nothing to worry about.

- A style of play based on the regular use of **5v4 in special attacking situations**. Some teams like this system so much that they do not only revert to it when at a disadvantage, but employ it throughout the game, to the extent that the 5v4 attack can be regarded as an actual playing style.

1.4 STAGES OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

As they grow and progress through the various stages of development, futsal players also go through distinct phases in terms of learning and acquiring the different components and skills involved in the game. These learning phases, which coincide with the different stages of growth and development, should always be tailored to the actual abilities of young players.

1.4.1 Beginners' phase

This is the first phase in a player's development, spanning **age group 1** (6-8 years old) and **age group 2** (9-10 years old), when players begin to familiarise themselves with and learn about the game.

Age group 1 (U7/U8/U9) **and** Age group 2 (U10/U11) **Objectives**

- To familiarise players with the concepts of attacking and defending and introduce them to both these aspects of the game in practice.
- To develop motor skills and coordination, and begin executing elementary technical and tactical elements.
- To ensure that coaches strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach when teaching tactical skills.
- To develop social skills as they relate to the game, while encouraging interest in associating with others.
- To adopt a tactical approach at the start of the coaching process, by developing perceptive/decision-making abilities as the basis of game play. An interest in socialising creates a need for perceptive/decision-making abilities.
- To practise real game play in 1v1, 2v2 and 3v3 situations, reducing space and using a ball suited to the size of the players.
- To help the players further develop an understanding of core tactical concepts through small-sized games. This is achieved by modifying game conditions and spatial dimensions, adapting exercises to suit the traits of the young players, and facilitating learning through various simplified game conditions.

.

1.4.2 Sport development phase

This second phase spans **age group 3** (11-12 years old) and **age group 4** (13-14 years old), which is when players begin to understand the game, its structure and its social aspects.

Age group 3 (U12/U13) **Objectives**

- To further develop the motor and coordination skills needed for futsal.
- To develop the player's understanding of the game of futsal. To increase their knowledge and understanding of attacking and defending, and to introduce them to the different phases of attack and defence.
- To develop an understanding of playing with and without the ball, both when attacking and defending.
- To develop the social aspects of the game, enabling players to acquire a reasoned understanding of the concepts of 'team-mate' and 'opponent'.

- To develop and improve perceptive and decision-making abilities as a basic foundation of the game. To increase emphasis on all-round work, while striking a balance with the need for more specific training.

- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games, varying the game conditions and spatial dimensions, and introducing teamwork and teamwork/opposition drills with significant perceptive and decision-making components.

Age group 4 (U14/U15)

Objectives

- To introduce and develop understanding of the internal logic of the game. To introduce players to the actual structure of game play and build knowledge of the different phases of attack and defence. To introduce players to attacking and defensive transitions.

- To understand the importance of playing with and without the ball, both in attack and defence, and to develop mobility and the ability to expand space in attack and constrict it in defence.

- To develop the social dimension of the game: social and motor skills and group play.

- To introduce players to team tactics and basic systems of play.

- To develop and hone perceptive and decision-making abilities.

- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games and simplified and/or modified drills, with increased transferral to real game play.

- To strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach to teaching tactics.

1.4.3 Skills acquisition phase

The skills acquisition phase corresponds to **age group 5** (15-16 years old), which is when players begin to apply the knowledge of the game that they have acquired and develop their social skills and their grasp of small-group and team tactics.

Age group 5 (U16/U17)

Objectives

- To familiarise players with game logic and apply it when developing tactical elements. To transfer all knowledge acquired to this point to real game play.

- To develop individual technical abilities.

- To further develop and hone small-group and team tactics.

- To develop and improve in social aspects of the game: social and motor skills, small-group technical/tactical options and group play.

- To develop attacking and defensive tactics.

- To improve attacking and defensive transitions.

- To broaden knowledge of different systems of play.

- To develop and hone perceptive and decision-making abilities.

- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games and through simplified and/or modified drills, with all knowledge acquired to this point being transferred to real game play, using competition as a learning tool.

- To ensure that there is a sensible balance between a specific and global approach to teaching tactics.

1.4.4 Proficiency phase

This is the fourth phase of player development, corresponding to **age group 6** (17-18 years old). During this phase, players continue to hone all of the skills and knowledge that they have learned during the preceding phases, learning to deal with complex tactical elements in a more competitive environment.

Age group 6 (U18/U19)

Objectives

- To analyse and apply game logic in developing tactical elements. To improve and hone knowledge of the structure of futsal: attack phases and defence phases.
- To transfer all knowledge acquired to this point to real game play. To execute and hone the technical/tactical and tactical elements specific to futsal.
- To hone team tactics. To develop and hone social skills as they relate the game: social and motor skills, small-group technical/tactical options and group play.
- To hone tactical attacking concepts and defensive concepts, as well as transitions in play. To develop a command of attacking and defensive systems.
- To develop and hone perceptive and decision-making abilities.
- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games with a ball and simplified and/or modified drills, with all knowledge being transferred to real game play and using competition as a learning tool.
- To strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach when teaching tactical skills.

1.4.5 Performance phase

From the age of 19 onwards (**age group 7, seniors**), players enter the performance phase, an extended period of time during which they are at the peak of their abilities and are continuing to learn at all times. The main objective during this stage is player performance and the transferral of everything they have learnt to actual competitive play.

Age group 7 (19 and over)

Objectives

- To continuously refine all aspects of the players' game, developing their already extensive knowledge of the structure and internal logic of futsal.
- To help players add technique to individual tactics and apply individual tactics to small-group and team tactics.
- To hone group aspects of the game as the basis for the development of team sport models. To broaden tactical acumen and improve the players' ability to adapt to and understand the demands of competitive play.
- To improve players' ability to manage all types of game situations, from a tactical, technical, physical and psychological point of view.
- To perfect selective attention skills, specific perceptive abilities and overall decision-making. To acquire 'experiences' that will improve general cognitive ability.
- To build on the progress made in training in general by transferring more and more knowledge to the situations found in real game play.

THEORY UNITS

2. TEAM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

2.1 THE ROLE OF THE COACH

Coaches are very important in all phases of training, not so much because of the position they hold, but because of the work they perform as instructors and facilitators, projecting the philosophy and the culture of the organisation to which they belong, which is then translated into a method for achieving tangible objectives.

The coach's role involves a number of key principles:

1. The coach cannot work in isolation. Their behaviour, attitude and work on and off the court must be consistent with the ideas embraced by the organisation for whom they work. The coach is an ambassador for the ideas and practices of the organisation. Conversely, the club or organisation needs to identify the type of people it wishes to employ to ensure there are no areas of conflict.

2. The coach must ALWAYS act as a teacher, starting from the player development phase and continuing right through to the professional phase, regardless of any external factors that may, on occasion, divert them from their core function. What changes over time is the teaching method, which is where differentiation, adaptation and individualisation come into play. The first objective – one that is far more important than the result – must be to improve every aspect of performance.

3. The coach must act as a catalyst for the players, whether they are youngsters or professionals. What matters is that the coach, in using a range of techniques adapted to suit the age category, stimulates their interest and acts as a facilitator for learning, teamwork, and unlocking talent and motivation.

4. The coach must be capable of harnessing, combining and managing individual interests, personal goals and, in the case of professional players, egos. They must channel these legitimate individual desires into a common objective and make the group understand that if its objectives and those of the organisation are achieved, then their individual goals will automatically be achieved as a consequence. The coach must know how to convey all of these principles to the players, and ensure that they commit them to memory so that they are always clear about their priorities. The same applies to coaches who have their own personal objectives and who may sometimes put those objectives ahead of the interests of the group or club.

5. The coach needs a plan. Things cannot be done on a whim or the spur of the moment. Everything must be planned. The coaching plan must reflect where we are (self-analysis and self-criticism), where we want to go (objectives) and how we are going to get there (strategy). The plan must always be in tune with the philosophy of the club or organisation and must always take the resources it possesses into account.

6. The coach is also a spokesperson and ambassador for the values of the organisation they represent. Leading by example means that the coach's words and actions must reflect those of the organisation. Given their public profile at professional level, and the fact that children see them as role models during the training phase, the coach must always represent what the club or organisation stands for. This is especially significant in the case of youth coaches, who work with children at ages when their personalities are still taking shape. There is also the fact that sport represents values that we must all aspire to.

7. The coach is also a manager, not just of human resources but of material and economic assets and of time. On many occasions, due to a lack of attention or care, essential equipment and facilities such as cones, goals, balls and dressing rooms are subjected to unnecessary wear and tear. While the view might be that damaged equipment can always be replaced, and it may not seem part of the coach's job to worry about such things, they always have a duty to act loyally and responsibly to protect the interests of the club or organisation that they represent.

The coach must also be effective at managing the time they devote to their work and their free time. It is very important that full use is made of the time allocated to training sessions, no matter how long they are. This can be achieved through proper planning and very strict control of any time lost between training drills and the time allocated for breaks.

As regards personal time management, this is, by its very nature, an individual matter, though there are times when it has an indirect effect on a coach's work, whether they are working with children or professionals. It is important that a coach organises the time they devote to their educational and professional duties with maximum efficiency. This requires careful preparation of training sessions in accordance with a coaching plan, and then, after each session, making notes on the effectiveness of the session, on any problems encountered with equipment or facilities, whether or not the planned objectives were achieved, the behaviour of the players, and any signs of potential problems. Once that has been done, the coach should switch off and recharge their batteries by spending time with family and friends. This last point is a very important one as it is vital to guard against becoming obsessive. When coaches start to think about nothing but their job and live for work and nothing else, they can fall into a dangerous psychological trap that distorts reality and their ability to see problems and find solutions. This can lead to obsessiveness, a psychological condition that can in turn prompt a descent into a seemingly bottomless pit. Reading a good book, watching a film or a play, playing sport or going for a walk with your children or friends are all good ways to counteract such tendencies.

To sum up, as has already been pointed out, the role of the coach is a very complex one, not just because of the amount and quality of the training they must themselves undertake on a continual basis, but also because of the tremendous responsibility they bear with regard to the cognitive, emotional, social and behavioural development of players. This is especially true when coaching children, though it also applies to professionals, who are operating in a very aggressive and competitive environment that can often be divorced from reality.

2.2 THE VARIOUS PHASES INVOLVED IN PLAYER TRAINING

Let us look, first of all, at the various phases involved in the training of young players. The age groups used here are a combination of UEFA age groups and those used in developmental psychology. Given that a number of scientific studies have shown how difficult it is to define these phases, we have opted for a simple and uniform approach.

Youth training phases:

- Age group 2 (U10/U11)
- Age group 3 (U12/U13)
- Age group 4 (U14/U15)
- Age group 5 (U16/U17)
- Age group 6 (U18/U19)

As we are looking to simplify and standardise phases in this manual, we can condense them even further, even if this does mean that they become less specific.

The following factors should be taken into consideration with regard to children's personalities at these ages:

Age group 2 (U10/U11) **Beginners' phase**

- **Psychological:** children at this age are very sociable. They live in an imaginary world that for them is absolutely real. Their abstract thinking skills are not fully developed and they are egocentric. They are great imitators and continually need to play.
- **Physical:** this is an ideal phase for learning coordination and balance, which are the foundations of technique. It involves developing and perfecting basic skills and abilities (turns, jumps, receiving the ball, kicking the ball, etc.). During this phase, children begin to develop basic physical attributes. As a result, strength work is non-existent as the child's own body weight will be enough to work on these abilities. As for speed, the sequencing of movements is especially important, as is endurance as a means of improving aerobic capacity. Finally, even if children do not appear to need it, flexibility must be developed through games, circuits and competitions - always with a ball.
- **Technical:** the aim in this phase is to develop basic motor skills and body positions; improve basic coordination skills; gain an awareness of the main core concepts of the sport; learn how to retain control of the ball; master the most important individual technical elements; and learn concepts such as laterality and positioning.
- **Tactical:** basic concepts such as the forward, defender, team-mate and opponent should be worked on. At this stage, children should also learn concepts relating to space and movement, develop their decision-making in real game situations in small spaces, use play as a learning resource and work on simple tactical concepts based on the various technical aspects.

Age group 3 (U12/U13) **and** Age group 4 (U14/U15) **Development phase**

- **Psychological:** infant behaviour gradually gives way to more adolescent behaviour. The feeling of belonging to a group is essential for children at this age, which is why teamwork should be programmed and encouraged. They have a need to prove to themselves and to show others what they can do.

- **Physical:** during this phase basic physical attributes are developed. Players' laterality is usually developed by this stage, and on reaching puberty they undergo physical and psychological changes that cause imbalances. At the beginning of this phase they improve their intramuscular and intermuscular coordination and become stronger. From the age of 13, strength work should focus on strength endurance and speed strength. As regards speed, they do improve in terms of speed of reaction and action but lose speed of execution and action due to body changes. Aerobic endurance improves up to these ages and then levels off. Improvement in all these areas should be sought as part of an integrated approach using games, game play, circuits and drills focusing on technique and tactics.

- **Technical:** the aim of technical training during this phase is to develop physical skills, improve coordination skills, hone the ability to retain control of the ball in game play, and improve individual and group technical elements in game play. At this stage, practising the technical skill in question is more important than speed of execution. The global method, which is based on real game play, can be alternated with specific exercises.

- **Tactical:** the objective in this phase is for players to move on from individual to group tactics, to work on the rational occupation of space, to be aware of their surroundings and make decisions. They will also work on elementary tactical elements and transitions. Some basic information on tactical formations can also be given at this stage, but without going into too much detail. Rigid tactics should not be imposed on children. They should be allowed to analyse, think and make their own decisions. There will be time later to help them with comments and observations.

Age group 5 (U16/U17)

Skills acquisition phase

- **Psychological:** at this stage, youngsters are about to leave their teenage years behind them and embark on adult life. Their physical appearance is very important to them. Dropout rates in sport are high at this age due to the higher demands and the level of dedication required.

- **Physical:** in this phase it is vital that training be restructured to reflect changes occurring in the previous phase. As a result, work focusing on coordination and balance becomes less and less important, while strength work reaches its peak. By increasing their strength, players improve their speed of movement, and once their body growth has stabilised, their speed of execution and action improves. Endurance is important, especially in developing lactic anaerobic capacity.

- **Technical:** at this stage, technical training is a means for working on other aspects such as physical (specific coordination skills) and tactical abilities. Although some technical sessions will focus on warming up, having fun or working on a new mechanical skill, at this stage technique should always be developed in real game play.

- **Tactical:** this is the ideal time to enhance players' tactical awareness, give them in-depth insight into the game's core concepts and instil in them a grasp of tactics that will help them to read game situations for themselves and improve their decision-making.

Age group 6 (U18/U19)

Proficiency phase

- **Psychological:** during this phase, players significantly develop their intellectual capacity. They are able to pay closer attention and for longer periods. Players in this age group can process more information and focus on what is important. They are able to reflect on things and be self-critical, and they understand the logic of the game and the coach's approach.

- **Physical:** players are introduced to sessions specifically designed to develop and perfect basic physical skills, the goal being to work on aerobic and anaerobic strength, speed of movement, action and reaction, speed strength, and strength endurance and flexibility.

- **Technical:** during this phase, specific ball skills are honed, and players are required to transfer all technical elements to real game situations. Use and coordination of the broadest range of technical elements and their effective transferral to real game situations. Perfecting models of execution of all core technical concepts with and without the ball. Practice and application

of technical and technical/tactical elements in increasingly complex and varied situations, while making logical choices when selecting each technical element. Improving decision making, speed of action and precision in execution of technical elements. Coaches should strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach when teaching technical skills. The acquisition of technical skills should be combined with the development of perceptive and decision-making abilities.

- **Tactical:** analysis and application of game logic in developing tactical elements. Players are expected to improve and hone their knowledge of the structure of futsal: attack phases and defence phases. Transferral of all knowledge acquired to this point to real game play. Executing and honing of the technical/tactical and tactical elements specific to futsal. Honing of group tactics. Development and honing of social skills as they relate the game: social and motor skills, small-group technical/tactical options and group play. Honing of tactical attacking concepts. Honing of tactical defensive concepts. Honing of transitions in play. Development of command of attacking and defensive systems. Development and honing of perceptive and decision-making abilities. Honing of core tactical concepts through small-sized games with a ball and simplified and/or modified drills, with all knowledge being transferred to real game play and using competition as a learning tool. Strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach when teaching tactical skills.

Guidelines for coaches in each phase

Age group 2 (U10/U11)

- Do not overwhelm children with theory-based explanations.
- Use lots of games in coaching sessions.
- If possible use one ball for each child or one between two.
- Organise drills in such a way that there is no 'dead time' between them.
- Set out rules that do not restrict the freedom and creativity of children.
- Choose a space that does not impose technical restrictions on children, one that facilitates the learning of technical/tactical elements.
- Use lots of 1v1, 2v2 and 3v3 games and drills.
- Encourage boys and girls to play together, as there is no obvious difference in their physical performance at this age.

Age group 3 and 4 (U12-U15)

- Work on technique with drills that simulate real game situations. There are times, however, when standard drills will need to be repeated so that players can familiarise themselves with the technical skill in question.
- Increase the difficulty of the drill according to the level of the group to ensure that it does not become an excuse for losing heart or motivation. When it is patent that players are having problems in acquiring what is being coached, drop back down a level and consolidate that level of learning before moving back up again.
- Work on individual tactics and move on to group tactics: 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3, 3v4, 4v4 and real game play. While it is still too early to emphasise key tactical aspects at this stage, it is advisable that players start to become familiar with them, as it will help them gain a full understanding in the next phase.
- Coaches should not focus on specific strength training at this stage and should use games instead.
- Specific endurance drills should not be undertaken. Body development is the best indicator of a child's readiness for such drills.
- Children should be encouraged to get into the habit of stretching. This will stand them in good stead in the future, when their muscles become fully developed.

Age group 5 (U16/U17)

- In this phase, planning should be based on the physiological age of the players, not on their actual age. Players in the same team may develop at different rates.
- Help players to work out the reasons behind different tactical situations for themselves.
- Work on every phase of the game: defence/transitions/positional attacks, while ensuring that players understand the concepts involved and know what they are doing, why they are doing it and when to do it. This will help create an intelligent player as opposed to a robot.
- Emphasis should also be placed at this stage on dead-ball strategies (corners, free-kicks, etc.) and on specific training for goalkeepers, whose role in the team is vitally important.

Age group 6 (U18/19)

- By the age of 18 players should have full command of motor skills. In other words, they must know how to do everything and understand every concept, though they will lack experience, which only comes with competitive play and over time.
- Work on core technical concepts involving the different parts of the body used to control or strike the ball, and use of both legs (laterality), in the context of increasingly complex game situations. There should be a very significant cognitive and decision-making component. More training drills with opposition.
- Command of attacking and defensive game systems. Development and honing of perceptive and decision-making abilities.
- Honing of core tactical concepts through small-sized games with a ball and simplified and/or modified drills, with all knowledge being transferred to real game play.

2.3 LEADERSHIP AND TEAM-BUILDING

A distinction should be made at this stage between youth coaches and elite performance coaches.

Youth coaches

They play an essential part in the educational development of the child. The style of leadership they adopt (authoritarian or participative) shapes the quality of the child's overall development, as does the way they organise sessions, their ability to foster team spirit, the way they treat youngsters, the evaluation criteria they use (result- or performance-based), the motivational techniques they employ, etc.

Their style of leadership will dictate whether they focus solely on the result or on performance. The latter can be defined as the effort devoted to improving on a personal level and helping to improve the team. This choice of leadership style will therefore have a major impact on all the aforementioned points.

In terms of leadership qualities, the minimum attributes expected of a youth coach are as follows:

- **Competence:** knowledge, coaching abilities (putting theory into practice) and attitude.
- **Self-knowledge:** ability to look within and make an honest appraisal of their own strengths and weaknesses so that they may consolidate the former and correct or conceal the latter.
- **Self-motivation:** it is absolutely essential that coaches approach every day and every session as if it were the first and put the same energy and passion into them. Enthusiasm is contagious. Children will copy their coach, in both the good and bad.
- **Empathy:** ability to put oneself in someone else's position and understand them, an attribute that makes communication more fluid and strengthens ties between people.
- **Power versus authority:** power comes with the job. However, the position in itself is not enough to earn the respect or esteem of others; it merely ensures their obedience. Wielding power for the sake of it is damaging in any area of life, but even more so when it comes to coaching, quite apart from the trauma it can cause children. In contrast, authority is earned from others. It is a form of recognition that is achieved by treating people in the right way, doing one's job properly, showing respect, helping children develop and behave in the right way, and exhibiting one's knowledge. It is spontaneous and comes from the bottom up. Another word for authority is 'credibility'.

While many other authors and specialists can obviously point to even more aspects and expand on them in much more depth, we believe that these are the basic, minimum requirements for anyone managing the overall development of a player/person at this level.

Elite performance coaches

When you think of elite performance or competition you might think of a world far removed from the one inhabited by youth coaches. However, we believe that the basis of success for each is exactly the same, namely coaching. What is different is the context or setting. At the elite level, a host of different factors can come into play that that can prevent the essential goal from being achieved, such as the importance of the result, pressure, time, the media spotlight, money, agents, spurious interests, etc.

At the elite level, the coach's main job is **team-building**. This involves the following three phases:

1. Forming a team
    - In creating a team, the coach is presented with a group of players with different physical, technical, tactical and psychological

characteristics. They also have different characters and interests, in many cases conflicting ones.

- The first test of a coach's leadership skills is their ability to make the players gel. The best way to achieve this is to create a vision that all the players can buy into, a goal that is challenging but achievable and which excites and motivates everyone. This will enable the coach to start creating a sense of belonging. As this feeling takes root, it will be beneficial to lay down some basic rules on respect within the group. Issues of a sporting nature can then be tackled, such as developing a style of play, designing a plan, drills, matches, etc.

2. Forming a team

- In this second phase, everyone in the group is playing the same game, with interpersonal relationships becoming more stable. However, there is still scope for improving inner motivation and drive.

- A coach's leadership is reflected in their communication skills, participative style and organisational abilities.

3. Forming an elite team

- At this point intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be taken to the next level. External factors that are a constant threat to the emotional equilibrium of the player and the stability of the team come into play.

- The coach must show leadership in responding to these factors.

Faced with a hostile and unstable environment, leaders must, as a minimum requirement, demonstrate the following attributes:

Self-control
In a stressful environment where pressure is extreme and time is at a premium, the coach must remain calm at all times and keep potentially destructive emotions under control. If the coach is relaxed, the players will be relaxed. If the coach projects a sense of security, players will feel secure. Yet, if the coach is nervous, players become edgy too, while aggressiveness on the part of the coach can lead to players becoming emotionally imbalanced and losing control on the court.

Motivational and relaxation skills
Coaches must, at all times, assess the level of stimulation among individual players and the team as a whole. If excitement is high among the players, steps should be taken to relax them and bring them back down to earth. Conversely, if the team or some of the players are overly relaxed, suitable motivational methods should be used to bring their level of stimulation back up to a competitive level.

Creating a positive atmosphere
Verbal, physical and psychological punishment of mistakes can create a climate of fear, leading to a lack of confidence and preventing talent from flourishing. Rather than being creative, players will focus on not making mistakes.

A climate of confidence can be created, in which mistakes can be utilised as a learning resource and looked at together so that individual players and the team as a whole can learn lessons and not make the same mistakes again. In this kind of environment talent and creativity can be allowed to flourish and this, in turn, leads to improvement.

Communication skills
The coach's level of knowledge is less important than their ability to get that knowledge across in a way that is relevant to the player in question or to a given set of internal and external circumstances.

Leading by example
A coach cannot say one thing and do another. The coach is under constant scrutiny by players, directors, the press and fans, etc., and must always show integrity, act fairly and be coherent in their actions. These are the qualities of a true leader.

2.4 PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING OF TRAINING

2.4.1 Concept

Planning is a theoretical concept. It comprises the description, organisation and design of each and every one of the events that take place in training, in a given phase in the career of an athlete. It also encompasses the control mechanisms that allow these events to be modified for the purpose of creating an increasingly specific training process, with the overall aim being to provide the recipient with the means to achieve the intended results in competition (Francisco Seirul·lo).

As Seirul·lo states, planning in sport does not focus solely on attaining and maintaining peak fitness, but on the impact it has on the athlete and their ongoing improvement within the group. Provided that planning is undertaken within these precise parameters, the attaining of peak fitness will manifest itself in improved competitive performance.

Planning does not depend so much on the subjective stance of the coach as on consideration of the athlete's need to reach peak fitness in line with their perception of competition (training session by training session, game by game).

One key difference between planning individual sports and team sports such as futsal is the number of competitive events the athlete takes part in over the course of a season (approximately 40-60 for the latter compared to 10-30 for the former). Team sports involve more competitive events per season and are also spread out over a period of time, which is why classic planning methods such as Matveyev's periodisation model, Verkhoshansky's peaking cycle, the varying accentuation of contents and means as divulged by Leibar and Neuhof, and Bondarchuk's highly specialised concentrated workloads are not entirely suited to futsal. When they are applied to the letter, poor performance or dips in form may be noted during competition. To address this issue, there is, therefore, an evident need to draw up some form of plan that is specific to futsal (Seirul·lo Vargas F., 1998: *Long-term Planning of Team Sports: A Course on Sports Training of Infants and Adolescents*. Escuela Canaria del Deporte. Dirección General de Deportes del Gobierno de Canarias).

There are two key concepts that underpin planning:

1. **Programming.** The aim of programming is to provide a structure for training content in the form of a strategic plan that allows the team to achieve its objectives. This content corresponds solely to training and can thus be called 'training programming'. Programming must include all work content that is sequenced in time, which is achieved through the periodisation of training.

2. **Periodisation** involves dividing the annual plan into shorter and more manageable training phases, which improves the way in which training is organised and allows coaches to manage programmes systematically (Bompa T.O., 2007).

Periodisation is always adapted to suit the type of sport and the competition schedule.

The division of the annual plan into smaller cycles makes the coach's job easier by giving them greater control of the training workload.

2.4.2 Objectives

The two major objectives of planning are:

1. To allow the coach to anticipate the future and thereby control situations as effectively as possible and bring order and a rational approach to their work as a result.

2. To help the coach shape the future of their project.

2.4.3 Characteristics

Planning should be unique, targeted, personalised and flexible.

1. **Unique.** All members of the coaching team (coaches, fitness coach, psychologist, doctor) and each person at every other level of the organisation must share the same vision and understanding to ensure that their respective methods and systems are oriented towards a single goal, with the objective of creating a truly unique and uniform plan.

2. **Targeted.** Planning must be based on a complete understanding of the sport of futsal and of its physical demands and technical, tactical, strategic and psychological dimensions (the Laws of the Game, the characteristics of the court, the talent levels of the players and their sporting objectives, etc.). It can thus be said (as per Barbero J. C., 2002) that futsal, at a physical level, is a sport that has:

    a. a temporal dimension;

    b. a spatial dimension;

    c. a speed dimension.

3. **Personalised.** Planning must be tailored to the specific needs of the player and the team whenever they are competing.

4. **Flexible.** Planning must be adapted in response to the changing situations encountered during the course of a season.

2.4.4 Variables

Planning is based on the following variables:

1. National and international competition schedules, which are becoming busier and ever more demanding.

2. The make-up of the squad, in terms of the homogeneity of the team (quality, experience, a football or futsal background, etc.), the number of players and their availability for training (attendance, training hours, amateur or semi-professional). Another variable that must be taken into account is the fact that futsal is more professionalised in some countries than others.

3. The logistical needs of the team (the basic resources needed for training and travel, etc. are not always available).

4. The availability of professionals in each field throughout the season.

5. Facilities.

6. Budget resources. These are a crucial variable, especially in the current climate, and have a decisive impact on planning.

2.4.5 Concepts and structure of planning

Planning should be structured according to the following concepts:

1. The setting of major goals and general objectives. It is important to create a set of objectives that relate to one's ultimate goals.

2. The setting of sub-goals or specific objectives.

3. The creation of an action plan. The aim is to specify what needs to be done and the resources needed to achieve one's objectives.

4. The defining of benchmark criteria for actions and objectives.

5. A visualisation of the plan's development. The coaching staff have to have a clear picture of how the plan will unfold (mental stimulation).

6. The execution of the plan. This involves overseeing, managing and developing human resources.

7. The evaluation of the results of the plan. This involves the following two benchmarks:

   - The evaluation of outcomes achieved as a result of the plan. These outcomes can be direct (sporting results) or indirect (outcomes that can be used to plan work and anticipate results, such as oxygen consumption levels during physical training).

   - Evaluation of the extent to which the programme goals are met.

8. The application of corrective measures. The aim here is to get the process back on track when needed.

2.4.6 Planning functions

In line with the approach taken by Seirul·lo, we can take the following actions:

1. Set out training objectives. Based on each phase of the personalised plan and corresponding to each specific phase in the player's career, these objectives can be adapted to each individual.

2. Describe the training components that are specific to the sport, based on its structural characteristics, and which are deemed to be the most effective means of achieving our objectives.

3. Organise, in a logical manner, the selected training components and content, in line with the principles and guidelines described in the supporting theories set out in the relevant literature.

4. Design the sequence and size of the training workload in accordance with the competition and its significance for the player, which should be conveyed through these components in the various phases of the training process.

5. Select the biological systems for which these workloads are intended, so that their development can be managed.

6. Propose the most suitable types of training for each of the pre-selected systems, as well as the period of time for which they will be applied and their results.

7. Set up valid control mechanisms for managing all of these processes and their effects on the athlete's various systems.

8. Utilise back-up technology for assessing the athlete during competition, thereby enabling analysis of its impact on them.

The training process should be reviewed on a continual basis so that it can be tailored more specifically to the player's personal needs.

2.4.7 Points to consider when planning for team sports: planning models

Traditional theories are based on biological laws and sports training, which make the maintenance of fitness conditional on a relatively short and localised period of the season. As a result, these theories are better suited to individual rather than team sports, with competitions that are more time-specific and are held at a certain stage of the season, with one main competition standing out above the rest. The current strategy involves concentrating work into relatively short periods of time, resulting in a more intense process of adaptation that is characterised by a change in the player's physiological equilibrium and stability, which causes performance levels to fall away (García Manso J. M., Navarro M. and Ruiz J. A., 1996). Consequently, on completion of concentrated training work there is a steep increase in functional parameters to levels higher than those achieved initially (Verkhoshansky, I. V., 1990). This approach to training is more appropriate for sports such as futsal.

We will now look at the main planning models:

Traditional planning models

These models remain valid despite their relative age, and continue to be used by a sizeable number of coaches. They include the following:

1. **The Matveyev model.** Regarded as the father of modern sports training programmes, L.P. Matveyev received great acclaim for his annual

planning model in the mid-1950s, expanding on and updating the knowledge and proposals of some of the sports training theorists who preceded him, such as Kotov, Gorinevsky, Grantyn, Ozolin and Letunov. One of the main features of this model is that it is structured around three clearly defined and differentiated training periods: preparation, competition and transition.

2. **Arosiev's pendulum approach.**

3. **Vorobiev's heavy loads model.** Along with Verkhoshansky, Vorobiev is regarded as one of the pioneers of the double periodisation model.

4. **Tschiene's heavy loads model.** The German theorist Peter Tschiene designed this planning model as a means of sustaining a high level of performance throughout the entire annual competition cycle. As well as taking the same name as the model referred to above, it also uses training workloads of a high volume and intensity all year around.

Contemporary planning models

The advances made in the models described in the previous section made a qualitative contribution to the emergence of contemporary models, in which tailored systems for specific sports feature prominently. This group of planning models includes:

1. **Verkhoshansky's block training model.** This method is not particularly relevant to futsal. The use of blocks lasting between four and five months is a clear indication that the timeframes are incompatible. Nevertheless, other aspects, such as a busy competition schedule, are to a certain degree compatible, so some aspects of the method may be applied to futsal. Verkhoshansky's block training model, which provides the basis for other contemporary models, has the following key features:

   - Strength work must be concentrated in the initial block (accumulation) in order to create the conditions for subsequent improvements in content relating to technical precision and speed attributes.
   - Specific loads must be intensified during training.
   - The use of non-specific loads may result in negative physiological changes.
   - The concentration of loads with a clear, specific orientation results in more profound changes.
   - Loads are organised according to two criteria: time and organisation.

2. **Bondarchuk's integration model.** Designed specifically for throwers, not footballers. As in preceding cases, the time factor means this is not an ideal model for the preparation of futsal teams.

3. **The cybernetic model** – the application of logical flow charts.

4. **Forteza de la Rosa's bells model.**

5. **Navarro's integrated microcycle model (1998).** This model concentrates training content and options into a short space of time.

6. **Navarro's ATR model (Issurin and Kaverin).** A number of studies show that football and futsal training that is based on blocks or periods of Accumulation, Transmutation and Realisation (ATR) results in an increase in performance (Pastor Pradillo J. L., 2007).

Based on the concept of 'concentrated loads', this model aims first of all to bring about a significant increase in specific training content, and secondly to link the content completed in one cycle with the content in the next. In other words, the attributes or content developed in one cycle provide the basis for the development of subsequent cycles, with objectives following on from each other.

Navarro states that instead of the standard mesocycle design, content is organised in accordance with the relationship between the various objectives and skills. In other words, the coach must ensure that an accumulative mesocycle with an extensive workload is carried out prior to the more specialised intensive workload of the transmutation mesocycle. This, in turn, should provide the basis for highly specialised competitive exercises and concentrated speed training in the realisation mesocycle.

The general idea behind the ATR model is founded on two key points (Navarro):

- The concentration of training loads on specific skills or specific training objectives.
- The consecutive development of certain skills and objectives in specialised training blocks or mesocycles.

Navarro modifies Verkhoshansky's concentrated load system and divides the macrocycle into three mesocycles, known as ATR, the characteristics of which are detailed in Table 1 below.

	ACCUMULATION	TRANSMUTATION	REALISATION
Definition	Improve the athlete's motor potential, which provides the basis for subsequent specific development. Focus on shortcomings at both an individual and group level.	Transform the potential of motor skills and techniques in specific preparations. Develop the skills the player needs in their specific position.	Use motor skills during specific competitive activity. Attain the best possible results in the preparation time available.
Skills or components to be developed	General strength (strength endurance, maximum strength). Basic speed (Factors: speed - frequency - intensity). Basic endurance (aerobic capacity).	Specific strength (explosive and elastic, explosive strength endurance). Specific speed. Acceleration ability through a succession of elements. Speed endurance.	Specific competition strength. Specific competition speed. Specific competition endurance.
Load dynamics	High volume/moderate intensity.	Peak volume/medium-high intensity.	Lower volume/high-maximum intensity.
Options used	Development from general to specific.	Development from specific to performance.	Performance.

7. **Bompa's peak fitness model.** The possibility of maintaining a high, if not maximum, level of sporting fitness for a long period of time is certainly very appealing in a sport with long competition periods, which means this model is deemed highly applicable to futsal.

8. **Seirul·lo's cognitive model.** This model is the most widely applicable in the preparation of professional futsal teams taking part in tournaments with long competition periods. It is based on three levels of team fitness:

    1. General level of fitness;
    2. High level of fitness;
    3. Peak fitness.

The aim is for the team to reach a high level of fitness throughout the season and to attain six to eight periods of peak fitness in that time. To achieve this, the load must be structured by means of microcycles that allow specific objectives to be reached immediately. It is for this reason that the structure is known as a microstructure. The microcycles are also dependent on each other.

In referring to a microcycle in the contemporary plan proposed by Seirul·lo (1987) for team sports, we will see that the approach to endurance differs from the one offered by traditional models.

According to Zeeb G. (1994): "The microcycle describes the planning and execution of training sessions for one week." Each microcycle, weekly or otherwise, is structured in accordance with supercompensation, which must coincide with the day of competition (generally Saturdays or Sundays). Let us look, for example, at a microcycle with competition taking place on a Sunday.

In a microcycle involving one competitive event the heaviest load will fall in Wednesday's training session, and on Sunday, which is matchday. Aerobic work is intended as an additional support for these intensive training sessions, and is sometimes oriented towards performance (aerobic power work) and on other occasions towards recovery from intensive loads (aerobic capacity). This type of capacity or power work should take place on the Monday and the Friday, with agility training involving very light loads taking place on the Saturday. Seirul·lo (1987) states that the start of the following microcycle should involve a minimum load to enable suitable recovery. Matches should be followed by recovery sessions scheduled on Mondays or Tuesdays, depending on the day on which the microcycle starts. If they are scheduled on the first day of the week, the emphasis should be on physical rather than psychological recovery. If, however, we choose Monday as the day off and earmark Tuesday for recovery exercises, we will perhaps allow fatigue-inducing toxins too much room in which to manoeuvre.

The concept changes in a microcycle involving two competitive events. A medium load level should be used the day after a competition to trigger a reaction that can be capitalised on in the next competitive event.

The characteristics of the Seirul·lo model (1987) are as follows:

- It takes into account the specific traits of the team sport competition system.
- It sets out to keep players at a high level of fitness throughout the season, and ensure that they achieve six to eight periods of peak fitness at key phases of the competition.
- Types of microcycles: pre-season structuring microcycles, competition-structuring microcycles and rest-structuring microcycles.
- The competition microcycle is divided into two parts: an initial load phase in the first few days of the week (from day 2 to 4), in which a momentary loss of fitness occurs, caused by fatigue resulting from a concentrated workload; and a secondary regeneration phase in the last few days of the week (from day 5 to 7), in which this momentary loss of fitness is supercompensated.
- During the pre-season, the aim is to adapt players to the aggressive and concentrated load processes characteristic of competition. In this phase, there is a heavy concentrated load of a specific type, after which a technical-tactical work phase known as 'technical-tactical volume' is proposed.
- During the pre-season, the design is the same as during the season itself, but planned according to days of the week: on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays the specific concentrated volume is worked on, while on Thursdays, Fridays and

Saturdays a technical-tactical work phase known as 'technical-tactical volume' is undertaken, with the aim of ensuring a high level of fitness on the day of the competitive event. Holding double and triple training sessions over a period of two weeks is not good for players, as all it does is tire them out, something they will pay for in the first five games of the league season. In Seirul·lo's opinion, the correct approach is to prepare solely and exclusively for the first game, and then for the second one and so on. Basing a pre-season on triple training sessions, with no ball work for two weeks, is not recommended. It does more harm than good.

2.4.8 Factors involved in planning: practical situations

Microcycles

1. **Pre-season microcycles.** Typically, players have a 5-6 week period in which to acquire the physical capabilities necessary to achieve maximum performance. The organisation of the load is not conditioned by competitive games, as a result of which accumulated supercompensation is normally used. Each team is subject to conditioning factors that will determine how the pre-season is designed (requirements or objectives, the previous season's results, a new coach, the fixture list, the number of new players, the board, the sponsor, friendlies, weather, the facilities available, etc.).

2. **Microcycles in the competition period.** During this period all team-sport microcycles are of the competition type. There are some specific points that need to be explained, however. For teams engaged in the learning process, for whom results should be considered of secondary importance, the various types of microcycles must be managed in order to achieve a balance. Typically, three to four microcycles with a relatively heavy load will be followed by a recovery microcycle to eliminate accumulated fatigue. With elite competition teams, microcycles must ensure that players are in good condition on the day of the game, which is not always easy to achieve. The key factor here is the correct proportion of load to rest between games. Generally speaking, in elite teams the microcycles in this period must be adapted to unforeseen circumstances occurring during the competition.

3. **Microcycles in the transition period.** Activities that are not competition-related are introduced here, with lighter loads in order to allow players to recover.

Mesocycles

A mesocycle can be defined as a series of microcycles with a similar training orientation and simultaneous preparation objectives. Mesocycles are, as a rule, complete training units that yield a notable increase in preparation.

The length of the mesocycle depends on three main factors:

1. The time needed to obtain an improvement in certain abilities.

2. The pace of the improvement.

3. The external conditions impacting on the design of the training schedule, such as the duration of the competitions, the duration of training camps, etc.

Macrocycles

A macrocycle is a unit comprising various periods and which describes training cycles lasting five to six weeks over three to four years. It is made up of several phases:

1. Acquisition, which corresponds with the **preparation period** (general and specific).

2. Stabilisation, which corresponds with the **competition period** (start, main section and end).

3. Temporary loss, which corresponds with the **transition period**.

Below, we will look briefly at the periods that make up a typical macrocycle:

1. **Preparation period.** The main objective here is to increase the athlete's functional capacity so that they are able to withstand heavy workloads at a high level of intensity, both in the last phase of this period and in the competition period. This is the period in which fitness is acquired. The less experienced the athlete, the greater the significance of this period, and the longer its duration. If, however, the athlete already has experience, they will achieve the required fitness level and be able to train at higher levels much sooner.

2. **Competition period.** The fundamental aim of this period is to maintain the level of sports fitness reached throughout the preparation period and to apply it in the pursuit of sporting objectives. Competitions must be viewed as follows: firstly, as the ultimate test of training plans; and, secondly, as a means of assessing players in situations that cannot be recreated in training scenarios. It is only in competitions that players face rival teams and experience levels of tension that can trigger inappropriate responses and emotions such as anger, frustration and fear.

3. **Transition period.** The objective of this period is to allow athletes sufficient rest following the effort expended in training and competitions throughout the preceding year or macrocycle, while allowing them to maintain a satisfactory level of training so that they can start the next macrocycle in good condition. Adaptation reserves are renewed in this period.

Preparation period

This period comprises two phases:

- **A general preparation phase.** This phase is characterised by a high volume of low-intensity work. Aerobic training plays a dominant part in most sports. The volume of work will gradually increase but the intensity is not very high. We can even break off at some stage and play a different sport to futsal, such as tennis or padel. As the volume of work is high, we need to take recovery periods into account. What is known as the 'wall' is often encountered in this phase, and it is important to go step by step at low intensities in order to build our core fitness. The more solid this core is, the better able players will be to achieve a higher and longer-lasting level of fitness. It is said that during such periods every competitive event or phase of high-intensity effort can resemble hitting that wall.

- **A special preparation phase.** We continue with aerobic work, while gradually approaching the type of specific endurance needed for futsal, and maintaining the level of development achieved in acquiring general physical capabilities. During this phase, training loads continue to grow and the intensity of the exercises also increases, which is reflected in the step-up in speed, pace and explosiveness. Aerobic training in part involves both anaerobic and aerobic components. As the competition event approaches, volumes are reduced while the intensity of training is increased.

Competition period

The competition period comprises various phases:

- **Competitive phase I:** this phase involves designing, identifying and fine-tuning everything we have done up to now with a view to achieving the main objective we have set. As the heading suggests, the aim here is to work in conditions that are very similar to competition.

- **Preventive phase:** the recovery of physical attributes.

- **Competitive phase II:** this is the final phase, in which the results of all the work that has been planned and developed with the athlete will be seen. The athlete should achieve sports fitness in this phase, which is characterised by far more specific training of a higher intensity but also of a lower volume.

- **Final competition phase:** the aim here is to maintain the level developed previously.

Example of an accumulation, transmutation and realisation (ATR) macrocycle for a futsal team

DATE	MICROCYCLE	MESOCYCLE	PERIOD
21-27 Aug	Load	Introduction	Pre-competition
28 Aug-03 Sep	Impact		
04-10 Sep	Load		
11-17 Sep	Recovery		
18-24 Sep	Impact	Development	Start of competition
25-30 Sep	Competition		
01-03 Oct	Load		
04-14 Oct	Load		
15-21 Oct	Activation		
22-28 Oct	Recovery	Control	Competition I
29 Oct-05 Nov	Activation	Accumulation	
06-12 Nov	Competition		
13-19 Nov	Competition		
20-26 Nov	Adjustment	Transmutation 1	
27-29 Nov	Load		
30 Nov -02 Dec	Load		
03-09 Dec	Competition	Transmutation 2	
10-17 Dec	Adjustment		
18-23 Dec	Load	Realisation	
24-31 Dec	Competition		
01-03 Jan	Competition		
04-07 Jan	Activation		
08-14 Jan	Recovery	Control	Recovery of physical attributes
15-27 Jan	Adjustment	Restoration	
28 Jan-4 Feb	Activation	Accumulation	Competition II
05-11 Feb	Load		
12-18 Feb	Competition	Transmutation	
19-25 Feb	Load		
26 Feb-01 Mar	Impact		
02-08 Mar	Competition		
09-15 Mar	Recovery	Realisation 1	
16-22 Mar	Activation		
23-29 Mar	Adjustment		
30 Mar-05 Apr	Load	Realisation 2	
06-12 Apr	Impact		
13-19 Apr	Recovery		
20-26 Apr	Adjustment	Control	End of competition
27 Apr-03 May	Competition	Maintenance activation	
04-09 May	Activation		
10-16 May	Competition		
17-23 May	Competition		
24-30 May	Activation		
31 May-06 Jun	Recovery		
07-13 Jun	Activation		
14-20 Jun	Recovery		
Jul			Transition

Completed futsal-specific physical and technical-tactical content

DATE/PERIOD	PHYSICAL CONTENT	TECHNICAL-TACTICAL CONTENT
21 Aug-17 Sep Pre-competition	• Long continuous running (140-160bpm). • Fast continuous running (150-170bpm). • Fartlek x time (15 secs-1 min). • Circuits (1 min work – 1 min recovery). • Training x repetitions. • Intervals (60%). • Sprints from a standing start. • Extensive and intensive jump drills.	LOTS OF DEFENSIVE WORK • In small spaces: introduction to half-court switching defence and 3v3 pressing (first line and cover, defence in two defensive lines). • Defending when outnumbered (2v1 and 3v2) + goalkeeper. • Dropping back: getting behind the ball and dropping back as a team behind the ball. • Defending 4v5 (diamond and 2-2). SMALL AMOUNT OF ATTACKING WORK • Set-pieces: kick-ins. • Playing the ball out under pressure, 3-1.
18 Sep-21 Oct Start of competition	• Variable long continuous running + fast continuous running. • Fartlek x time (5 secs-1 min) x distance (10-150 metres). • Circuits (1 min work – 1 min recovery and 30 secs work – 30 secs recovery). • Interval training (50-80 metres). • Training x repetitions (3 mins) and variable-pace running (300-600 metres). • Sprints from a standing start. • Extensive and intensive jump drills. • Continuous running around a circuit. • Strength work in the gym + its application on court with ball.	DEFENCE • 40x20m space: pressing (2-1-1 and 1-2-1) depending on the system for playing the ball out under pressure. • Half-court switching defence with pressing: pre-season examples ➔ When and where to change. Common mistakes. ATTACK • Counter-attacking as a 'perpetual movement' playing style. • The 3-1 attack with false pivot. • 5v4 numerical advantage on the wing. • Set-pieces: kick-ins and corners.
22 Oct-07 Jan Competition I	• Leg power, etc. • Circuits (30 secs work – 30 secs recovery with specific elements). • Interval training (max 80 metres with specific elements). • Training x repetitions (1-3 mins) and variable-pace running (150-300 metres). • Max. speed. • Reaction speed + 20 metres running. • Extensive and intensive jump drills. • Continuous running around a circuit with specific elements. • Strength training with specific loads for improving speed and jumping. • Strength work in the gym +its application on court with ball.	DEFENCE • Honing the pressing game ➔ details. • Honing of half-court switching defence with pressing. • Honing the 4v5 defence. ATTACK • Attack with pivot (3-1 system, concealing intentions). • 4-0 line attack. • Runs off the ball behind and in front of the opponent following defensive switch. • Different systems for playing the ball out under pressure (2-1-1 and 4-0, system rotations, etc.).

DATE/PERIOD	PHYSICAL CONTENT	TECHNICAL-TACTICAL CONTENT
08-27 Jan Recovery of physical attributes	• Long continuous running and continuous circuit training with stress on aerobic strength (especially aerobic capacity).	
28 Jan-19 Apr Competition II	Same work as in Competition I period but with some changes: • Leg power, etc. • Circuits (20 secs work – 40 secs recovery with specific elements). • Interval training (max. 50 metres with position-specific elements). • Training x repetitions (up to 1 min 30 secs). • Max. speed (40 metres). • Reaction speed (10 metres running). • Extensive and intensive jump drills. • Continuous running around a circuit with specific elements (20-30 secs). • Strength training with specific loads for improving speed and jumping. • Strength transmutation work in the gym + on court with ball.	DEFENCE • Honing and maintaining of defensive style. • Solving problems that crop up in competition. ATTACK • Changes to set-pieces (eliminate those that do not work and introduce new ones). • 5v4: new 2-1-2 attacking system with surprise numerical advantages on the wing.
20 Apr-20 Jun End of competition	• General endurance work with games applicable to futsal. • Activation exercises with short sprints. • Strength with loads.	• Continuation of technical-tactical work and fine-tuning ahead of play-offs, depending on the opposition. • Tactical switches designed to surprise the opposition.

THEORY UNITS

3. TEACHING METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

3.1 PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

The methodology of futsal training encompasses the organisation of the knowledge, methods and resources available for the teaching (the options) and the learning (the goal) of the sport of futsal through sports training.

We will base our approach on certain pedagogical principles or core concepts of the teaching/learning process.

3.1.1 Core concepts of the teaching/ learning process in futsal

Brief descriptions of some of the core concepts or principles are given below:

The objectives

These are the goals or aims to be achieved as a result of the learning process. They relate to both behaviour (realisation objectives) and results (result objectives). We will make these objectives an integral part of planning and try to ensure they are achievable by the players. Objectives should be made as explicit as possible.

- **Motor objectives:** these encompass all objectives relating to the learning of basic skills at both a general and specific level, as well as coordination and conditioning skills.
- **Cognitive objectives:** these refer to the perceptive and decision-making abilities of the players, both in terms of the development of the game and their ability to learn.
- **Socialisation objectives:** these relate to social and motor skills (socialisation through play, including group play) as well as emotional and social objectives, and their relation with the attitudinal values of the players and their behaviour and social discipline.
- **Conceptual objectives:** these are based on knowledge of the game and its structure, such as rules and regulations, game content, etc.

Content

The subject that is taught, the means for reaching the objectives. We define content in a schedule, providing specific knowledge as part of the players' learning process. The most common types of futsal-specific content can be categorised under the following generic headings: physical, technical (individual and group), tactical (individual and group) abilities; psychological training; and sporting and attitudinal values.

Resources

The structure, materials and logistics we have at our disposal in order to reach the objectives set out in our teaching/learning process. There are various types of resources: personal, material and financial.

Activities and options

Activities are proposed as a means of developing content. These are a series of tasks that are oriented towards the attainment of objectives through the active participation of players. In considering the options for the coaching of futsal from early age groups, we must refer to play as the first appropriate option for the psychomotor development of the child and the learning of basic skills. It is followed by generic group play, specific group play, small-sided games, modified games and competitive games (Sampedro Molinuevo, J., 1999).

Communication between the coach and the players

The contact or relations that occur between various people with a view to encouraging pedagogical interaction and the assimilation of what is being

taught. This interaction can take place between the players themselves or between the coach and the players (at individual or group level), in either verbal or visual form.

Teaching methods

This is the act of teaching as defined in the methodology and the means by which learning objectives are to be reached. It goes without saying that the choice of teaching methods and techniques will be influenced by the coach's philosophy and way of thinking, as well as by the characteristics of the players.

In terms of methodology, there are two clear approaches:

Traditional or directive methods
Direct control or instruction/task assignment/ reciprocal teaching/individualised-programmed teaching. Their main characteristics are as follows:

- Overly specific drills based on direct instruction, with clearly defined objectives.
- Activities are designed and supervised by the coach, with only minimal participation on the part of the players.
- A surfeit of specific scenarios with no opposition or with coach-led attack-and-defence sessions, restricting cognitive development.
- Evaluation is results-oriented and little attention is paid to the learning process.
- Transfer between drills and real game play is limited or difficult to effect.
- Insufficient time spent on motor engagement and cognitive processing.

The modern approach to programmed play or active methods
Guided discovery/search for solutions and problem-solving. Its main characteristics are as follows:

- The player is the central figure, not the coach, and the approach is based on active learning with more open objectives.
- Streamlined training, focusing on technique, tactics and social and motor skills at the same time.
- There is a balance between motor learning and the cognitive development of the child/player, helping to improve perception and decision-making skills.
- Drills that can be transferred to real game situations, mini versions of the game and social and motor drills.
- Contribution to the player's creativity and the process of discovery and exploration.
- Time is used effectively, with greater motor and cognitive engagement achieved in all drills.
- Motivation and positive reinforcement as a result of discovery and problem-solving.
- Proper attention paid to the effect of competition from the outset.
- Continuous evaluation with great attention paid to the training process.

Evaluation

In terms of futsal coaching, evaluation is a means of analysing, measuring and interpreting the aspects of the game and the players that are the object of learning (mainly objectives and content) and, in a broader sense, the planning, scheduling and context of training sessions, the coach themselves and their teaching and training methods. It also considers all aspects that have a direct or indirect impact on the teaching/learning process in futsal.

Evaluation is also part of training and teaching, in that it is a process-based and feedback-oriented activity that allows players to see the results of their training on a continual basis, which influences their motivation and makes it easier to correct their mistakes.

The following approaches and resources can be used in the evaluation process: **systematic observation**, which is the most realistic approach as it is carried out during competition or on a continual basis during training. It is supported by statistical analysis and the use of indicators and is also known as the qualitative

method; **evaluation tests**, which involve practical exercises designed specifically to obtain the most precise and objective data possible from the basic game components forming part of the teaching content. This type of evaluation is also known as the quantitative method.

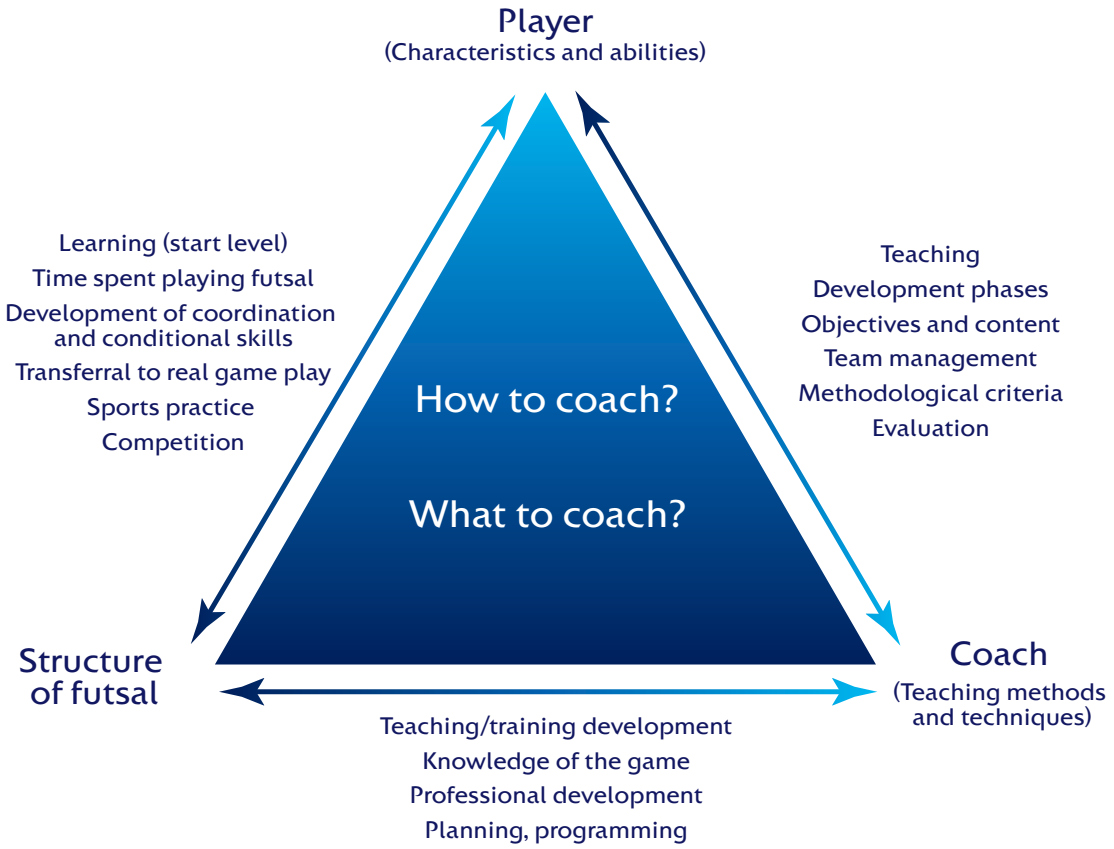
Professional development and sports management

The training of coaches and their career development represent a starting point. After all, you cannot teach what you do not know. Coaches must receive the right kind of training both in terms of sport and education. They must have a command of the content they are required to teach and have the ability to teach it.

Sports management is also essential in directing the player-learning process and enabling the coach to get to know the players well enough to be able to interact with them.

3.1.2 Aspects to bear in mind in the teaching/learning process

The player, the structure of futsal and the teaching method are the three cornerstones of the teaching/learning process and are interlinked.



3.2 THE TRAINING SESSION

The objectives we set can only be achieved with proper organisation. Without it, sessions and planning will be disorganised and useful time will be lost in the learning process, hampering the active involvement of the players in training and their commitment to it. Organisation is an important methodological resource in every area, and, as coaches, we must devote special attention to it.

3.2.1 Basic principles

The training session should be organised in a way that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- The session must be secondary in importance to the learning objectives.
- The various phases of the training session should be seen as means for introducing the objectives and content specific to that particular session and for coaching them in both a general and, where necessary, specific manner.
- The session should encourage a high level of participation and involvement.
- The session should encourage individualisation.
- The session should create a favourable environment for training and for the learning process.

The functions of organisation are to optimise, increase, improve, etc.

- Organisation helps to nurture a good relationship between the players themselves and between the players and the coach.
- Organisation of training sessions and of an annual training schedule helps us develop the teaching/learning process gradually.
- Organisation helps us prevent player inactivity and maximise learning time, focusing attention on the learning process.
- Organisation also allows us to create safer conditions in which training can take place.

The main factors to be taken into account in sessions are as follows:

- **Time:** the duration of the training session.
- **Space:** the space to be occupied during the session and the characteristics of the training facility and the resources available.
- **Group:** the characteristics of the group and the initial level of the individuals.
- **Equipment:** which equipment to use and how to use it properly.
- **The coach:** making use of the available methodological resources.

3.2.2 General characteristics of the session

The session is the basic unit of training, the link between the coach's planning and the practical and specific application of their teaching work through player activity. The work carried out in each session should enable players to achieve the objectives set for each level, based on the scheduled content.

A typical training session should have the following characteristics:

- The training session must be of a specified duration and tailored to the training phase for which it has been designed.
- The training session is the link between what is planned and what is implemented. In designing a session, therefore, we must continue to implement the teaching approaches adopted previously, while also being flexible enough to address any variations or changes that the players may reveal during the learning process.
- Very specific objectives must be set. We must reinforce the concepts that have been introduced to the players, while also being aware of the fact that they all need to be practised in order to be assimilated.
- The session and the drills carried out during each session contain a limitless source of information that allows many conclusions and assessments to be made. This, in turn, enables us to improve the activities and enhance their impact on learning.
- Content and objectives should be explained before the start of each session.
- As well as the drills that form part of the session, a series of other equally important aspects must be specified beforehand. These include the duration of the tasks, the required intensity, breaks and rest periods and the positioning of any equipment.
- During sessions the coach should check that drills are carried out at a sufficient rate of progress to ensure gradual assimilation of the specific drill content (from the simple to the complex). Likewise, the coach must also be able to transfer the content to real game play, especially at the end of the session.
- Evaluation and control parameters should be set on an internal level beforehand and passed on to the players.

3.2.3 Structure of the session

Training sessions must be structured on the basis of progressively increasing difficulty and intensity, with the necessary level of physical effort and attention gradually being increased. The training session can be divided into three basic sections:

1. **First part/warm-up phase**

First of all, it is important to organise all of the available material and methodological resources and begin by informing the players of the objectives we are hoping to reach in the session, the content and, in general, any other aspects (pedagogical, corrective, evaluational, task assignment, etc.).

The level of intensity at the start of the session should be low to moderate. This allows players to gradually ease their way in, the idea being to prevent them from becoming tired and their energy levels dropping, as that would make it impossible to conduct the main part of the session in optimal conditions. This first part of the session also allows us to focus the players' attention on the content we will be working on, helping them to concentrate and gradually exposing them to the training dynamic.

General body exercises working on the major muscle groups usually take place at the start of the session and seek to increase body temperature and get players warmed up, both physically and mentally.

Key points

- Initial information. Present the session objectives and content.
- Adapt to the environment and the available resources.
- Prepare the players for the main activity; introduce games.
- The duration of the session depends on the training phase the players have reached.
- General part (cardio-respiratory activity).
- Specific part (introduction to content).
- Vary the equipment and the environment according to the content.
- The first phase should not be tiring: low or moderate physical activity.
- Create a suitable working environment to encourage the players and ensure that they focus and show commitment.

2. **Main part/development phase**

In the main part of the session, content is worked on in a more specific manner, in line with the aforementioned principle of progressively increasing difficulty. This is the content we have planned with a view to achieving the objectives as per our schedule.

During this stage of the session, intensity levels are at their highest and approach maximum or competition level at some points. We must also ensure that the player maintains the required attention and concentration levels. At this stage, recovery times are essential in ensuring players maintain high intensity levels and stay physically fresh. The greater the intensity of the drills, the more important it is for players to recover properly.

The main part of the session is also where most of the basic learning concepts are developed. As a result, the coach must place special emphasis on correcting and demonstrating points, strictly implementing the teaching techniques and methodological resources that have been selected for the player-learning process.

Key points

- Duration depends on the age groups: 35-40 mins for 8-9, 10-11, 12-13 and 14-15-year-olds and approximately 60 mins for older youths and adults.
- Activities focused on objectives and content. These are presented at the start and are demonstrated in the main part with more specific technical/tactical explanations.
- They must be specific and tailored to the training schedule.
- Principle of progressively increasing difficulty, in terms of the teaching and learning of the content.
- Guidance should be offered on drinking water, recovery and personal care during sessions.
- Ensure players remain stimulated and motivated enough to achieve the objectives.
- Variety of drills during the session and in relation to other training sessions. Encourage learning and offer more solutions to players.
- Transfer the content worked on to real game play, and aim to end the session with a real game.

3. The final part/warm-down phase

The final part of the session comprises exercises that are designed to aid both heart-rate recovery and functional recovery. This part usually includes stretching, flexibility and elasticity exercises. Intensity levels should drop from low to very low, through to the completion of physical activity.

As in the warm-up, exercises carried out in the final part of the session must be consistent with the overall objectives and content for the session, although more often than not they do not involve the ball, which should always be used in warm-up drills.

Finally, we should stress the importance of this final part, both in terms of the session itself and as a means of preparing the ground for subsequent sessions. As well as being an opportunity for evaluating and assessing results, it also provides a chance to hear the personal views of the players themselves and find out how happy they are with the work they have done and how interesting they found the session. Similarly, a proper warm-down can help players physically recover in time for the next training session.

Key points

- Warm-downs should last between 10 and 15 minutes.
- The heart rate should be allowed to return gradually to its normal rest rate.
- This is also the ideal time for players to take on board the positive and negative reinforcement received during the session.
- It provides an opportunity for coach and players to analyse, evaluate and assess on an individual level.

3.2.4 Effective time management and organisation

Training time can vary a lot from one team to another. This can be due to a number of factors. As coaches we must prioritise the time available to us in order to make maximum use of it. Sensible allocation and organisation of time is essential, as is the embracing of a methodology that allows us to make optimal use of it in terms of learning performance.

Strategies for maximising use of available time

- Encourage punctuality and commitment to ensure that time spent travelling to the training facility and time spent in the dressing room does not eat into useful training time.
- Prepare the session and the content properly. This will save time when explaining the drills.
- Adopt an organised and disciplined approach to enable speedier and more direct communication between coaches and players.
- Improve procedures for setting up and putting away equipment in order to increase actual session time.
- Integrate drills into warm-ups as a means of introducing the content of the main part of the session.
- Avoid drills where players have to queue up, or those that can have a negative impact on their motor engagement.
- Integrated comprehensive training enables us to review content learned in previous sessions on a continual basis.

3.3 DESIGNING DRILLS

3.3.1 Execution factors

The following execution factors (or organisation factors) should be taken into account when selecting the activities to include in training-session drills and exercises:

- Type of drill: predominantly physical, technical, tactical, integrated, cognitive, real game play, simplified, modified, conditional, etc.
- Content and the coach's instructions.
- The equipment and resources required.
- Intensity of the exercise and workload volume.
- Motor engagement time during the exercise.
- Recovery time, both during the exercise itself and between drills.
- Number of players taking part in the drill.
- Game or action space.
- Evaluation of performance or results.
- Level of competence or opposition in the drills: no opposition, passive opposition, active opposition, conditional opposition, etc.

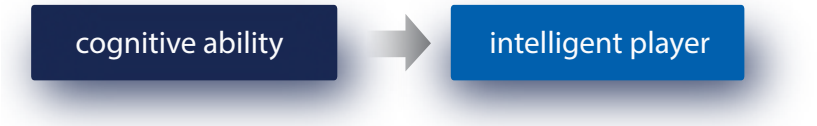
3.3.2 The cognitive model

In other sections of this manual we have looked at the need to coach on the basis of real game play; in other words, to analyse the game and the game-action process as a means of identifying the best way to coach. We are now going to see how we can apply the cognitive model in designing training drills and activities.

The methodology of our cognitive training model is based on active teaching methods (guided discovery and problem-solving), and is specifically supported by situations arising in individualised/programmed teaching (directive method), to be used mainly at beginner level and as a corrective tool.

Our aim in proposing these particular teaching techniques is to ensure that **training sessions place special emphasis on the player's perceptive, cognitive and decision-making processes**, without overlooking execution, while also allowing the player the opportunity to be creative. In short, the aim in using these techniques is to adapt the methodology to the internal logic of the game of futsal, in the quest for efficient play. We cannot treat the execution of functional components and the core concepts of the game as being separate to the perceptive and decision-making factors that play such a decisive role in our sport.

To recap, we will base our teaching on a methodological model founded on **decision-making**, as this will help us to nurture players with great potential in terms of their tactical ability and understanding of the game, which are decisive factors in their ability to make effective and correct decisions as quickly as possible and come up with solutions during an actual game.



This training model is based on the following:

- Breaking down tactical elements, provided that they can be transferred to real game play, with attention being focused on the content selected.
- Changing the training variables when designing drills: space, time, number of players, role changes, determining factors of the game, etc.
- Honing the learning process by changing game situations.
- Identifying drills in which players continually take decisions and which involve competitive situations.
- Predominance of active methods as teaching techniques.
- The principle of progressively increasing difficulty: as soon as an exercise is mastered players should move on to a more difficult one.
- Creating situations that pose a higher level of difficulty than that found in actual competition.
- Training based on real game play, with exercises that allow players to find solutions.
- General training based on the cognitive model. From the general to the specific.
- Work based on tactical components, with the development of individual, small-group and team tactics.
- Analysis of game situations with players.

3.3.3 Variables in designing drills

When designing drills we have access to many tools or variables that we can use to condition play and player decision-making, all with the aim of adapting the drill as much as possible to the content we want to work on and to the objective of the training activity.

SPACE	**DIFFERENT PLAYING AREAS:** 40mx20m: futsal court. / 28mx20m: basketball court length, futsal court width. / 28mx15m: basketball court. / 20mx20m: half futsal court. / 18mx9m: volleyball court. / Variable small-sized areas: 5mx5m, 6mx6m, 10mx10m, etc. / Circular passing drills and/or possession drills. **AREAS OF PLAY WITH SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS:** no encroaching allowed. / Can only be entered by 'jokers'. / Limited number of attackers or defenders in certain areas of play. / Limit on time spent in certain areas of play. / Shooting on goal restricted to specific areas. **AREAS OF PLAY WITH MANDATORY ACTIONS:** any number of touches in attacking half, only two touches in defensive half. / Players receiving ball in the area must shoot. / Minimum number of passes played before crossing halfway line. / Compulsory one-touch play in a specific area. / Right half of court, shoot with right foot; left half, shoot with left. **CONDITIONAL INVASION GAMES:** specified number of players in each space. / Create numerical advantage in specific areas: Passer can invade space, any player can invade space. / Invasion of pivot area following pass. / Invasion of attacking area by means of dribbling.
TIME	**RESTRICTION OF ACTION TIMES:** retaining possession for a period of time. / Principles of the game based on time periods: keep the ball for 10 seconds, advance into the opposition half in five seconds, shoot on goal in ten seconds. / Creation of temporary periods of numerical advantage or disadvantage. / Temporary changes designed to cause imbalances: every 20 seconds one player comes off and another goes on, first in one team and then the other, and so on. **CHANGES IN GAME PERIODS:** mini games. / Mini games with specified time periods in which one side has a numerical advantage or disadvantage. **PUNISHMENT OR REWARD FOR ACTION TIMES:** requirement to shoot on goal within a certain time period or lose possession. / No limit on touches after 20 seconds of possession, before that time only two touches allowed. / If advancing over halfway line within five seconds, one opposition player cannot defend in that half. **SIMULATED GAME PLAY:** real game play with time limit on shooting, simulating game situations or results.

GOALS	**NUMBER OF GOALS:** games with four goals (two per team). / Games with varying numbers of goals; with the last set of goals in which a goal is scored being removed. / Games in which there is one more set of goals than there are goalkeepers. / Only one goal for the two teams, who change between attack and defence. **SIZE OF GOALS:** oversized goals. / Small goals with no goalkeepers. / Games with standard goals and with small sets of goals on the touch lines. **POSITION OF GOALS AND SHOOTING:** teams can attack either of the two goals after fulfilling a specific objective or condition: in crossing the halfway line or playing five passes within five seconds of regaining possession, etc. / Goals on the basketball baseline and facing the wrong way. / Goals on the basketball baseline and with no nets, allowing goals to be scored from either side. / A number of goals positioned asymmetrically on the court. /Two goals positioned correctly. After scoring in one goal, teams can switch direction and attack the other goal. **NO GOALS:** goals or points can be scored in a variety of different ways: by reaching the goal line with the ball under control; by moving into the area with the ball under control; by moving into and out of the centre circle, with the ball under control, etc.
REGULATIONS	**CHANGES IN THE SCORING SYSTEM:** goals scored with the weaker foot count double. / Goals scored from a one-touch move count double. / The team conceding a goal loses a player (for a specific period of time) / Goals scored from set-pieces count double. / Penalty or kick from the second penalty mark after scoring a goal. / Goal at the far post counts double. **SPECIAL RULES FOR REWARDING GOOD PLAY AND PENALISING BAD PLAY:** introduce 'ball returned to backcourt' rule. / Shooting at both goals following a specific number of passes or specific amount of time in possession. / Changes to rules on substitutions (players can come on and off anywhere; the player coming on can do so five seconds earlier; expand the area for making rapid substitutions that are designed to catch the opposition off guard and create a numerical advantage in attack). / Team shooting on goal gets a corner. / Play always restarted from the goal line. / Compulsory number of passes before shooting, or limit to the number of passes before shooting. / Limit to the number of individual touches allowed before shooting: only one or two touches allowed before taking a shot. **CONDITIONS ON REFEREEING OR REGULATIONS IN REAL GAME PLAY:** one team starts with five fouls. / The referee does not blow for every kick-in, allowing the game to continue instead.
TECHNICAL VARIATIONS	**CHANGES TO THE BALL:** use balls of differing size or composition or that have a different bounce: tennis ball, reaction ball, rugby ball, outdoor football, etc. / Play with more than one ball (e.g. two). / Play with two balls for shooting and one for possession (only the team in possession may shoot with either of them). / Play with three balls (one on the floor and two to be held by one player in each team who cannot take part in the game). / Tricks (of increasing difficulty) with different types of balls. / Juggling of balloons, tennis balls (goalkeeper). **NUMBER OF TOUCHES OR PASSES:** two-touch play, no limit on touches, one touch, etc. / Touch and a half: one or two touches – if receiving the ball from a player who takes two touches, a player can only take one, and if receiving ball from a player who takes one touch, a player can take two. / Teams can only advance beyond the halfway line with a pass played along the ground. / Specific number of touches or passes before shooting. **CONDITIONS ON NUMBER OF TOUCHES AND CONTROLLING BALL:** restrict the number of individual touches and allow one more for shooting. / Only two touches allowed, not one. / Two touches allowed if using both feet. / Lofted passes cannot be allowed to bounce. / Lofted passes must be left to bounce. **CONDITIONS ON THE CONTACT AREA:** rewards for controlling with the sole of the foot. / Specify the part of foot for controlling ball / Specify the part of foot for shooting (i.e. toe, instep, inside of foot, etc.).
TACTICAL VARIATIONS	**VARIATIONS IN PLAYER NUMBERS:** equal numbers, numerical advantage or disadvantage, in specific areas or for certain time periods. / Certain players or specific positions allowed to move/not allowed to move. / Lots of players in a small area. / Fewer players in a large area. / Training of technical/tactical group options. / Player losing the ball must run to the opposing team's goal and touch a post or be substituted with another player on the opposition goal line. **SPECIFIC ROLES AND CONDITIONS ON ROLE VARIATION:** use of 'jokers' in attack: no restrictions, restriction on number of touches, can only shoot, can only pass, etc. / Use of 'jokers' in defence: in possession drills, in demarcated areas in real game play (e.g.: a defensive 'joker' in the centre circle). / Imposing of conditions on defensive activity: active, semi-active, passive, players restricted in their running or basic positioning. / Goalkeeper cannot come out of the area. **CONDITIONS ON INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP-BASED TACTICS:** placing of restrictions on the type of defending or defensive system allowed. / Goals can only be scored after link play with pivot. Goals can only be scored after a one-two, after a 'parallel move' (where an attacker moves into the space behind the defender marking the player in possession in order to receive a pass) or after a diagonal pass. / Goals can only be scored from inside the area. / Goals can only be scored from outside the area. / All the players must touch the ball before shooting on goal. / Feint every time before receiving the ball. **CONDITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS ON DECISION-MAKING:** for example, reduction of passing options: no passing back to the player from whom the ball is received; each team contains players wearing different-coloured bibs (no passing to team-mates wearing bibs of the same colour).

3.4 COACHING STYLES

There are many different directive and active teaching methods for achieving performance when coaching players in a team sport such as futsal, which, as we have established, is a sport involving perception and decision-making. As we have seen, there are differences between the traditional directive model and dynamic, active and participatory teaching models, which contribute to the creation of intelligent players. One of our objectives must be to ensure that the recipients of the coaching, namely the players, are central figures who share responsibility and are directly involved in shaping the activity.

We will now look at the differences between traditional directive methods and dynamic active methods.

3.4.1 Directive methods

3.4.1.1 Direct control or instruction

The player plays a passive role in the teaching/learning process. The coach provides direct information on the solution of a motor problem, specifying how it should be executed. This type of approach is suitable for working on the repetition of skills, though we should look to gradually dispense with it when seeking to create automatic processes based on decision-making.

As we have seen, in this coaching method it is the coach who decides on the drill and explains how it should be performed, overseeing and controlling the drill as it takes place and even delivering feedback on how it is carried out. Players merely do what the coach tells them.

3.4.1.2 Task assignment

Different drills are assigned to players depending on the roles we want them to perform. The coach explains how they want the drills to be carried out, setting out guidelines for their execution, while the players take responsibility for what they do in order to solve the problems they come up against.

The coach provides feedback based on player decision-making, their ability to select tasks and their perceptiveness. Players are more involved than when the coach exerts direct control, choosing the drills they believe suitable, based on the coach's proposals.

3.4.1.3 Reciprocal teaching

The coach specifies the drills and explains how they should be performed. The work is carried out in pairs, with one team-mate being responsible for observing the drill and providing information for the team-mate who is performing it, making corrections if necessary. The players then swap roles.

The coach oversees the drills, while players guide and correct each other. The coach determines feedback in conjunction with the two players (the one performing the drill and the one watching). Players participate by performing the drill, correcting their team-mates and overseeing the drill, though they are not involved in choosing it.

3.4.1.4 Reproduction of models

The player tries to reproduce a specific motor-activity model, with specific movements or exercises. The model is provided by the coach, and can be performed by them or another player. Alternatively, the model can be provided by someone external to the session (e.g. a famous player seen performing the particular movement that is being worked on).

3.4.1.5 Individualised/programmed teaching

Individualised teaching is a methodological option that can be applied in those situations when a player has to work at a different level to other team-mates, so that their specific level of learning can be brought into line with their starter skills, the pace of learning, the objectives, individual programmes and workloads best suited to their physical condition, etc. The aim in using this method is to provide a different teaching approach as a means of promoting learning rather than separating players from each other. We need to make a clear distinction between individualised teaching and one-on-one teaching, where the coach teaches a single player.

This type of method must be applied in heterogeneous groups in youth categories, since within a single group of children there can often be variations in terms of motor development, early cognitive abilities and the pace of learning. This is why we must occasionally resort to this method in order to increase the pace at which certain players learn, although individualised coaching is some way removed from the latest pedagogical approaches that are applied to the coaching of team sports, which promote methods designed to encourage socialisation.

Listed below are the main characteristics and procedural structure of individualised teaching, in terms of organising, executing and evaluating a training session:

- The coach focuses on the individual characteristics of the player and their learning process, setting specific objectives tailored to their individual needs.
- Although it eliminates certain socialising aspects of game play, it does enable greater individual monitoring and control of each player.
- It can be a useful pedagogical tool for encouraging the development of certain motor-related, physical and technical aspects.
- It can be used for corrective purposes in order to allow a certain player to reach the same general level of learning as the rest of the group with regard to a specific content area.
- It may also help us develop the specific attributes of an individual player.
- It is sometimes difficult to provide the requisite level of attention to individuals during group work. Therefore, carrying out specific activities at specific times can help individuals to progress in certain aspects of the learning process.
- The coach draws up individualised learning programmes and objectives, devising workload cards for each player.
- The players are responsible in the main for the execution of each individualised drill.
- The coach is an observer during the drill and attempts to manage the session, while paying special attention to individual correction.
- The coach makes their final evaluation at the end of the session, focusing on whether the individual objectives set at the start of the session have been achieved.
- Attention and concentration levels must be worked on continuously.
- The player's creative capability is lessened to an extent as they are required to focus directly on the programme set out on their workload cards.

The objectives to be achieved as a result of individualised teaching are as follows:

- To tailor the teaching process to the motor, cognitive and technical skills of each player and to their pace of learning.
- To establish a more individualised relationship with each player by setting more specific objectives designed to bring about more effective learning.
- To compensate for delays in learning caused by situations such as a delay in the start of the learning process, a period of inactivity caused by injuries, lower learning capabilities, etc.
- To create a more effective learning process with regard to specific content where there are individual differences in initial skill levels or in the pace of learning.
- To develop the player's sense of independence.

- To personalise some aspects of the learning process. To introduce the concept of specialisation.
- To inject greater control into the performance of each player.

3.4.2 Active methods

3.4.2.1 Guided discovery

Guided discovery is an active and inductive teaching method in which the player is guided in their learning, on the basis of their own creativity and their ability to explore. The player is not offered answers or solutions; rather they are fed information, whenever they need it, to facilitate their search for solutions. The player acts with a great deal of flexibility, albeit aided in this by the conditions created by the teacher.

Listed below are the main characteristics and procedural structure of guided discovery in terms of organising, executing and evaluating a session:

- The starting point is the player's creativity and ability to explore. The inner motivation of the player is essential in encouraging their active participation.
- It involves the player playing an active, cognitive role in their own learning, in contrast to traditional teaching, which mechanises learning through repetitions.
- It is the player who discovers the proposals put forward by the coach as part of the trial-and-error process, which is given priority over the final result and evaluated as part of the learning process.
- There is a specific relationship between coach and player, with the former posing problems for the latter to resolve and intervening to offer suggestions and guidance without providing the answer.
- Solutions can be found verbally or through the motor action itself.
- The coach positively reinforces the correct solutions provided by the player.
- The player is evaluated from a global viewpoint that takes into account every aspect, focusing as much as possible on the manner in which the player may behave, and not only on the motor aspect of the proposed drill.
- The player must be able to gradually envisage the elements that will lead them to the result hoped for, which will motivate them to achieve it.
- This type of model encourages the development of decision-making during motor actions.
- The coach can point players in the right direction with guidelines and clues that provide a basis for their searches, while questions are also essential.
- Subsequent evaluation continues with the training process, conducted mainly through the interrogative method. As a result, this

evaluation is more closely linked to the learning process than its result.

- In guided discovery it is vital that the player's desire to search for solutions is aroused. To achieve this, the coach must create a range of situations that can stimulate player initiative.
- Cognitive, emotional/social, psychological, tactical and technical aspects are developed at the same time as motor skills.
- When using this method the coach must set tasks that are within reach of the players (problems that have solutions) and must, as a result, vary their degree of difficulty in line with the perceptive, cognitive and analytical abilities of the players.
- Analysis of what is learned and subsequent feedback is both clearer and easier to understand and will have more of an influence on the development of the player.

The objectives to be achieved as a result of guided discovery are as follows:

- To involve the player in the teaching/learning process and also in the evaluation process, with the aim of bringing about meaningful learning.
- To develop the cognitive abilities of the player, encouraging their overall development and ability to create and explore.
- To improve the player's ability to react when faced with game situations and new stimuli.
- To encourage the player to use their initiative and to motivate them to learn.
- To adapt teaching content to the learning skills of the players, while better gauging the amount of practice time they need (wait for them to find the answer).
- To include a training component in the evaluation phase, thereby expanding the process.
- To improve the ability of players to analyse and evaluate themselves, allowing them to develop a more reasoned understanding of the game.
- To create a special relationship between coach and player, improving communication and encouraging the flow of information between them, as it is the player who seeks out the information.

3.4.2.2 Problem-solving

Problem-solving is an active teaching method that involves the player on a cognitive level, places greater emphasis on the game and the player in the teaching/learning process and encourages decision-making and greater tactical awareness. Players must find the solution, or possible solutions, to the problem or task set by the coach by themselves.

Listed below are the main characteristics and the procedural structure of problem-solving in terms of organising, executing and evaluating a session:

- The coach poses problems or sets tasks based on game situations in order to trigger cognitive dissonance. In other words, there is more than one solution to the problem posed.
- Having structured the training content, the coach then presents the problems.
- The problem must be posed correctly and understood by the players, who must be given the opportunity to ask questions in order to gain a clear understanding of the task.
- The aim here is not to repeat known answers for developing motor patterns. The solution must not be known beforehand.
- The coach allows players to solve the problem themselves, while reinforcing effective solutions at all times. The players take control of their learning, acting independently of the coach.
- Drills must be suggestive from a cognitive viewpoint and pose both an individual and group challenge, while focusing on the players' baseline skills at all times.
- The problems should stimulate the creativity and imagination of the athlete, helping them to develop their decision-making and reasoned understanding of the game.

- The existence of cognitive dissonance means there are various solutions for the different game situations put forward, thereby increasing the number of experiences that the players are exposed to and enhancing their psychomotor skills.

- Similarly, the increase in cognitive operations brings about increased experimentation by the players in their technical and tactical responses, and contributes to their understanding of the connection between these two aspects.

- This method is a level above that of guided discovery and forces players to think even more. Problem-solving provides more possible solutions than guided discovery, without the coach prompting players.

- There may be times when learning takes place more slowly than with traditional systems, as players will only be able to work as fast as their abilities allow them. Learning will be more meaningful, however.

- The coach must be vigilant and ensure that players interpret situations correctly from a technical point of view. Failure to do so will hamper learning at later stages.

- In setting tasks to be resolved through problem-solving, the coach must make a point of gradually increasing the level of difficulty of the exercises: from simple exercises to complex ones.

- This method is extremely motivating for players, and encourages them to be curious and inquisitive and to experiment and look at things from a different angle.

- Learning resulting from the problem-solving method is much easier to transfer to real game play.

- Subsequent self-evaluation forms part of the teaching/learning process.

- The coach makes an evaluation only when the player has completed their search for a solution, and does not rule out any of the responses proposed by the player.

The objectives to be achieved as a result of problem-solving are as follows:

- To involve players fully in the teaching/learning process and thereby bring about meaningful learning.

- To develop players' cognitive abilities and decision-making when faced with varied and changing game situations.

- To increase the number of cognitive experiences and motor, technical and tactical responses, at the same time as improving players' ability to react when faced with game situations and new stimuli.

- To stimulate players' initiative and ability to investigate and explore, encouraging them to learn.

- To adapt the learning process to players' abilities.

- To enhance players' ability to analyse and understand the internal logic of the game.

PRACTICAL UNITS

1. TECHNICAL/TACTICAL

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO TACTICS

1.1.1 General concept of tactics

Many different definitions of the concept of tactics have been used over the years by various authors. We wish to propose one that reflects the reality of the game as closely as possible.

Hence, we can define tactics as comprising the individual, small-group and team actions performed by players in a team, who, in a coordinated and organised manner, make rational use of the resources at their disposal. In doing so, they need to take into account the role and nature of the opposition, including any shortcomings or errors in their game, and they must attempt to come up with practical and efficient solutions to problems they encounter in the game, both in defence and attack, with the aim of overcoming or counteracting their opponents.

Within the general concept of tactics, we can differentiate between individual tactics (involving a single player), small-group tactics (involving two or more players) and team tactics (involving the whole team).

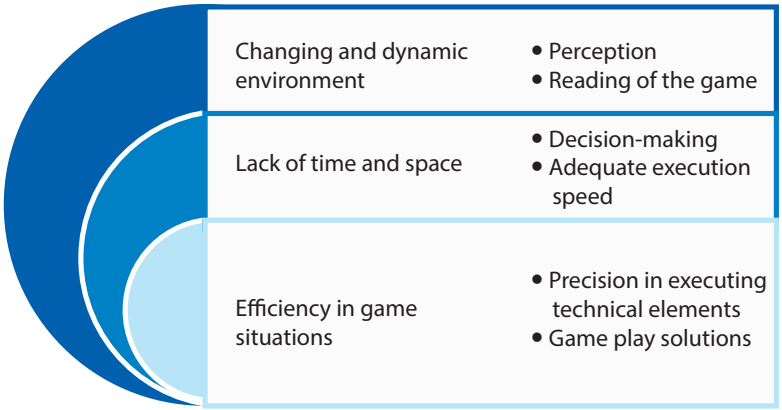
1.1.2 The classification of futsal as a team sport

Sports can be categorised from different perspectives. However, narrowing the focus, it is clear that the key defining feature of futsal is that it is **a team sport involving teamwork and opposition** (or cooperation-opposition), as opposition players continually interrelate and team-mates cooperate in all game situations.

This correlation between teamwork and opposition applies both when a team has possession of the ball and when it does not, during any phase of attacking or defensive play.

Futsal is therefore a team sport based on teamwork and opposition, involving social and motor skills. It is highly tactical and is characterised by the need for the players to constantly adapt to changing and dynamic surroundings, where time and space are limited and where the players must analyse situations, make decisions and execute skills in order to deliver effective solutions during game play.

The objective of the entire motor ability process is to achieve efficiency during game play (the ability to overcome specific problems). Game play is tactical: game situations must be recognised and analysed and decisions taken to overcome the problems that arise. These decisions must be supported by the appropriate motor skills and executed correctly to deliver an effective outcome.



1.1.3 Analysis and training

To train appropriately for the game situations encountered in futsal, we must analyse exactly what happens and how it happens during the game. To do this, we must consider the four following points:

1. **What type of sport is futsal?**
   The first thing to consider is the type of sport that we are dealing with. We have already established that futsal is a team sport involving teamwork and opposition. Therefore, during training, we must always take into account that the game involves team-mates and opponents all playing in the same game space at the same time. All of the players are thus interconnected within this shared space, in which two sets of goals represent the ultimate objective of the game.

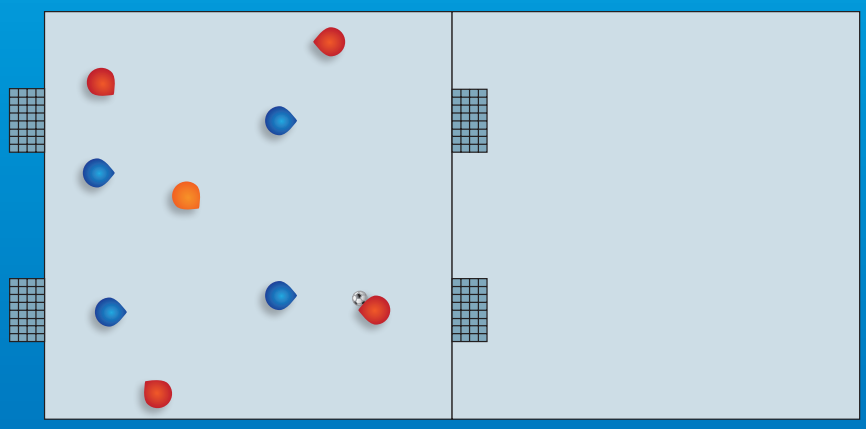
2. **What happens during the game?**
   There are two types of situations that arise in the game, which are determined by possession of the ball – the object with which the game is played: attack (when the team is in possession), and defence (when the opposing team is in possession).

3. **Motor skills used in the game:** we have to know which tools are used to play the game. These tools are conditional factors, i.e. physical ability and coordination, which encompass all of the movements that the players make, which we refer to as technical elements.

4. **Training method:** we can see that situations occur during the game in which players need to move (conditional or physical factors) and execute elements with the ball (technical factors) to achieve the objectives (tactical factors). All of these elements are interlinked. Therefore, they cannot be treated in isolation during training; rather a global approach must be developed that encompasses all of the factors that influence the game.

4v4 plus an attacking 'joker'

1



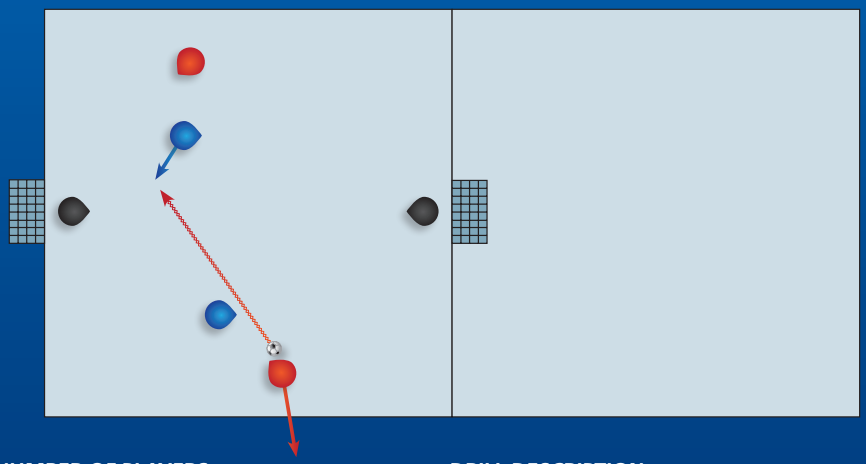
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
9.

KEY CONCEPTS
Attacking: passing/control. Shooting accuracy. Switching play. Positioning of the body for shooting.
Defensive: closing down passing angles. Pressing the ball. Blocking shots. Showing the attacker onto their weaker foot.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
4v4 plus an attacking 'joker', without goalkeepers, within a 20x20m area (half-court). Each team is assigned a position on the court and has to defend two small-sized goals (in order to improve accuracy) positioned on the same side of the playing area. Teams can score in either of the opposition's goals.
By placing an attacking 'joker' in the game and creating an imbalance in numbers, the team in possession always has a numerical advantage, which means that the core concept of the pass is even more important in this drill.

2v2 plus goalkeepers

2



NUMBER OF PLAYERS
6 (4 + 2 goalkeepers).

KEY CONCEPTS
Attacking: control/running with the ball. Final pass. Shooting. Decision-making when shooting.
Defensive: closing down passing angles. Tackling. Interceptions. Stealing the ball. Controlling the defensive/attacking space. Dropping back. Decision-making by the goalkeeper. Defending at a numerical disadvantage.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
2v2 plus goalkeepers, within a 20x20m area (half-court). Each team is assigned a position on the court and has to defend a goal. Teams are allowed to score in the opposition's goal. The game starts with a 2v2 set-up. When a team loses possession, the last attacking player to touch the ball must exit the playing area (from any part of the court). This player can re-enter the playing area when their team recovers possession (coming back on from any side of the court).
Hence, in this drill there will always be a 2v1 plus goalkeepers.

1.2 TACTICS IN FUTSAL

1.2.1 The objectives of tactics

Tactics are determined by the objectives in the game, which differ for each of the two key processes: attack and defence. A team's objectives are to score in the opposition goal and prevent the opposition from scoring in their goal. The objectives of each process are explained in more detail below:

The objectives of attack

The key objectives for the attack are founded on what can be termed as 'the general principles of attacking play' (Bayer, 1986). These are as follows:

1. **To retain possession of the ball:** the first key objective after winning possession must be to keep the ball.

2. **To advance with the ball towards the opposition goal (advance in play):** the next logical objective is to advance with the ball towards the opposition goal and get into a position to finish on goal.

3. **To finish on goal/score a goal:** the ultimate objective of the attacking move is to create goal-scoring opportunities and convert them into goals.

The objectives of defence

As with attacking play, the three objectives in terms of defending are based on 'the general principles of defensive play' (Bayer, 1986). These are as follows:

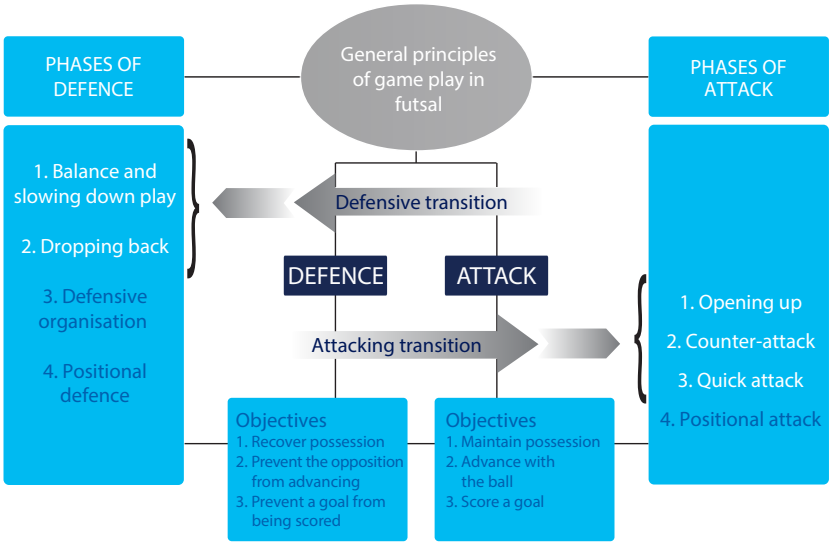
1. **To regain possession of the ball:** the key objective when defending is to regain possession of the ball and switch the team's play from defence to attack.

   Once a team has recovered possession, all defensive objectives have been met (when you regain the ball you are implicitly preventing your rival from advancing and scoring) and it can switch the focus to attacking objectives. The recovery of the ball should therefore be considered the fundamental goal of the defensive process.

2. **To prevent the opposition from advancing or to control their advance:** the objective is to make it difficult for the opposition to advance. If possession cannot be retrieved, then the minimum aim should be to keep the opposition away from the danger zone.

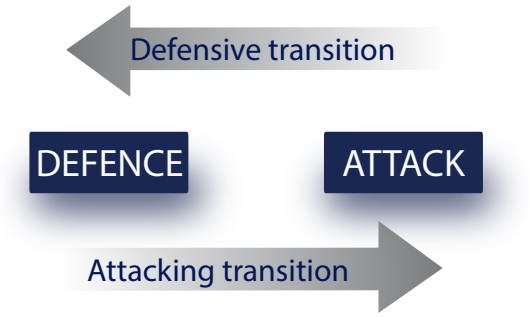
3. **To prevent the opposition from finishing on goal/scoring or to restrict their opportunities to do so:** the defence's ultimate objective is to prevent the opposition team from scoring a goal.

1.2.2 Tactical structure of futsal



1.2.3 The game cycle

In this section, we are going to look at the game cycle, which is based on the periods of attack and defence – in other words, those occasions when a team has possession and those when it does not. The switch from attack to defence is known as the defensive transition, while the switch from defence to attack is referred to as the attacking transition. These are cyclical processes that are repeated throughout a match.



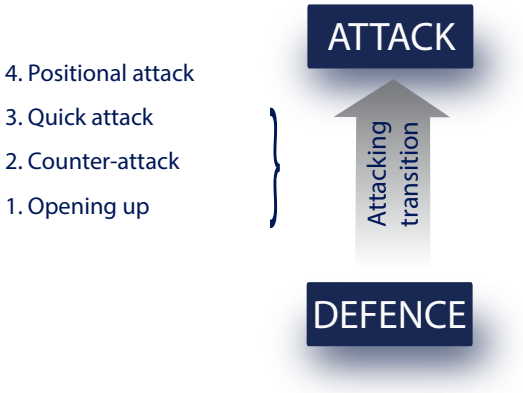
In a positional attack, a team attacks against an already organised defence, whereas an attacking transition occurs when a team regains the ball and tries to attack before the opposition's defence is in position and has reorganised itself, attempting to benefit from a numerical or positional advantage in order to create an opportunity to finish on goal quickly.

In a positional defence, all of the defenders are organised and in position, whereas in a defensive transition, all defensive actions and intentions are executed when the ball has been lost and up to the point when the defending team has reorganised itself or managed to prevent or break up the opposition's attacking transition.

1.2.4 Attacking tactics

Attacking tactics are the individual or group elements that a team's players execute when in possession of the ball, attempting to overcome the opposition and achieve the objectives of the attack. In other words, they are the actions that are executed within the different phases of attack (opening up, counter-attack, quick attack and positional attack).

Phases of attack



Opening up: an action in which the intention is to attack and which involves a swift regrouping after possession is regained, preventing the opposition defence from dropping back and regaining their shape, and thereby creating a numerical advantage or the defensive disorganisation that is required to facilitate a successful counter-attack. Failing this, possession of the ball can be maintained with a view to launching a quick attack or a positional attack.

Counter-attack: an attacking play where a team advances on the opposition's goal quickly before the opposition team's four outfield players are in position to defend. The opposition does not have all of their players positioned behind the ball, and therefore the defensive unit is not complete.

Quick attack: the last phase of the attacking transition, in which the intention is still to attack quickly. Even though the four players from the defending team are behind the ball, they are not set up to defend, therefore the attacking team can gain a positional advantage before their opponents manage to organise themselves defensively.

Positional attack: an attacking play executed against a defence which is already in position and organised and which cannot be caught off guard by a counter-attack or quick attack. Generally, this approach involves organising and coordinating the players in an attacking play, with the aim of occupying areas of the court effectively, controlling possession of the ball and finishing on goal.

1.2.4.1 Building an organised attack

There are three stages involved in building an organised attack, namely opening up, build-up play and finishing on goal.

Opening up: the transition from defence to attack, which involves the execution of initial tactical elements and movements, and is performed as soon as the team regains possession of the ball.

Build-up: coordinated movement with and without the ball that is designed to break up the opposition's defensive system and help the team develop play. Possession of the ball and defensive balance are maintained at all times, with the aim of creating advantageous situations and numerical or positional advantages which allow play to move forward into the final phase of the attack so that an opportunity to finish on goal may be created.

Finishing on goal: the final phase, in which the attacking team attempts to make the most of the advantageous situations that have been created via opening up and building up play, and, ultimately, to finish the move with a shot on goal.

As a rule, the following points need to be taken into account:

- The build-up phase is not always needed.
- An attack can be built using a pre-planned and systematic strategy, with the team following clear instructions. Alternatively, players can be given the creative freedom to make attacking decisions on the basis of their reading of the game.
- The structured use of tactical systems and rotations is common, and provides a positional and dynamic base from which to create play, as well as solutions for finishing on goal.
- In all of these phases, it is important to take into account the amount of space available.
- Attacking movement must be balanced with the idea of maintaining organised and logical positions at all times.

To build an attack correctly, various attacking models are needed, as is the use of several different technical/tactical options:

- In order to help one's team maintain possession it is essential to provide constant **support** to the player on the ball.
- **Off-the-ball movement** is a basic core concept, in which players without possession move off the ball in order to lose their marker and find space so that they can try and break down the opposition's defensive system.
- Making territorial advances in the game largely relies on concepts such as the **depth** and **width** of players' positioning on the court.
- **Movement off the ball** combined with a good reading of the game can create passing opportunities for the player in possession. Similarly, one of the objectives of movement off the ball is to **create/occupy/use space**.
- Another fundamental aspect is the ability to **keep the ball moving**.
- The intelligent and accurate use of the **basic core technical concepts**.
- **To draw out opposition defenders** it is important that players adopt a **body position** that demonstrates a tactical intent to push forward.

1.2.4.2 Positional attack

The positional attack is the formation and manoeuvre utilised by a team that has to attack an organised defence.

We have already seen that there are three stages in building an attack, but a positional attack involves only two of these: 'the build-up' and 'finishing on goal'.

For this reason, in a positional attack, it becomes necessary to deploy one of several specific systems. The most common systems are **3-1, 4-0 and 2-2, as well as specific systems for situations when outnumbering the opposition (5v4 and 4v3)**.

1.2.4.3 Attacking transition

The attacking transition is the switch from defence to attack when possession has been recovered, and corresponds to three phases: opening up, the counter-attack and the quick attack.

As an offensive process, the attacking transition also involves three phases of development (opening-up, build-up and finishing on goal). It is important to note that attacks take place in a short space of time and do not always involve all three phases.

1.2.5 Defensive tactics

Defensive tactics are those individual or group elements that players execute when their team is not in possession, to counteract or have some kind of impact on their opponents for the purpose of achieving their defensive objectives.

As can be seen in the transition from attack to defence, when possession has been lost, there are four phases, the first two of which form the defensive transition.

Phases of defence

Balance: the position that the attacking players need to adopt at the moment when possession is lost in order to give their team balance and prevent the opposition from catching them out via an attacking transition.

Buying time: an action performed by any player on an opponent who is in possession, with the aim of slowing the game down to allow the defence to drop back and reorganise.

Dropping back: the action of getting back as quickly as possible, either behind the ball or into an area which allows the team to regroup and organise their defence.

Defensive organisation: the actions executed and positions adopted by players after dropping back, so that they can organise and form a balanced and disciplined positional defence, in line with a specific tactical plan and shape.

Positional defence: the defensive actions that are executed once all defenders are organised and in position.

1.2.5.1 Building an organised defence

Building an organised defence is primarily based on the last two phases: defensive organisation and positional defence (also known as the 'systemised defence'). Other fundamental aspects to consider when building the defence are an awareness of the game space and how high up the court the defensive lines are. The defending team can adopt a high pressing defence, a three-quarter court open defence or a closed defence (behind the halfway line).

The types of defence available are:

- **Man-marking system:** a type of defence in which each player has an individual responsibility, and is required to mark one of the opposition's players.
- **Zonal system:** a type of defence in which the players are not responsible for marking a specific player, but rather for defending a designated area or zone of the court. Each defender is responsible for dealing with the opposing players who move into their zone.
- **Mixed system:** a type of defence which combines individual and zonal systems, where one or more players man-mark and the rest defend a zone.
- **Switching defence:** a man-marking system in which defenders switch opponents in line with the guidelines/instructions given to the group as a whole. A switching defence can combine positive aspects from both man-marking and zonal systems, but it relies on core defensive technical/tactical concepts being properly implemented and on sound decision-making.

1.2.5.2 Positional defence

Positional defence comprises two phases: defensive organisation and the positional defence itself. Defensive organisation is the initial phase of a positional defence. It is short in duration but requires a high level of communication between defenders, together with quick and accurate analysis of the game situation. This is necessary in regaining defensive organisation, picking up opposition players, covering, and controlling the space.

The **positional defence** consists of all of the defensive movements that a team performs as soon as it organises itself defensively. The nature of these movements depends on the type of defence and defensive systems employed in each area of the court. Defensive systems are based on types of defence and core defensive technical/tactical concepts, the cornerstone of which is **marking** and the **direction in which the defence is facing**, depending on the position of the ball and the goal being defended.

The most common systems are **1-2-2, 1-1-2-1, and 1-1-3, as well as specific systems for situations when outnumbered by the opposition (4v5 and 3v4).**

1.2.5.3 Defensive transition

As we have already seen, the defensive transition begins at the moment in which possession is lost and includes several different phases: balance, buying time and dropping back, prior to which the whole team gets behind the ball and begins to prepare itself for positional defending. The aim of the defensive transition is to prevent the opposition from launching a quick attack before the team has organised itself defensively, and to recover the positions vacated on pushing forward in an organised fashion so that the positional defence can be implemented.

1.2.6 The role of tactics in futsal

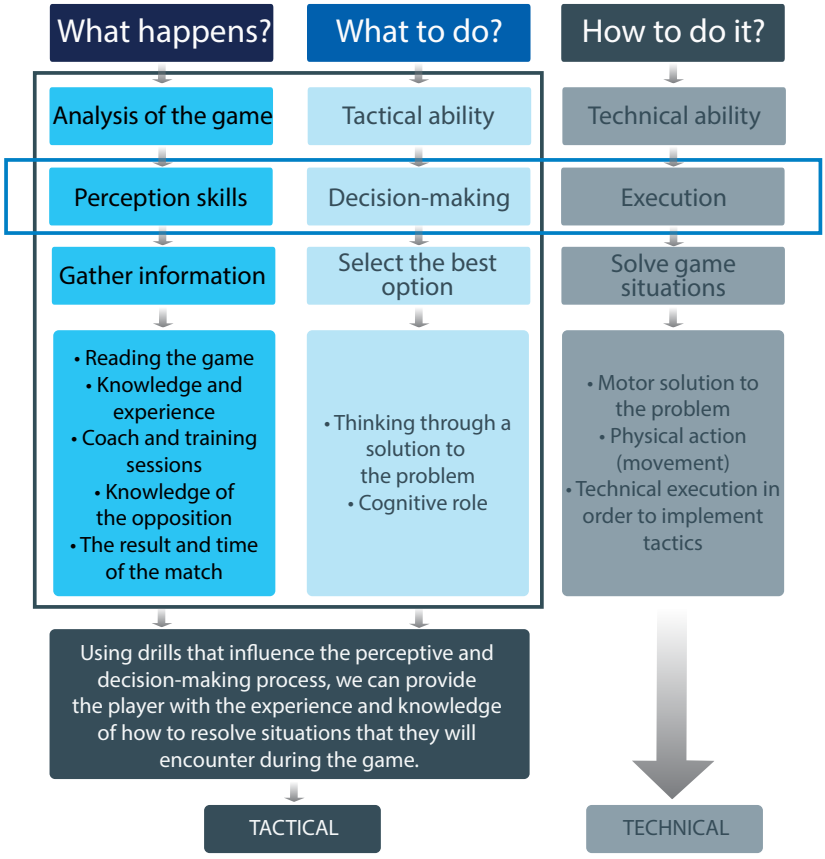
Mahlo's diagram (1969) sets out the various elements that are involved in tactics and how they can be broken down into three processes: perception, decision-making and execution.

1. **Perception:** this is the starting point and the basis for any tactical element, particularly in a sport, such as futsal, that is founded on teamwork and opposition, which makes the decision-making process more complicated.

2. **Decision-making:** once we have evaluated the situation, we need to make the correct decision and provide the most effective solution in light of the game situation and the speed of the game. Making correct decisions means selecting the most effective solution to the problems encountered during a game. The first two processes involve a tactical component – we make correct decisions by accurately analysing the game, based on accurate and comprehensive information.

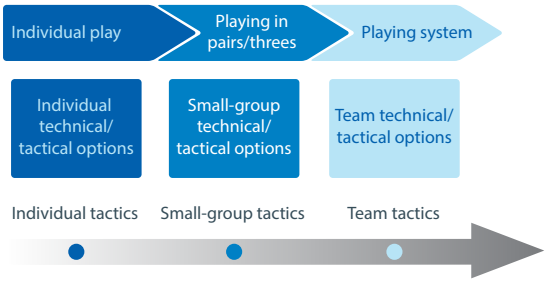
3. **Execution:** the process of putting the intended motor actions into practice. Conditional factors can have an impact on this process, as can the individual's technical ability to find a motor solution to the problem.

The role of tactics



1.2.7 Categorising tactics

Tactics can be categorised according to the number of players involved:



By **individual tactics** we mean a group of actions made by a player based on their knowledge and on core individual tactical concepts. **Small-group tactics** broaden the framework of knowledge and tactical concepts through the relationship between the player and the ball, their team-mates and opponents. **Team tactics** refer to the model of play adopted by all of the players together (i.e. the whole team).

1.2.8 Methods for coaching tactics

1.2.8.1 Cognitive model and decision-making

Should we organise an instructed, targeted training session, in which execution drills are repeated over and over and the player performs actions without thinking or analysing the game?

Or

Is a global and integrated training session more suitable? This type of session continues to focus on execution but adapts to the internal logic of the game and shapes the player's perceptive and decision-making mechanisms, enhancing their creativity.

Do we want a player with a narrow range of tactical experiences who needs to seek direction from the bench in order to make decisions?

Or

Do we want a player who is capable of reading the game and making decisions on the basis of what they have learned?

Traditional model: work on the separate training components (technical, tactical, physical preparation, etc).

Cognitive model: training which combines and integrates all of the components based on real game play.

Because

- Futsal is a game which presents tactical challenges.
- Actions are never executed without a specific motive relating to the game and its internal logic.
- Futsal requires cognitive ability, rather than the ability to simply reproduce actions mechanically.

Why

- To adapt to the variations and open-ended situations that the game presents.
- To develop players who are capable of focusing their attention on what is relevant in every action.
- To enable players to think their actions through during the game and improve their creative skills.

Methodological recommendations

- Teaching techniques should predominantly comprise active methods. By not providing the players with all of the information, they are left to discover it for themselves.
- Training should be based on real game play, with drills that allow for open solutions.
- Players should be encouraged to think for themselves at all times.

1.2.8.2 Tactical training objectives in various futsal player phases

Beginners' phase

Age group 2 (U10/U11)

Objectives

- To familiarise players with the concepts of attacking and defending and introduce them to both these aspects of the game in practice.
- To begin executing elementary technical/tactical and tactical elements.
- To strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach when teaching tactical skills.
- To develop social skills as they relate to the game.
- To adopt a tactical approach at the start of the coaching process, by developing perceptive/decision-making ability as the basis of game play.
- To practise real game play in 1v1, 2v2 and 3v3 situations.
- To help the players further develop an understanding of core tactical concepts through small-sized games. This is achieved by modifying game conditions and spatial dimensions, adapting exercises to suit the traits of the young players, and facilitating learning through various simplified game conditions.

Sport development phase

Age group 3 (U12/U13)

Objectives

- To develop an understanding of the game of futsal.
- To develop familiarity with and understanding of attack and defence. Introduction to the phases of attack and defence.
- To develop an understanding of playing with and without the ball, both in attack and defence.
- To execute elementary technical/tactical and tactical elements, gradually increasing the tactical difficulty.
- To develop the social aspects of the game, enabling players to acquire a rational understanding of the concepts of 'team-mate' and 'opponent'.
- To develop and perfect perceptive and decision-making abilities, which are a fundamental basis for futsal.
- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games, varying the game conditions and spatial dimensions, and introducing teamwork and teamwork/opposition drills with significant perceptive and decision-making components.
- To strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach to teaching tactics.

Age group 4 (U14/U15)

Objectives

- To familiarise players with the internal logic of the game.
- To introduce the players to the structure of real game play, so that they can get to know the phases of attack and defence.
- To introduce the players to attacking and defensive transitions.
- To understand the importance of playing the game without the ball, in attack as well as defence.
- To execute technical/tactical and tactical elements, while gradually increasing their tactical complexity.
- To develop the social dimension of the game: social and motor skills and group play.
- To introduce the players to group tactics.
- To introduce the players to basic systems of play.
- To develop and hone perceptive and decision-making abilities.
- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games and simplified and/or modified drills, with increased transferral to real game play.
- To strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach to teaching tactics.

Skills acquisition phase

Age group 5 (U16/U17)

Objectives

- To familiarise players with game logic and apply it when developing tactical elements.
- To transfer all knowledge acquired to this point to real game play.
- To execute technical/tactical elements and specific futsal tactics.
- To develop and hone group tactics.
- To develop and improve in social aspects of the game: social and motor skills, small-group technical/tactical options and group play.
- To develop attacking tactics.
- To develop defensive tactics.
- To improve attacking and defensive transitions.
- To broaden knowledge of different systems of play.
- To develop and hone perceptive and decision-making abilities.
- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games and through simplified and/or modified drills, with all knowledge acquired to this point being transferred to real game play, using competition as a learning tool.
- To strike a sensible balance between specific and global approaches to teaching tactics.

Proficiency phase

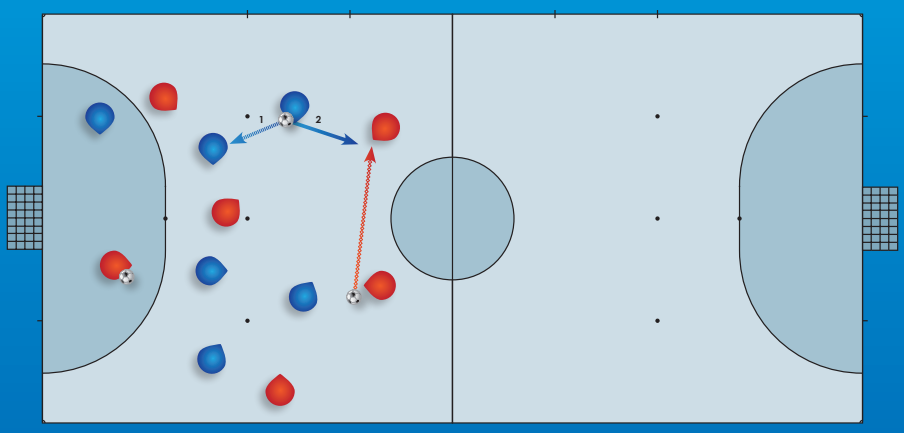
Age group 6 (U18/U19)

Objectives

- To analyse and apply game logic in developing tactical elements.
- To improve and hone knowledge of the structure of futsal: attack phases and defence phases.
- To transfer all knowledge acquired to this point to real game play.
- To execute and hone the technical/tactical and tactical elements specific to futsal.
- To hone group tactics.
- To develop and hone social skills as they relate the game: social and motor skills, small-group technical/tactical options and group play.
- To hone attacking tactics.
- To hone defensive tactics.
- To hone transitions in play.
- To develop a command of attacking and defensive systems.
- To develop and hone perceptive and decision-making abilities.
- To hone core tactical concepts through small-sized games with a ball and simplified and/or modified drills, with all knowledge being transferred to real game play and using competition as a learning tool.
- To strike a sensible balance between a specific and global approach to teaching tactics.

Possession drill with one football – each team also has a 'handball'

1



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technique/tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Controlling the ball, passing and dribbling. Developing peripheral vision of the surrounding area. Developing perceptive and decision-making skills.

OBJECTIVES
To improve on basic technical and tactical aspects, developing general visual perception skills and learning to make simple decisions in order to keep possession.

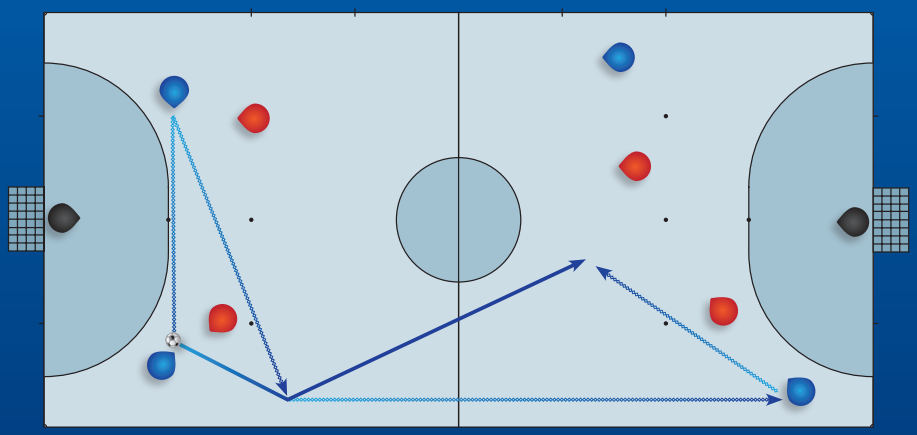
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10-12.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Players are divided evenly into two teams. If there is an odd number of players, they are split into two teams plus an attacking 'joker'.
- The area in which possession must be kept is marked out according to the number of players and the desired level of difficulty.
- Players must keep possession of the ball, playing with only one or two touches within the marked area. In addition, each team has a 'handball' which they can pass to each other (with their hands).
- The player in each team who has the 'handball' cannot take part in attacking or defensive moves and is not allowed to move freely to change position (they are only allowed to take three steps). The 'handball' must not fall to the ground (if it does, this is penalised by loss of the ball or by the award of a penalty/restart).

2v2 in each half of the court, with scope to change to a 3v2

2



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technique/tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Small-group technical/tactical options. Team technical/tactical options. Tactical attacking concepts. Introduction to scenarios where a team outnumbers or is outnumbered by the opposition.

OBJECTIVES
To improve small-group technical/tactical options for retaining the ball, developing play and finishing on goal. To improve core technical/tactical concepts when outnumbering or being outnumbered in a 3v2 or a 2v1.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8 plus goalkeepers.

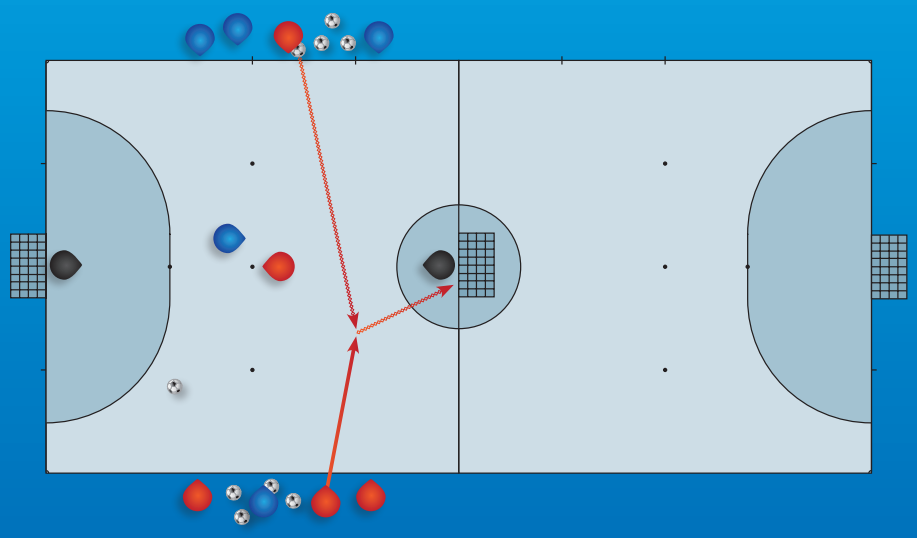
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Drills using a real game situation; 4v4 plus goalkeepers, with a 2v2 positioned in each half of the court. The main rule is that players cannot cross the halfway line from either side of the court.
- After passing the ball into the attacking half of the court, the player that has made the pass may move onto that side of the court. When this happens, the player who has switched, or either of the other two attacking players, can only return to the defensive half of the court when they have scored a goal, so that if they do not score when outnumbering the opposition, they will be outnumbered 2v1 in their defensive half.

VARIATIONS
- Switching half is only allowed for a limited time (e.g. five seconds).
- The player that does not play the pass moves into the attacking half of the court.
- A player is allowed to move into the attacking half by carrying the ball over the halfway line.

Drill with equal/inferior/superior numbers, scoring in two goals

3



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technique/tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Core technical/tactical concepts. Finishing on goal. Peripheral vision of surroundings. Situations involving numerical advantages/disadvantages. Execution speed when finishing on goal. Perception and decision-making.

OBJECTIVES
To improve decision-making when presented with opportunities to finish moves quickly and increase speed/accuracy in the final third.

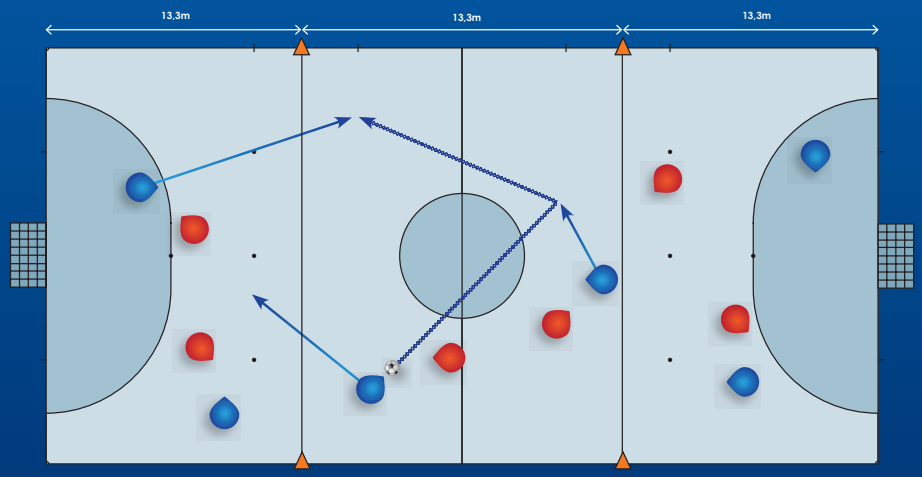
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Executing a drill on a 20x20m court with 4v4 plus goalkeepers and one server per team.
- The players line up next to each other, one team on each side, with their respective servers on the opposite side. Additional players from each team enter the court one at a time. The server may serve the ball at any moment when a team-mate comes on.
- Once the ball is in play, nobody else can enter the court until the ball is out of play or a goal is scored. The server may pass the ball to any player who is already on, or about to enter, the court.
- The situations between the two sides are: 1vGK, 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3, 4v3 and 4v4. The players can score in either of the goals at any time, and can change direction when they wish. After reaching 4v4, the sequence begins again, with the order in which players enter the court changing.

Zonal possession drill with 2v2, with scope to change to a 3v2

4



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technique/tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Controlling the ball, passing and dribbling. Peripheral vision of the surrounding area. Opening up/occupying/using space. Perception and decision-making.

OBJECTIVES
To improve basic core technical/tactical concepts needed to maintain possession and provide the player in possession with support at all times.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
12.

EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs and cones.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- The court is divided into three equal areas by two horizontal lines situated 13.3m from each goal line. Players are divided into two teams of six, with a 2v2 situation in each area of play.
- The objective is for the six players on one team to keep possession of the ball between them. A player from any zone adjacent to the zone in which the ball is located may switch zone to create a 3v2 advantage for their team for a period of four seconds. Before those four seconds are up, any player that ventures into an off-limits zone must move out of it.
- The game is played with two touches and the ball can be played into any free space.

1.3 THE PRINCIPLES OF FUTSAL

1.3.1 Basic core attacking concepts

Regardless of the formation adopted on the pitch or the attacking system deployed, the correct application of technical options and our ability to evaluate and analyse the game will depend to a large extent on the basic core concepts of attacking play. Generally speaking, the most basic core concepts are those that involve perception/motor or coordination skills and individual attacking tactics (individual technical/tactical options), as the greater the group aspect of the core concept, the greater the complexity. It therefore follows that these basic core concepts are the foundation upon which small-group tactics (small-group technical/tactical options) and team tactics (team technical/tactical options) may then be developed.

Basic core attacking concepts can be defined as being comprised of movement, positioning and attacking elements, executed either individually or in combination with team-mates, depending on the aim or objective of the attack (e.g. keeping the ball, developing play, finishing on goal/scoring a goal). These elements provide players with the options needed to execute effective solutions to problems they may encounter during the game. Given that decision-making relies on an analysis of the game situation, based on perception, this means that core perception and decision-making concepts are the foundation of good tactics.

The basic core attacking concepts can be categorised as follows:

1. **Visual command of the playing area**
   Making the right decisions based on analysis of the game involves the player having a visual command of the area around them, including the position of the ball and the positions of team-mates and opponents. A player needs to know where, how and what to look for at all times of the game.

2. **Body positioning**
   This is another basic core concept that determines both the ability to perceive situations and, to a large extent, tactical intent. Positioning the body in one way or another can alter the options available with and without the ball. Positioning the body correctly in response to the game situation can increase the tactical options available, affording the player improved spatial and temporal perception of their position and situation in relation to their team-mates, opponents and the ball.

3. **Controlling space with the ball and in relation to one's marker**
   Being able to control the space needed to execute manoeuvres in a controlled manner is another key factor at a tactical level. The player's ability to position themselves at the correct distance and in the correct direction and position in relation to the defender marking them when they receive the ball or are already in possession of it involves anticipating, at all times, defensive actions while they are on the ball. In anticipating these actions the player must also bear in mind their subsequent tactical intentions. As we can see, all of these efforts are designed to make it difficult for the defender to carry out their man-marking duties.

4. **Applying the basic core technical concepts**
   As we have already seen, while passing, control, touch, dribbling and shooting are all technical elements, the use of them in any given game situation involves a prior cognitive process, namely perception and decision-making. We could say that tactics are both the cause and the effect of any technical element.

5. **Off-the-ball movement**
   This is the movement a player makes to prevent an opposing player from marking them when their team has possession of the ball. The team

must try to find spaces that will provide the player in possession with passing options. **Off-the-ball movement** can be used to **support** the player in possession or to **find gaps** in the defence, with team-mates taking up positions where a pass will enable the attacking move to continue.

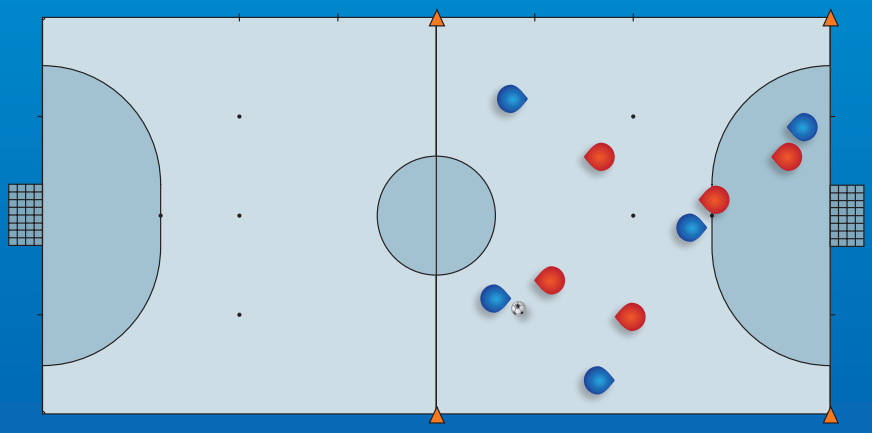
6. **Support**
This is the action taken by players without the ball to create passing options for the player in possession by means of movement off the ball. The support players must constantly seek to assist the player in possession.

7. **Feinting**
This is a core technical/tactical concept that involves a shift or movement of the body with the aim of deceiving or confusing a direct opponent so that they themselves make a shift or movement that enables the player performing the feint to then execute a subsequent planned action.

8. **Switching the play**
This involves the player in possession selecting a passing option that changes the focus of the play to a different area of the court in order to improve the options available to the team. The switching of play involves the player in possession shifting their body into position and moving the ball into position and then making use of it by playing a pass or running with it.

Possession game, 5v5 on a 1/2–sized court, one touch/unlimited touches

1



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Basic core attacking and defensive concepts. Decision-making when passing. Body positioning. Visual command of the playing area. Marking. Tackling. Closing down passing angles. Spatial awareness in switching positions.

OBJECTIVES
To improve the basic core attacking and defensive concepts needed to keep and recover possession.

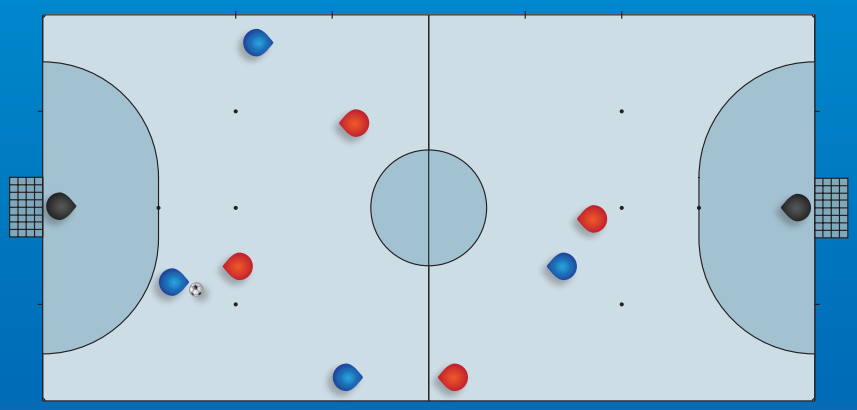
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10.

EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs and cones.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Possession game on a half-sized court (20x20m), 5v5.
- Both teams try to keep possession of the ball. Once a team loses possession, it switches to defence. If the ball goes out of play, a kick-in is awarded against the team that last touched the ball.
- Conditions: if a one-touch pass is played to a team-mate, that team-mate can take as many touches as they like. However, if a player takes more than one touch, the team-mate that they pass to may only take one touch.

Perception game, 4v4 plus goalkeepers in a 40x20m playing area, one touch

2



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Basic core attacking and defensive concepts. Decision-making when passing. Creating passing angles. Body positioning. Visual command of the playing area. Spatial command over the marker. Closing down passing angles. Watchfulness. Pressing the ball on passing angles. Anticipation. Intercepting, etc.

OBJECTIVES
To improve the basic core attacking and defensive concepts needed to develop play, recover possession, prevent the opposition from developing play and getting into a position to finish on goal.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8 plus two goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Real game situation, 4v4 plus GK, **one touch**, but **two touches** if the ball comes from an opponent, or from a team-mate who has taken one touch, or in order to finish on goal.
- The player is forced to evaluate the situation before receiving the ball, and position their body so as to gain visual command of the court and play a one-touch pass if necessary. When the ball comes to the player, they must know what to do and make the right decision as quickly as possible.

9. **Creating passing angles**
Passing is key to any attacking link-up play. The more passing options there are available, the easier the decision-making process is for the player in possession. Therefore, attacking players, both the one in possession and those without the ball, must always look for ways to create passing opportunities.

10. **Creating/occupying/using space**
Game situations vary according to the spaces and passing angles available to the player in possession. Most attacking movements without the ball are designed to change the areas where space is available or to make use of the space that is already available. A player can **create** space by moving from one area to another and opening up space in an area that was previously occupied. This causes one of the defenders to alter position, as they move in response to the attacking movement of the opponent without the ball. Another option available to an attacking player is to make runs off the ball and supporting runs to **occupy** space. The ultimate objective of creating and occupying space is always to make **use** of this space when receiving the ball.

11. **Drawing out the opposition**
When an attacking player is in possession, there is a big difference between moving into the defender's space and the defender breaking into the attacking player's space. By moving into the defender's space, and by correctly positioning their body, an attacking player can find effective solutions that the defender will struggle to prevent or control.

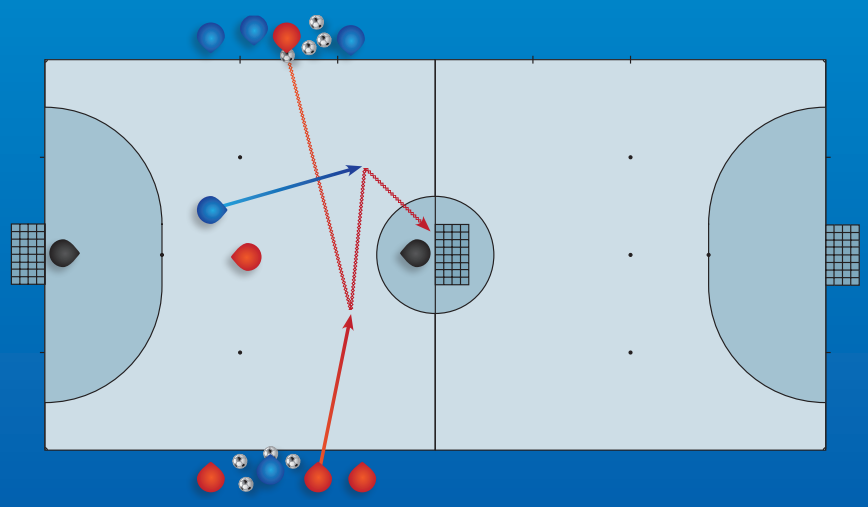
12. **Buying time in attack**
Just as defences can buy time, so can we also reduce the tempo when attacking in order to slow things down and execute the attack at a slower pace. In altering the pace of play, we are then able to create a more favourable or advantageous situation in which to execute our tactics.

13. **Blocking**
An action executed by one player on an opposing player defending against a team-mate who is in possession (a direct block), or on an opposing player defending against another team-mate who is not in possession but is looking to receive the ball (an indirect block). Acting within the rules, an attacking player takes up a position to stop the defender from getting into a specific area of the court, thereby enabling this space to be used by the team-mate in question (who may or may not be in possession of the ball).

14. **Moving without the ball**
We have already discussed the benefits of the core concept of players moving off the ball in order to create better passing options and more space. However, this is worth reiterating, given its importance, as it makes it harder for defenders to anticipate danger, mark effectively, and make use of all the core perceptive and decision-making concepts they possess.

Drill with equal/inferior/superior numbers, scoring in two goals; extra players added one by one

3



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Core technical/tactical concepts. Finishing on goal. Peripheral vision and awareness of surroundings. Making the most of a numerical advantage/copying with a disadvantage. Execution speed when finishing on goal. Perception and decision-making.

OBJECTIVES
To improve decision-making when presented with opportunities to finish on goal quickly and to increase speed/accuracy when keeping the ball moving and in the final third.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

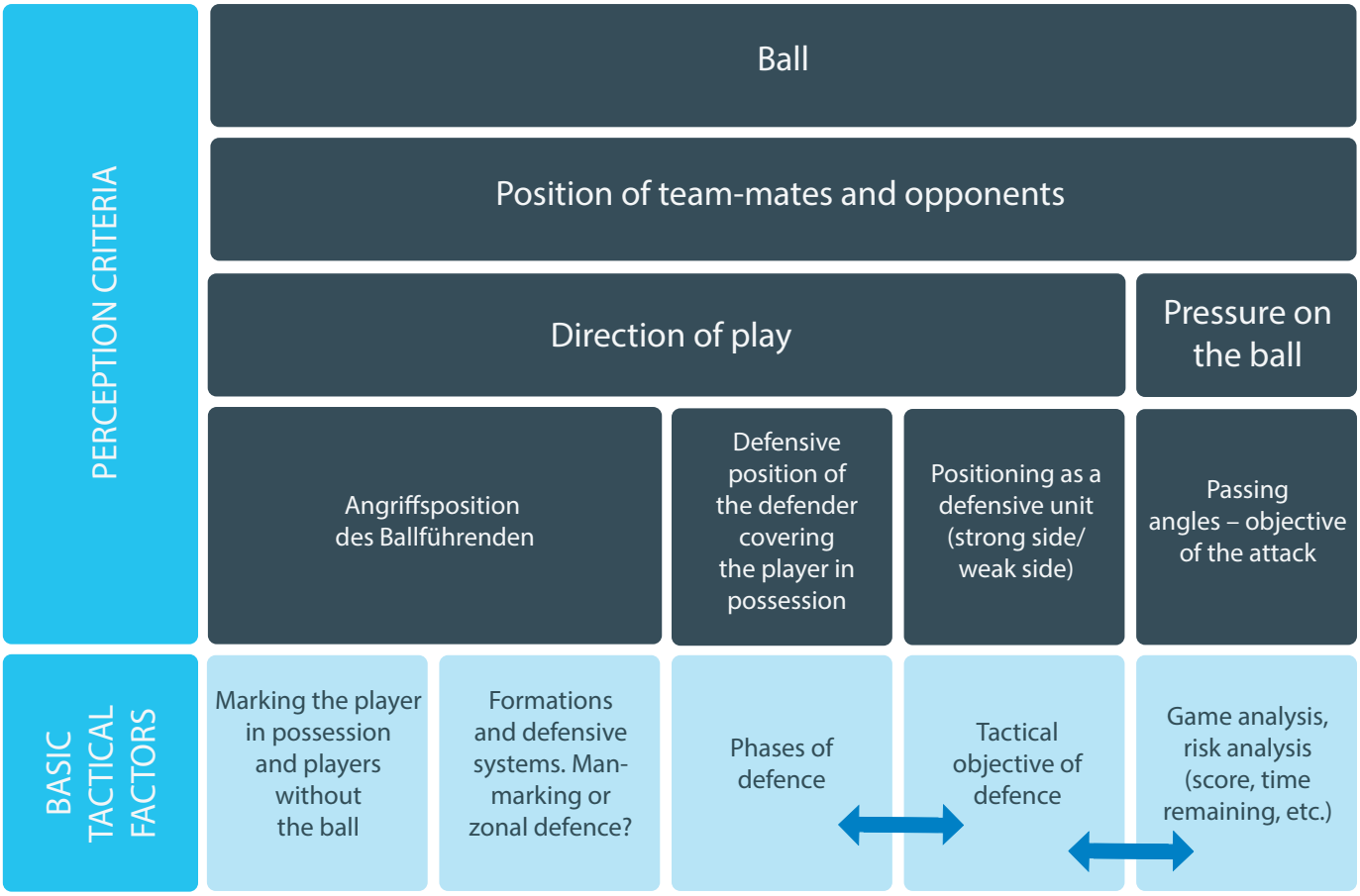
DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Drill on a 20x20m court with 4v4 plus goalkeepers and one server per team. The two teams form a line, one on each side of the court with their respective server positioned on the opposite side. One by one, additional players are added to each team. Every time a player comes on, the server on that team plays the ball onto the court.
- Once the ball is in play, nobody else can enter the court until the ball is out of play or a goal is scored. The server can play the ball to any player who is on, or about to enter, the court.
- The situations are: 1vGK, 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3, 4v3, 4v4. Players can score in either of the two goals, but **only when all of the attackers on the court have touched the ball**, and they can change direction whenever they wish. After the game reaches 4v4, the sequence begins again, with the order in which players enter the court changing.

1.3.2 Basic core defensive concepts

Basic core defensive concepts can be defined as a combination of defensive movement, positioning and actions that are individually or collectively executed, according to the defensive aims or objectives (e.g. to recover possession, prevent the opposition from advancing or scoring). It should be noted that all of these core concepts have a tactical objective and are designed to accomplish one of the general principles of defensive play.

These elements and concepts are difficult to separate or classify, due to the group-based nature of the events involved in the defensive process. However, they are all essentially based on perception and decision-making, which are in turn based on the player's analysis of the game situation. As, therefore, their application is determined by the reading of the game and the range of variables and conditioning factors involved, the cognitive aspect of motor ability in each game situation is decisive. As such, it is important to look briefly at the fundamental components of perception and decision-making.

Fundamental components of perception and decision-making



Once we have formed an understanding of the process involved in perception and decision-making, which in turn enable the basic core defensive concepts to be applied, we can then study the key elements which form the basic defensive principles:

1. **Elements of man-marking**
   There are three key phases of man-marking:

Before receiving the ball (or in cases where the ball is not received)	Defensive cover. Basic defensive positioning. Defensive solidity.
	Position one's body in order to gain a visual command of the playing area (the ball and the position of team-mates and opponents).
	Keep a safe distance between oneself and the opponent (to enable a composed reaction prior to any attacking move). Anticipate when defending (defend with one's body between the opponent, closing off any potential passing angles available).
	Support, cover, control the space (individually and collectively); 'floating defence', etc.
When the ball is being received (while the pass is on its way)	Movement along the trajectory of the pass, close up on the player receiving the ball. Pressure. Aggression.
	Anticipation. Interception on the path of the pass. Defend by anticipating the pass before it is played or position oneself between the ball and the player receiving it while it is on its way.
	Body position and controlling of space in relation to the player receiving the pass in a defensive movement. Points to bear in mind: speed of the ball, movements made by the attacking player, stronger foot of the player receiving the ball, reading the game.
After the ball has been received (defending against the player in possession)	Basic defensive position. Harrying. Tackling. Going shoulder to shoulder with the player on the ball.
	Blocking/interception (breaking up) of passing or shooting angles. Without losing basic defensive position.
	Defensive movements: pressure on player running with the ball and controlling of space to prevent the team in possession from developing an attack. Read the game in order to defend in the right direction when pressing the ball.
	Team concepts based on reading the game: buying time, floating cover, etc.

2. **Controlling the space (when making adjustments)**
   A key core concept is the ability to control the space in relation to an opponent when making adjustments in terms of marking:

   - Keep a clear distance in relation to the opponent being marked (space around the opponent without the ball).
   - Control the space around the opponent in possession.
   - Recover the defensive space.
   - Control space when executing a defensive blocking move.

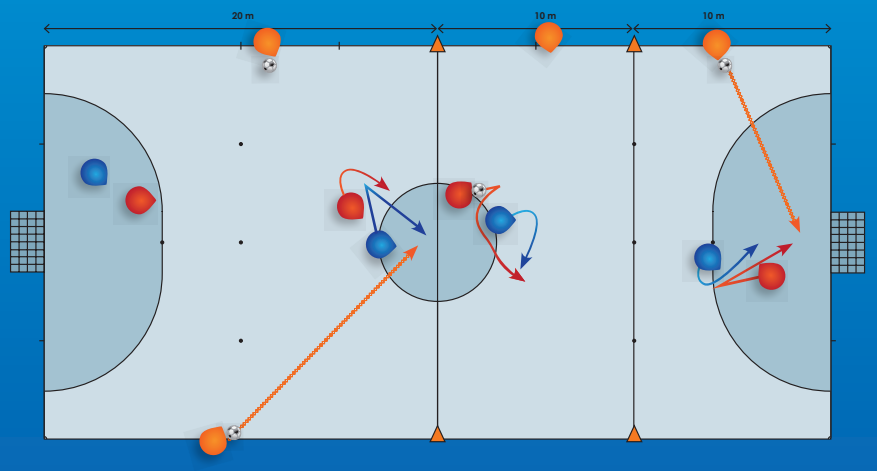
3. **Putting pressure on the ball**
   A key core concept of defending, on which the other aspects of defending largely depend. The following factors should be taken into account:

   - Reducing the defensive space along the path of the pass.
   - Basic defensive positioning when pressing.
   - Tackling, intercepting, harrying, going shoulder to shoulder with an opponent and anticipating.
   - Defensive positioning when pressing, dominating the area around the opponent to reduce space and passing angles.

4. **Commanding the space**
   Rational occupation of space in the defensive line is a basic core concept for any defensive system (including man-marking). There are always defenders who have less of an individual impact than their opponent. They must provide balance to the defence by dominating and closing down the space that the opponent can utilise to create an attacking threat, or by taking up a covering defensive position. The task of commanding the space begins before the team loses possession of the ball by maintaining **defensive balance** when in attack. Once the defensive phase begins and the positional defence is organised, defenders in the second and third defensive lines are required to dominate the space and compensate for the movements and decision-making of the players

Individual marking drill

1



LEARNING UNIT
Individual technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Beginners.

CONTENT
Individual aspects of marking.

OBJECTIVES
To introduce the players to individual elements and aspects of marking and how to defend against an attacking player before and after they receive the ball.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
12.

EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs and cones.

DRILL DESCRIPTION

- The court is divided into three zones, as shown in the diagram; two at 10x20m and one at 20x20m.
- In the 10x20m zones, play a 1v1 (with one player outside the zone) where the attacker tries to receive the ball from that player. Whenever the ball goes out of play, it must be played back in by the player outside the zone. The objective for the attacker is to get to the opposite line from which the ball was delivered, while controlling the ball. The defender must try to prevent the attacker from receiving the ball, or if they do receive it, to prevent them from advancing to the other side of the zone. If the defender regains the ball, they must pass it to the player outside of the zone, in order to become the attacker and try to receive the pass.
- In the 20x20m zone, a 2v2 is played with two players outside the zone (one for each team), with the same routine as before. Halfway through the exercise, a new rule is introduced, whereby both the attacking players have to touch the ball before looking to cross the line. Every time the defending team regains possession, they play the ball to their player outside the zone.
- Coaches must correct aspects of individual marking before and after the attacker has received the ball.
- Players outside the zone swap with players inside it at set intervals or based on rules that require rotation in specific circumstances.

in the first line in pressing the ball, the idea here being for them to switch opponents, provide possible cover and rotate if necessary. The player in the second line on the side opposite to the player in possession is known as the defensive **opposite wing**. The positioning in a **defensive triangle** of the players in the first line of defence and the opposite wing is a tactic that is commonly used. These players try to make use of the greatest possible number of defensive **lines of pressure**, creating an organised system which provides support and defensive cover and enables defenders to control the space effectively.

5. **Core teamwork concepts**
The key core concepts of teamwork in small-group tactics are: **support** (an action taken by a defender to halt the progress of an attacker who has broken clear of a team-mate and which enables said team-mate to recover their position; **covering** (where a player takes up a position or makes themselves available to help a team-mate who could be about to lose the player they are marking); **switching** (occupying the position of the team-mate providing cover after an opponent has broken clear).

6. **Buying time**
This is an action designed to check the progress of an attacking player so that the defence has more time in which to regain position.

7. **Floating cover**
This is a defensive resource in which a defender floats away from a particular attacker (the player being marked) so that they can then intervene in a different situation, waiting for the right moment to select the correct defensive action.

8. **Markers switching opponents**
Defenders may swap the opponents that they are marking in a game situation where they are looking to maintain a particular defensive shape

in response to an opposition attack. The objective here is to maintain the defensive lines; prevent the opposition from creating passing angles; stop the opposition from moving the ball around; close off passing angles; maintain pressure on the ball; and make it difficult for the opposition to support the player in possession, etc.

There are many different scenarios where defenders may choose to swap marking duties, but we will highlight just three:

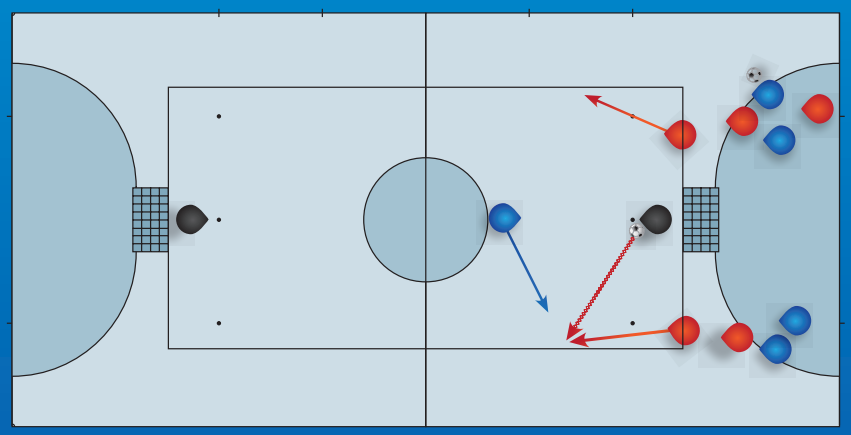
- Swapping opponents to mark with a team-mate (opposition players without possession).
- Switching markers to restrict passing angles between opposing players (closing the angle).
- Variation of space when switching markers.

9. **'Jumping'**
In practice, this core concept entails the switching of opponents, although it also involves other distinguishing characteristics, the most important of them being that in a situation where there are two defenders covering two attacking players, one of which is on the ball, the defenders switch attackers when the attacker on the ball plays it to the other attacker. The defender covering the attacker playing the pass then 'jumps' over to cover the attacker receiving the pass, with the other defender then covering the attacking player who has just passed the ball.

10. **Closing/blocking the passing angles**
There are two different ways to block or close down a passing angle: close down the passing angles available to the player in possession (defensive positioning, pressing the ball and controlling the space) or close down the passing angles available to players not in possession (blocking the angles, anticipating the pass, etc.).

A defensive 1v2 with no restrictions on spatial dimensions once the attacking team has made six passes; finish into one of the two goals

2



LEARNING UNIT
Core defensive concepts.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Controlling space. Visual command of the playing area and command of peripheral vision. Movement. Defensive feints. Reading attacking positioning, etc.

OBJECTIVES
To improve certain core defensive concepts when playing at a numerical disadvantage of 1v2. Special emphasis on improving visual command of the playing area.

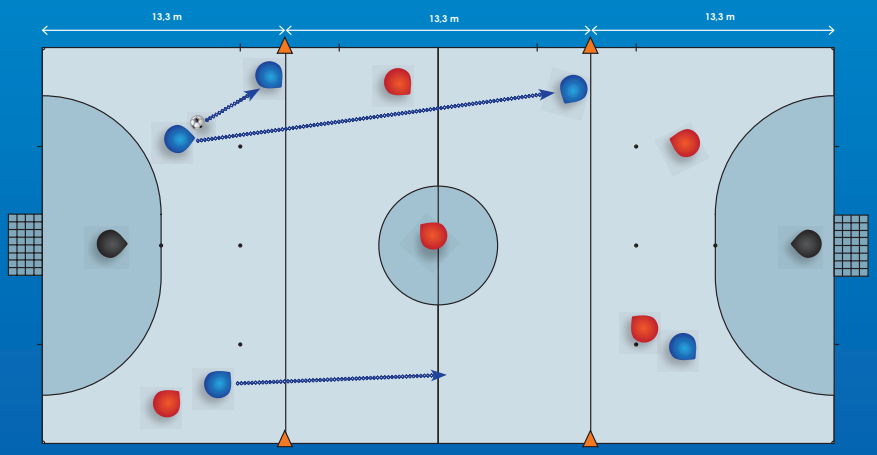
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- As the diagram shows, a 1v2 scenario is played out on half a basketball court until the two attacking players pass the ball six times between each other, at which point we open up the whole of the playing area, giving the attackers the freedom to finish in either of the goals.
- They are not allowed to change the direction in which they are attacking by switching from one half to the other. Once the attackers take the ball into one of the courts, they cannot then change direction and head for the other goal.
- A player finishing on goal becomes the defender for the next drill.

5v5 + goalkeepers in a 40x20m split into three zones of 13.3x20m with a maximum of 3v2 in any one zone

3



LEARNING UNIT
Core defensive and attacking concepts.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Floating cover. Dropping back. Buying time. Closing down passing angles, etc.

OBJECTIVES
To improve certain core defensive concepts when playing at a numerical disadvantage of 2v3.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus two goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs and cones.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 5v5 plus goalkeepers in a 40x20m area.
- Split the court into three zones of 13.3x20m. A limit is set on the number of attackers and defenders allowed in each zone. A maximum of three attackers and two defenders are allowed in each zone, but as long as this condition is met, the players are free to leave or enter each zone.
- Play is allowed to flow freely.

VARIATIONS
- Only allow two touches.
- The goalkeeper of the team in possession counts as an attacker in a 3v2.

Normally, the objectives for closing down the passing angles are: to prevent the attacking players from using space to their advantage; to prevent the opposition from moving the ball around the court (from the strong side to the weak side of our defence); to prevent the opposition from advancing with the ball (stopping them from breaking through our lines of defence); to buy time or prevent the opposition from creating a numerical advantage; to recover possession.

11. **Dropping back**
This is a basic core defensive concept which involves one or several players on a team dropping back into deep defensive positions after losing possession of the ball (defensive transition phase) or when the attacking team breaks with the ball beyond one of the opposition team's lines of defence (positional defence, usually pressing high up the court).

12. **Defensive organisation**
During any of phase of play and in assessing the options available to it, a team must organise itself so that it can make the most of its resources and make effective use of the other core defensive options open to it. This basic core concept forms the foundation for group tactics at a defensive level. The idea is not only to demonstrate positional organisation and the rational occupation of space in all situations and during all defensive phases, but also for the players to work towards a shared tactical objective (recover possession, close down the player in possession, maintain a balanced shape, etc.).

1.4 TECHNICAL ABILITY

1.4.1 Definition of technique

Generally speaking, the concept of technique within the world of sport refers to a process or a set of motor processes that enable proficiency to be gained in a particular sport. In futsal, players are often restricted in terms of the space and time available to them, which means that there is a lot of emphasis on the player's technical ability with the ball.

1.4.2 Technical ability and game situations

Being very skilful in terms of ball control is all well and good, but players must be able to apply this ability to a concrete, functional context involving team-mates and opponents, all operating within the spatial and temporal restrictions that characterise the sport of futsal. In other words, technical ability must be demonstrated in relation to the actual needs of the game. This is why the concept of 'technique applied to the game' is particularly important.

1.4.2.1 Developing technical ability

Mastering skills is generally based on the principle of repetition. However, in futsal, it is not possible to learn solely through a series of specific drills. The coach must also focus on other factors that have an impact on performance. Technical skills must be utilised pragmatically and must be adapted for use in constantly changing situations. In other words, technical ability is developed in a permanently evolving context (futsal is an 'open skill' sport).

1.4.2.2 Teaching technical skills

In general, when teaching technique, one must strive for a happy medium between a drill-focused approach and time spent on game situations. Drills are characterised by the repeated execution of an action as per the coach's instructions, and are not influenced by the presence or actions of opponents (focus on the player's ability with the ball and on exercises in pairs and groups).

Game-situation exercises always feature opposition, meaning that techniques must be executed in response to what the opponent does.

Furthermore, teaching methods must be tailored to suit the age group in question.

For players who are new to futsal, the emphasis must be on enjoyment, with players acquiring technical skills simply by playing the game.

Teaching core technical concepts means working step by step from the beginners', development, skills-acquisition and proficiency phases (in which basic skills are acquired and players are first exposed to competition) through to the refining and mastering of skills.

1.4.2.3 Pinpointing and correcting mistakes

When a coach seeks to correct a common error, they need to be able to break down the technique in question into the elements that make up a particular technical skill. For instance, when analysing a player kicking the ball, the coach has to focus on certain key aspects: the run-up; the player's standing foot; the foot used to strike the ball; the position of the upper body. The most common errors in these areas involve the angle of the run-up, incorrect placement of the standing foot and incorrect positioning of the torso and arms.

1.4.3 Core technical concepts related to use of the ball

1.4.3.1 Overview

Basic technical skills

Passing
Shooting
Receiving, controlling and keeping the ball
Running with the ball
Tackling
Dribbling
Heading
Goalkeeping technique

Futsal-specific technical skills

Trapping the ball with the sole of the foot
Using the sole of the foot to play short passes
Using the sole of the foot when dribbling
Toe-pokes
Kicking with the outside of the foot
Passing with the inside of the foot
Goalkeeping technique

1.4.3.2 Passing

Passing is the best way to launch an attack, since it is the quickest and least tiring way of moving the ball from one part of the court to another, occupying space, beating one or more opponents or the defensive line, and retaining possession of the ball. Passes must be accurate, easy to control, measured and played at the right time.

Passing directly to a team-mate
Direct passes must be played to a team-mate's feet. In some situations (e.g. where there is tight marking) the pass must be made to the foot opposite to the side where the opponent is positioned, to enable the player receiving the ball to protect it as much as possible.

Pass into space
A pass into space is timed to intersect the trajectory of a team-mate's run so that the latter and the ball converge on the target space.

The optimal situation for a pass into space is when the player receiving the ball controls it without having to slow down as they run into the target space.

When should a pass into space be played and when should a pass be made directly to a team-mate's feet?

If the aim is to keep possession of the ball, passes should predominantly be made to feet, whereas when the ball needs to be played into space to launch an attack straight away, the best option is for the ball to be passed to where the receiving player is making their run.

The objectives and purpose of passing
The objectives and purposes of passing are as follows:

To develop moves: backward passes (to a team-mate behind the ball); forward passes (to a team-mate in front of the ball); cross-field passes (to spread play).

To create space: through balls (splitting the defence).

To finish moves: long balls that reach a team-mate as they make a run towards the opponents' goal, that are played in behind the defender or which put the player receiving the ball into a shooting position.

The risks associated with square passes
Square passes can be extremely dangerous, especially if they are made from the side of the court to the centre. If the ball is intercepted, it cuts out both the passer and the intended recipient. In such situations, it is up to the receiver to open up a more suitable passing angle.

1.4.3.3 Directional ball control

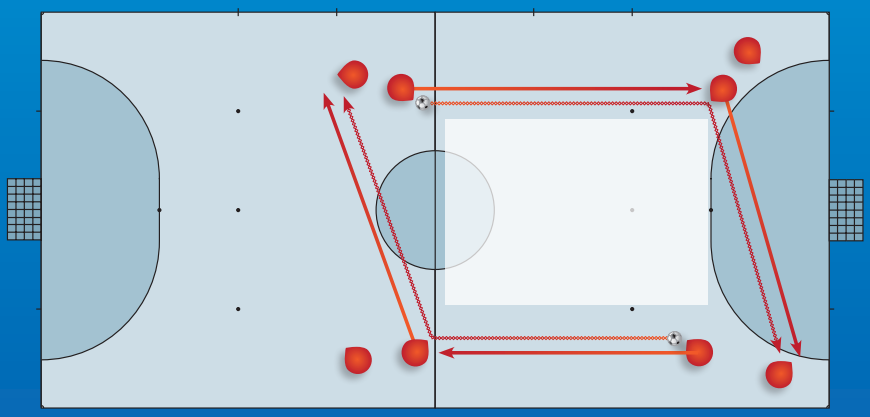
By 'directional ball control' we mean a player's ability to receive the ball and redirect it with the first touch according to how they want play to develop. This technical skill has become especially important when playing at a high level. In today's futsal, stopping the ball dead in the position in which it is received is no longer effective.

Controlling the ball while remaining aware of game development
The player with the ball often focuses completely on controlling it, and thus does not notice a team-mate who has managed to escape their marker. The ability to be aware of several things at once must be nurtured in order to develop play. This can be achieved through drills that reinforce the player's perception of the entire court.

Control and shielding of the ball
Receiving the ball well requires proficiency in terms of controlling the ball and shielding it from opponents. The player receiving possession must position their body between the opponent and the ball, and control the ball with the foot that is further away from the opponent.

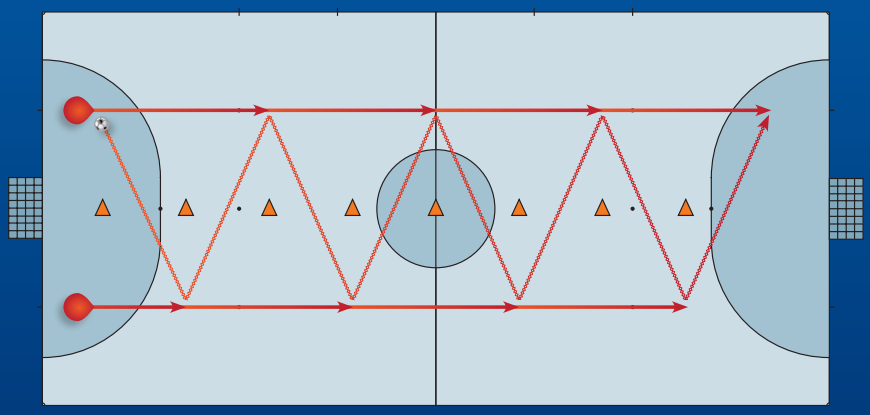
Drills and game-situation exercises for passing and receiving the ball

1



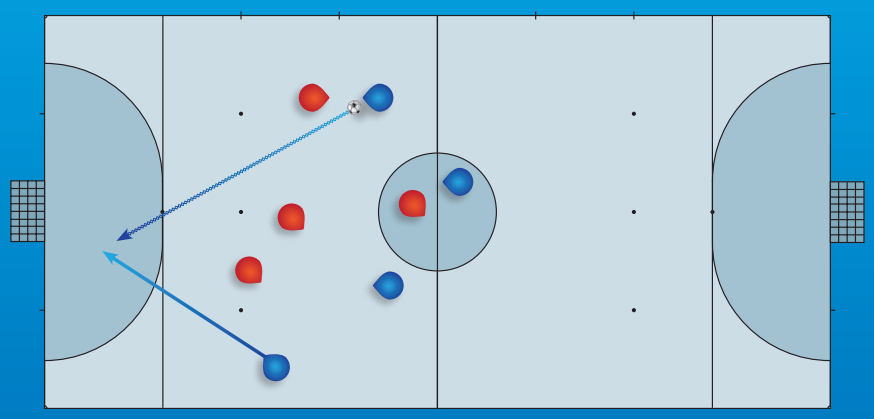
DRILL DESCRIPTION
Mark out a rectangle of approximately 15x12m and put two or three players at each corner, with the balls positioned as shown. The ball should be passed around the edge of the rectangle (e.g. in a clockwise direction), with players allowed two touches. The player follows the direction of their pass and stands behind the team-mate to whom they have passed the ball. The pass should be controlled so that the ball is ready to be moved in the direction of the next pass.

2



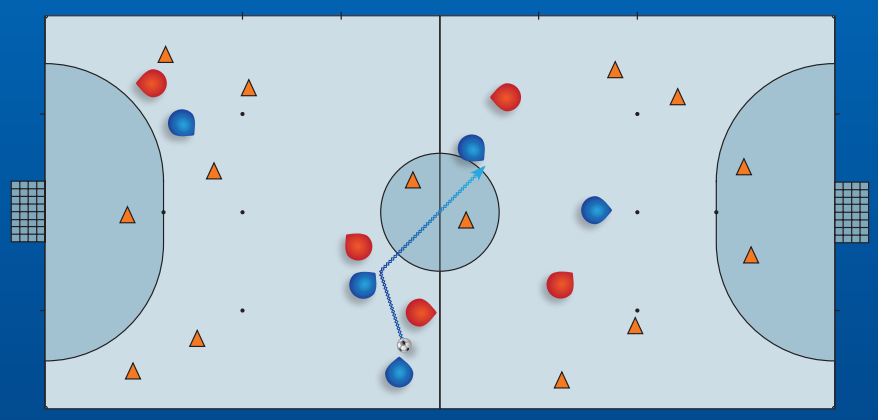
DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two players stand eight-10 metres apart at one end of the court. They make their way up the court, passing the ball to each other between the cones, with first-time or second-touch passes.

3



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two teams (e.g. 4v4) line up in a playing area that has a six-metre-wide zone at each end and into which defenders are not allowed to enter. The team in possession scores a 'goal' if it gets the ball to one of its players in that zone (attackers may enter the zone only to receive the ball).

4



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two teams line up using the entire court, on which cones are used to mark out 'goals'. There must be more 'goals' than players on one team. A team scores if one of its players successfully passes to another through one of the 'goals'.

1.4.3.4 Running with the ball: the basis of dribbling

Being able to run with the ball freely is a crucial part of effective dribbling. According to the coaching manuals, dribbling involves running with the ball with the aim of getting past or beating an opponent.

Running with the ball is one of the first core technical concepts that children are taught when they take up the game.

Tips for running with the ball
The player must use light touches to ensure they keep the ball as close to their feet as possible.

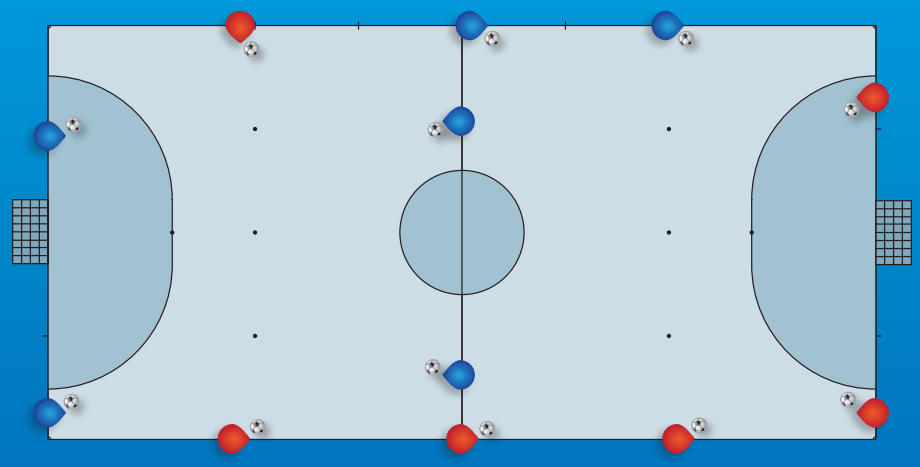
Ball control is more important than speed.

The player should run with short, quick steps.

Keeping the head up while dribbling is vitally important to the subsequent development of an attacking move.

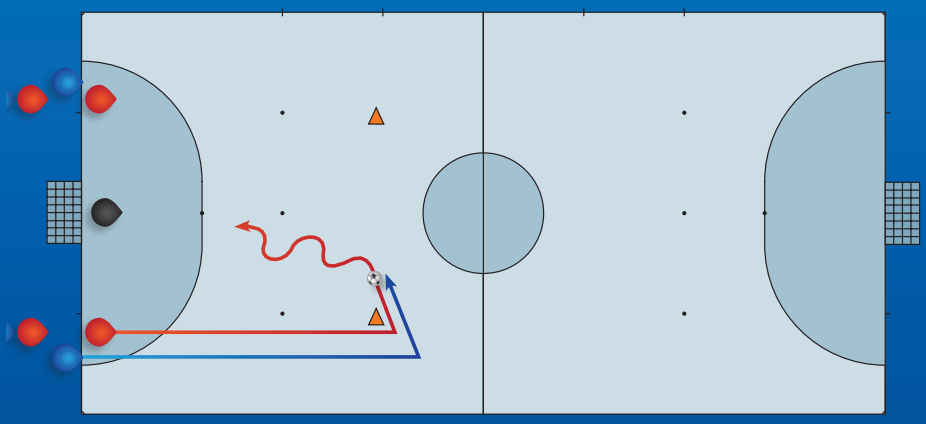
Drills and game-situation exercises for developing dribbling skills

5



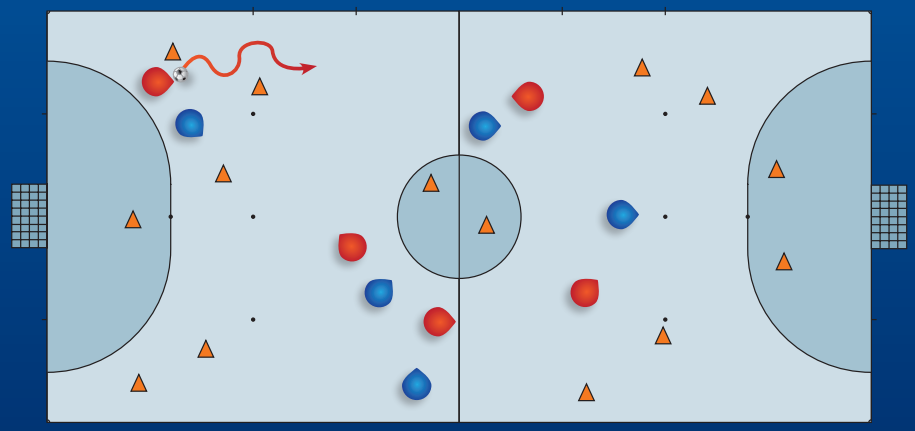
DRILL DESCRIPTION
Each player should dribble the ball around the edge of the court. Upon the coach's signal, they should enter the court and dribble freely, changing direction and pace. They return to the edge of the court upon the coach's next signal.

6



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two players (one forward and one defender) sprint from the goal line towards a cone near the halfway line. The forward is given a head-start of around one metre. Once the forward reaches the cone, they take the ball and run towards goal, with the defender in pursuit trying to recover the ball.

7



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two teams line up using the entire court, on which cones are used to mark out 'goals'. There must be more 'goals' than players in a team. A team scores if they take the ball through one of the 'goals'.

1.4.3.5 Dribbling

Basic guidelines for dribbling
The player dribbling with the ball must keep it at a suitable distance to enable them to beat the defender.

They must also be perfectly balanced, and can use feints to throw the opponent off balance.

Beating a player from a standing start or when already moving
Beating a player from a standing start hinges on the forward's ability to wrong-foot the defender and get past them at the right moment. Conversely, beating a player from a running start hinges on being able to accelerate rapidly.

The first part of the run
The player with the ball who wants to dribble past a defender must first run directly at them, trying to do so at the fastest possible speed. This means they must get close to the defender with the ball before taking them on with a combination of feinting and dribbling.

Why is it important to take the defender on?
This denies the defender the time to force the forward towards the area of the court that is 'defender-friendly'. In addition, when the player with the ball runs straight at their opponent, the defender is left off guard and their legs and upper body are not at the ideal angle to execute a defensive action and successfully thwart the forward.

Feints and intended movements
A feint is executed by a player just before they try to get past their opponent. Basically, this involves the player on the ball making the opposition player think they have opted for one way of getting past them before finally making the intended movement.

A successful feint wrong-foots the defender, enabling the forward to beat their man.

Timing the feint and the intended movement right
When dribbling past an opponent, a player has to make them think the feint is actually the real move. Therefore, players must not 'sell' a feint too quickly (the defender might not realise what is happening and therefore not react at all), or too slowly as this might give the defender enough time to regain their balance and counter the attack. The 'real' move must be executed very quickly to ensure the defender does not have a chance to recover their balance.

Where to get past the opponent
The forward with the ball must attack the defender on the side where they have their leading foot (e.g. to the right of a defender who is leading with the right foot, considered the 'weak side'). The best moment to go past the opponent is when the leading foot is just about to touch the ground.

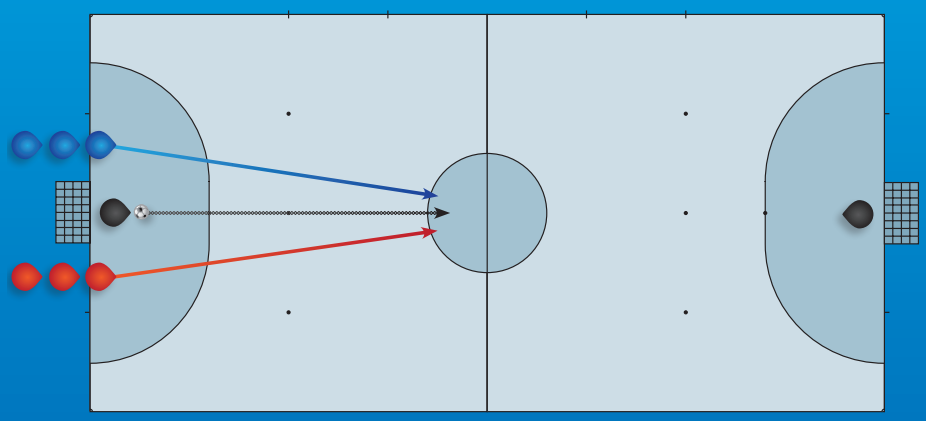
Dribbling in order to develop a move
When a team is looking to attack they must concentrate on passing rather than dribbling. Players should only take opponents on in 'safe' parts of the court when their team-mates are in the right position. Dribbling is key to creating situations that give the attacking team a numerical advantage over their opponents and to occupying space in attack, as it helps create shooting opportunities, open up dangerous passing angles and prevent the opposition from pressing.

Coaching methods designed to improve ability in taking on opponents

- Beating an opponent whose movement is limited (positioning in lines).
- Beating an opponent who has more room to move (restricted to a zone).
- Beating an opponent in an unrestricted space.
- Improving perception of space and time in one-on-one situations: drills in which the defender and forward start moving at different times, either when the forward already has the ball (e.g. where the defender sets off first, the attacker goes first, or both set off at the same time, from a stationary start, etc.) or when the forward receives the ball from a team-mate before dribbling.

Dribbling drills

8

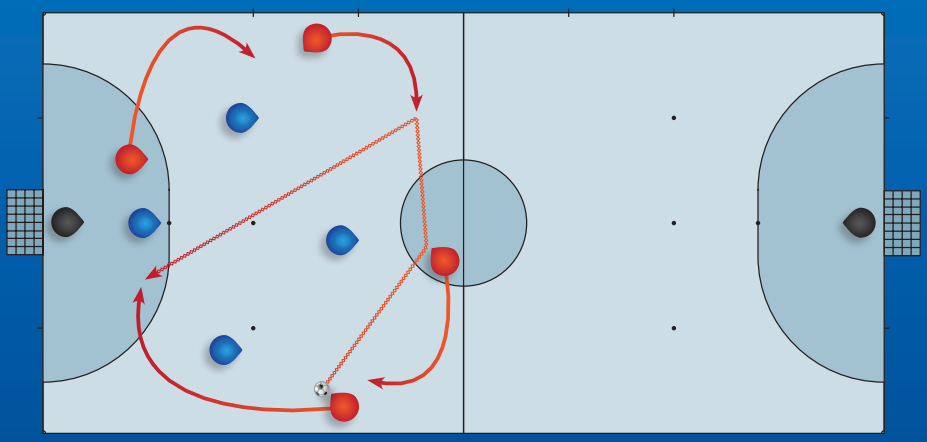


DRILL DESCRIPTION
1v1 dribbling. The goalkeeper kicks the ball towards the centre of the court to two players who simultaneously run from beside the posts. Whoever gets to the ball first is the attacker, and the other is the defender. The attacker attempts to dribble past the defender and have a shot at goal.

VARIATIONS
The attackers start from a sitting position, or lying on their front or back, etc.

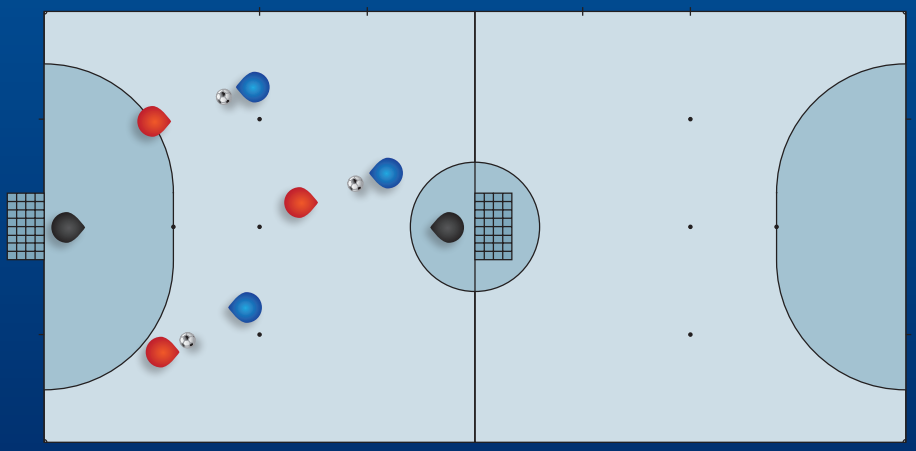
The drill can also be carried out in both goals, at the same time, with another goalkeeper and two other groups of players.

9



DRILL DESCRIPTION
A game of 2v2 plus goalkeepers takes place on half a court. The playing area is divided into two zones by an imaginary line running between the centre of the two goals. One attacker and one defender play in each zone. The players may not leave their respective zones, although the ball can be passed from one zone to the other.

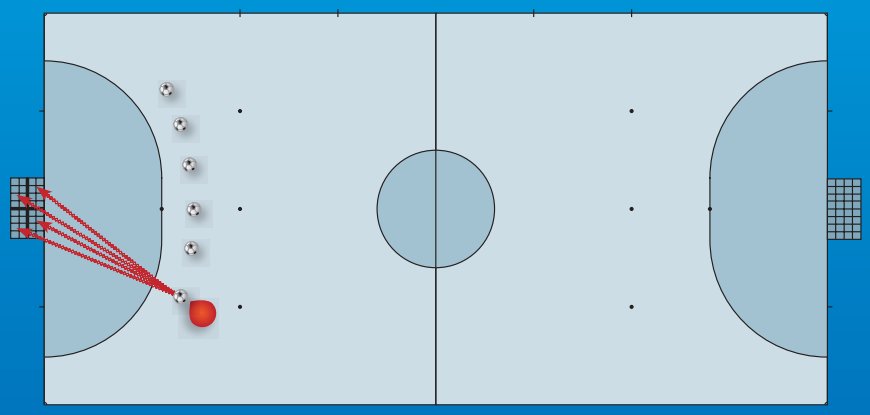
10



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Three pairs of players plus goalkeepers line up on half a court, in 1v1 situations. Each pair has a ball.

Drills and game-situation exercises for shooting

11



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Players take a series of shots from 10 metres out, with the ball stationary, and with the focus on precise placement. The goal is divided into four sections (two upper and two lower) by hazard tape.

VARIATIONS
The ball can be moving when the shots are taken.

1.4.3.6 Shooting

A successful attack ends with a shot on goal. The player who takes the shot needs to find the right balance between accuracy and power. Coaching that focuses on correcting errors in shooting accuracy may prioritise aiming at the following targets: the whole goal, to the keeper's right or left, the inside of the posts (high up or low down).

Shooting from wide positions
Forwards positioned on the left side of the court should shoot with their left foot and forwards positioned on the right should shoot with their right. They should aim towards the far post, so that if the shot is not on target it can be redirected by a team-mate. A shot aimed at the far post may therefore lead to the continuation of the move with a subsequent shot on goal.

Cutting in from wide positions to shoot
A coach can put right-footed players on the left and vice versa so that they can cut in from the flank and shoot on goal. The various options include a shot back across goal, with the player shooting towards the opposite side of the goal in relation to the direction of their run, deceiving the goalkeeper, who makes an initial sideways movement to cover the anticipated direction of the shot and is then wrong-footed.

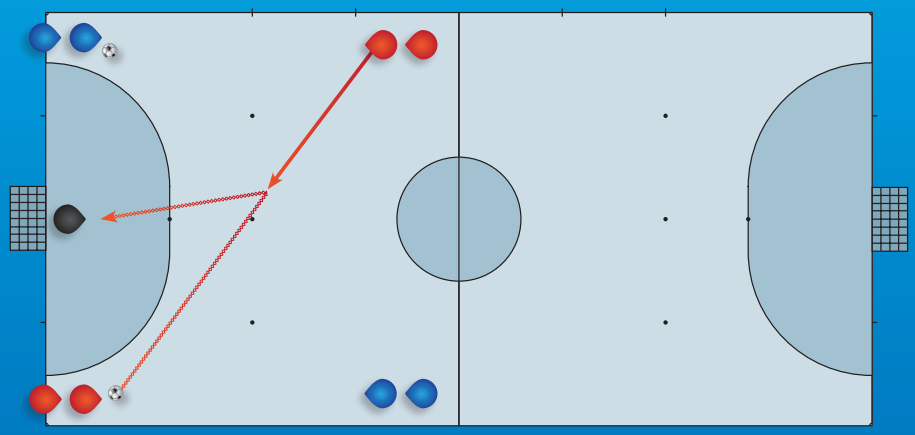
1.4.3.7 Headers

There are three types of header: forward, sideways and back.

Players can head the ball with their feet on the ground (possibly while making a forward lunge) or when jumping off one or both feet.

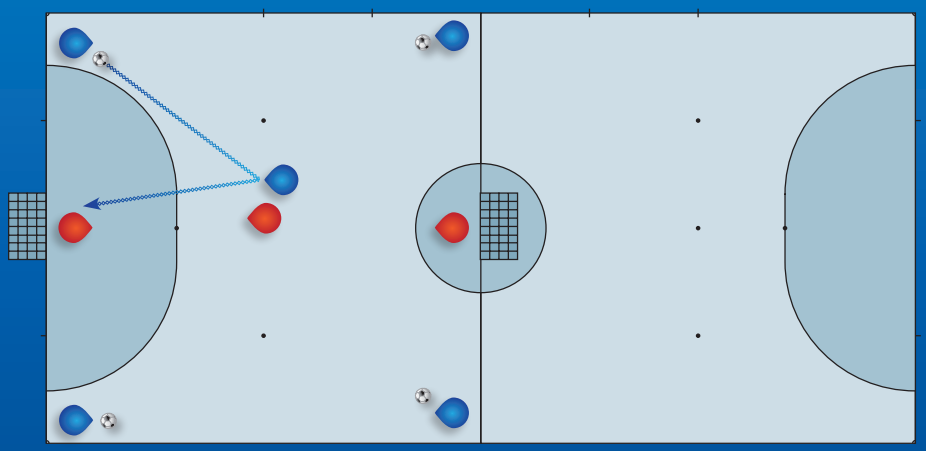
The coaching of heading initially involves drills from a sitting position, in which the player heads a ball thrown by a team-mate. This is followed by various standing drills with players heading the ball either stationary, in a forward lunge position, or bouncing up and down on the spot. The final stage involves a complete range of movements, including forward and backward runs.

12



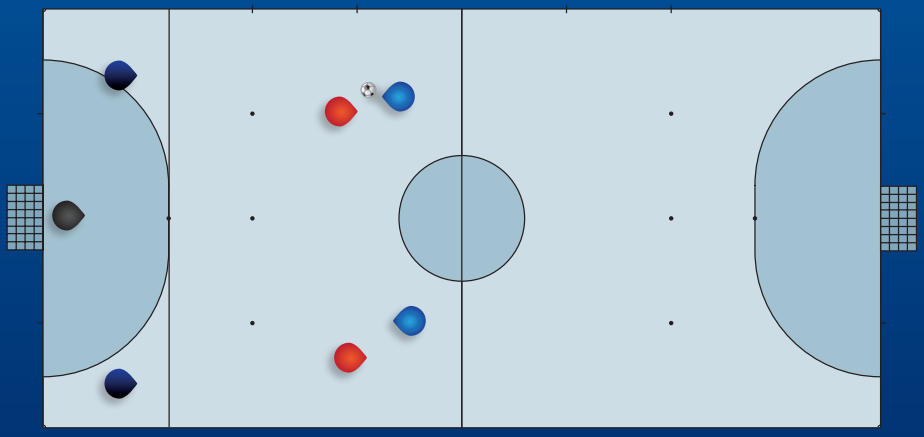
DRILL DESCRIPTION
Four groups of two players are positioned as follows on half a court: two groups are by the corner arcs (one in one corner, one in the other), and the other two groups are on either side near the halfway line, with the goalkeeper in the goal. One of the players in a corner plays a diagonal pass to a team-mate by the halfway line, who can either shoot first time or run with the ball briefly before shooting. The groups are rotated at the end of the drill.

13



DRILL DESCRIPTION
A player stands in each corner of a half-court with a ball.
An attacker and a defender are in the middle. The attacker should receive the ball from one of their four team-mates in the corners and shoot first time at one of the two goals.

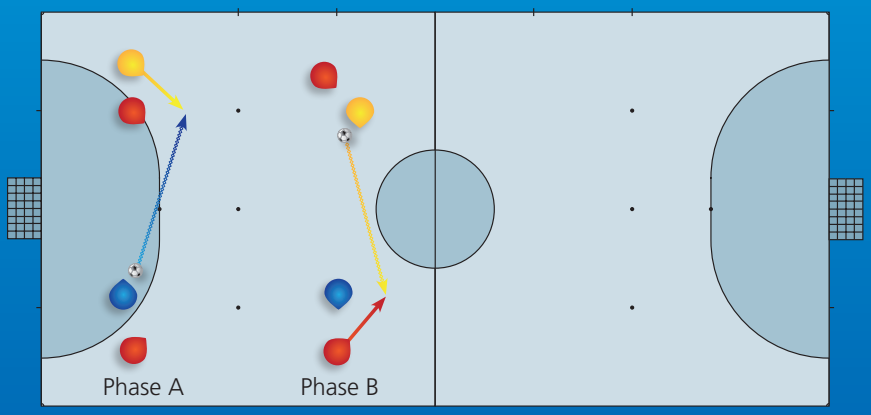
14



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two teams of two line up against each other in half a court. The team with the ball can either take a direct shot or play a one-two with a player (shown in blue) in the neutral zone (from the goal line to the edge of the penalty area) before shooting. The players in the neutral zone can take a maximum of two touches.

Drills for off-the-ball movement

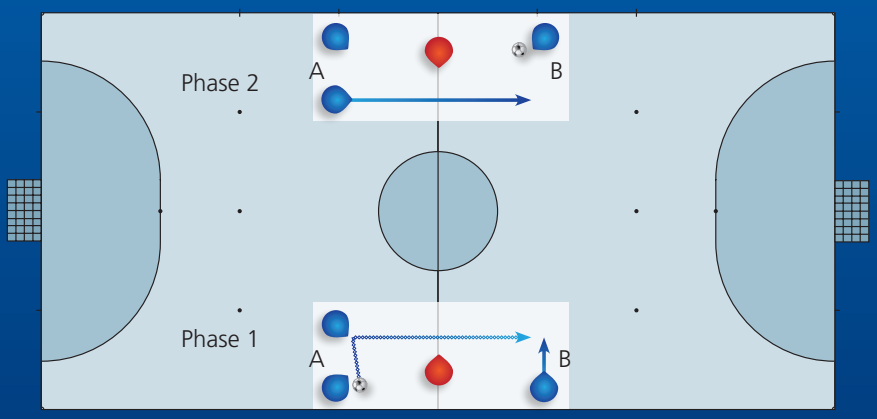
15



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Several groups of four players, each with a ball, spread out across the court. In each group, two players line up near one touch line and face the other two players in their group, positioned near the other touch line.

The player in yellow (Phase A) should make themselves available for a pass (in the 'open area') and receive the ball from their team-mate. The player in yellow then restarts the sequence (Phase B).

16



DRILL DESCRIPTION
A 3v1 situation is arranged in a 4x8m rectangle. The two players in Zone A must get the ball to their team-mate in Zone B, who should make themselves available and receive the pass (Phase 1). One of the two players in Zone A goes to join their team-mate in Zone B (Phase 2). Initially, the defender can move only along the line that divides the two zones. After that, they are free to move wherever they like.

1.4.3.8 Off-the-ball movement

Movement enabling a player to shake off an opponent and run into an ideal position ('open' area) to receive the ball from a team-mate. This aspect of individual tactics is a key factor in enabling the team with the ball to create opportunities. Off-the-ball movement is inextricably linked with the concept of mobility (movement), which is a cornerstone of group tactics when in possession of the ball. The player on the ball will not find it helpful if their team-mates remain static.

Off-the-ball movement
How? By making checked runs, runs involving a change in direction and pace, and runs diagonal to the goal line.

Where? In an area where players can receive the ball (an open area), i.e. the part of the court where the player on the ball can see a team-mate who has lost their marker.

When? At the right moment in the game.

Different ways to move off the ball
By dropping off in order to offer support, the forward moves towards the team-mate who has the ball, effectively shortening the distance between the passer and the recipient, while increasing the distance between themselves and the goal. Alternatively, the attacking player may choose to drop deeper than the player with the ball, thus creating a safe passing option. The attacker can also lose their marker by running free into space behind them. What this does is increase the distance between the player on the ball and the intended recipient of the pass, while also reducing the space between the latter and the opposition goal.

The 'open area' concept
This refers to the area in which the player in possession can see a team-mate who has thrown off their marker and is therefore able to deliver a pass to them. The size, shape and position of this space vary continually, depending on the position and actions of the defender marking the player

with the ball, as well as on the position of the other defenders and what they do.

The 'closed area' concept
This is the area of the court immediately behind a defender and into which the player in possession cannot pass the ball. The closer the defender is to the ball, the larger the 'closed off' area behind them. This area thus becomes a 'dead' zone for the team that has the ball.

Checked runs
These make it possible to get away from defenders into space and receive a pass more easily. The player heads in one direction before suddenly darting off the other way.

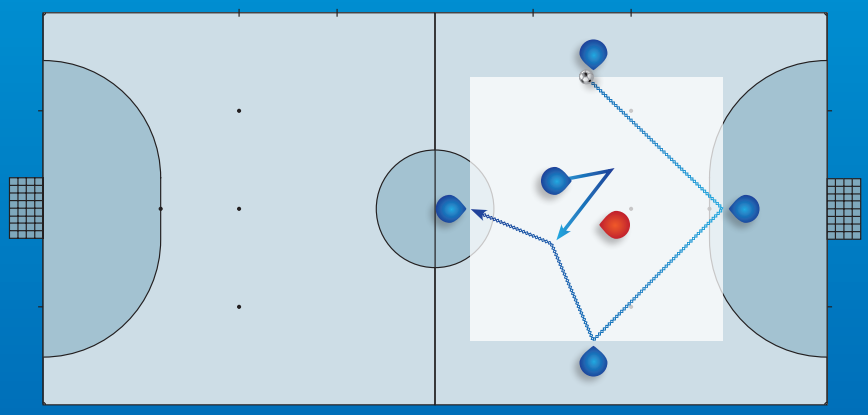
Running and changing direction
This is another way of gaining space on a direct opponent. It is very important to vary the speed of runs when changing direction.

For example: parallel, diagonal runs, etc.

Getting behind the defender
This is a useful and effective way of losing a marker. It poses a problem for the defender, since they cannot concentrate on both the ball and the player they are marking.

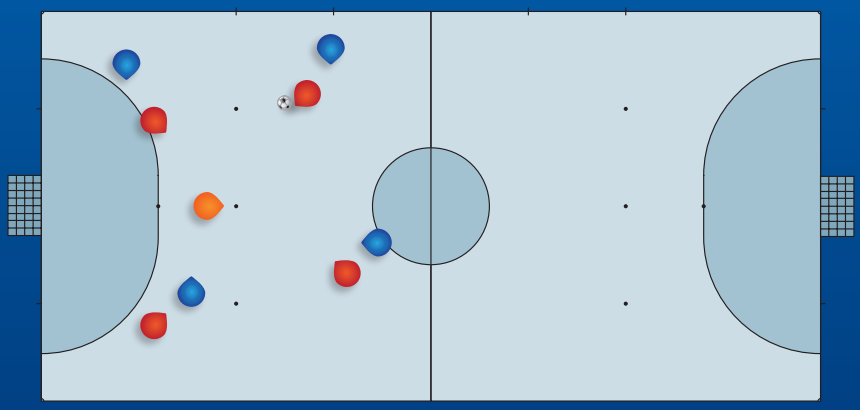
Timing runs off the ball
Timing is extremely important when it comes to running off the ball. A player must run into space as soon as they see that the team-mate who has the ball is in a position to pass. Furthermore, it is important to assess the situation that the player who has the ball is in, in terms of the time and space available to them.

17



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Four players standing at the sides of a 12x14m rectangle pass the ball between themselves, taking two touches. A defender and an attacker are inside the rectangle. The attacker must try to find space by checking their run, receive the ball from one of their four team-mates on the edge of the rectangle and then play the ball back to them.

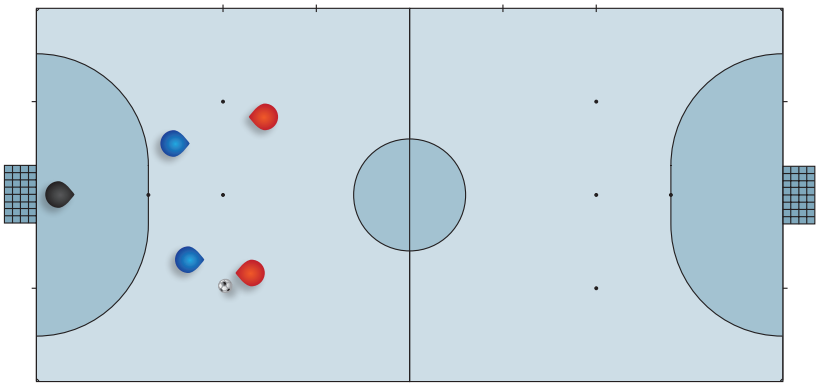
18



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two teams of four to five players attempt to retain possession. Defenders should mark their direct opponent tightly. Within the playing area (half a court), one or two players take the role of a joker, helping each team in turn to keep the ball. Players should be limited to two or three touches at a time.

1.4.3.9 Marking

Does the opponent have the ball or not?
If the opponent has the ball, the defender moves into a position between the opponent, the ball and the goal. However, if the player from the other team does not have the ball, the defender must still be positioned between their opponent and the goal, inside a triangle formed by the position of the ball, the position of the attacking player and the middle of the goal. The defender must take up the most suitable position inside this triangle, depending on the game situation.



Positioning and marking.

Challenging an opponent who has the ball: position of the legs
When it comes to teaching beginners, the textbooks state that the defender must not challenge the player in possession with their legs in line with their shoulders (feet parallel) because they could easily lose their balance. Instead, the defender should challenge with one foot forward and the other slightly behind them. Which foot goes forward and which back depends on the tactical decision made by the defender.

The defender's strong and weak sides in relation to the position of their feet
By putting one foot ahead of another, a defender automatically creates a strong side and a weak side. The strong side is where they can move more easily (side corresponding to the back foot) whereas the other foot is referred to as the weak side (side corresponding to the front foot).

Tactical considerations for a defender in one-on-one situations: drawing a player into a particular move
The defender can force the attacking player to move in the direction they want them to (where the forward is not as dangerous, e.g. out wide, a long way from the goal) and draw the player towards the defender's own strong side.

Tactical considerations for a defender in a one-on-one situation: various solutions
Is the opponent one-footed (i.e. do they overwhelmingly use just their right or left foot)? If so, they should be pushed onto their weaker foot.

Otherwise, it might be best for them to be ushered inside because there are more defenders in the central part of the court, or because the defender knows they are dangerous when shooting towards the back post and wants to prevent a dangerous situation developing in the next phase of play.

Problems involved in showing an opponent one side or the other
If the defender decides to show the attacking player one side or the other, they must make sure that the attacker actually goes where they want them to. To achieve this, the defender should ensure that the attacker is positioned no further forward than an imaginary line running between their (the defender's) legs.

What is the main aim of a defender in a one-on-one situation?
The answer may seem obvious in that the primary objective is to avoid being beaten. Therefore, in general, when starting to defend, the defender must go with the attacker who has the ball. Furthermore, they must pretend to go for the ball (tackle) to unsettle the forward and make them uncertain about how much time and room they actually have.

Challenging an opponent (front-on) as they are about to receive the ball
It is important to close down the forward who is about to receive the ball at the right time (while the ball is travelling between the passer and the player receiving it). Moreover, the defender must make sure they stop and remain at a safe distance just before the attacking player receives the ball.

Defender marking an opponent who has the ball with their back to goal
The defender must learn to avoid fouling while preventing their opponent from turning to face the goal. Furthermore, they must not let the forward use the defender's own body as a pivot point, enabling them to turn and beat them.

Marking an opponent who does not have the ball
The defender should generally be positioned between their opponent and the goal they are defending, while keeping an eye on both the opponent and the ball. The defender will be in difficulty if they lose track of the player and ball (i.e. if the forward has moved behind the defender).

Taking into account the opponent's characteristics and position when marking
The safety margin varies depending on the forward's speed, build, technical ability, etc.

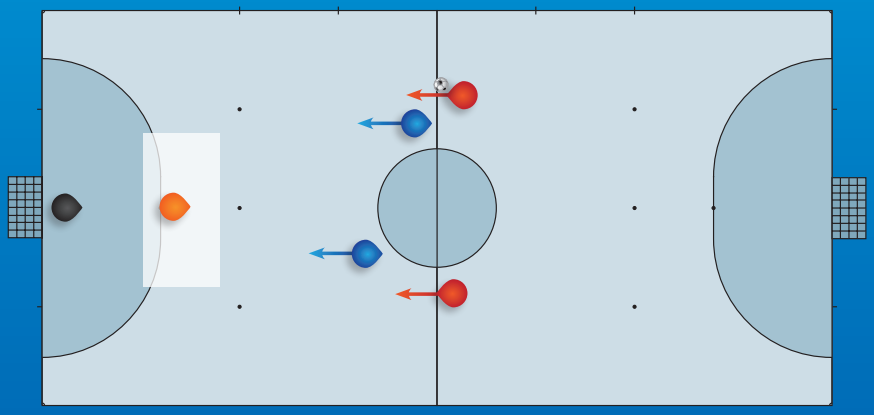
The further the forward is from the ball and the goal they are attacking, the looser the marking (more covering, less marking).

The closer the forward is to the ball and the goal they are attacking, the tighter the marking (less covering, more marking).

Marking or covering?
The main dilemma faced by defenders is deciding to what extent they should mark their opponent and to what extent they should just cover them. They need to consider the position of the opponent and the time and room available to the player with the ball (is the passing angle 'open' or 'closed'?).

Drill for defensive marking and covering

19



DRILL DESCRIPTION
Playing in half a court, the two players in possession must pass the ball to their team-mate standing in a 6x3m zone marked out in front of the goal close to the edge of the penalty area. When this team-mate receives the ball, they take a shot at goal. The two defenders attempt to prevent this using a 'marking and covering' action. Only the player who receives the ball and shoots can enter the marked-out zone.

1.4.3.10 Tackling

Tackling is a technical skill that enables the defender to win the ball from an opposing player or knock it away from them. Along with the two other ways of winning the ball (anticipating early and intercepting a pass), it enables the defender to break up the opponents' move.

It is a core technical concept requiring considerable tenacity and physical strength.

Tackling is not always the best option; sometimes it is better to avoid doing so (in some situations it is better to wait).

When coaches want to teach players how to tackle, they can use a theoretical approach. However, to ensure the players acquire the skill properly it is essential to set up one-on-one situations (even though this increases the risk of injuries).

There are three types of tackle: block tackle; side-on tackle; sliding tackle.

Block tackle
In a block tackle, the defender and the attacker are facing one another.

It is important to be in a side-on rather than a front-on position (with one leg slightly in front of the other).

Body weight must be evenly balanced, with legs slightly bent and ready to move.

Centre of gravity should be as low as possible to increase stability and strength.

The ball should be attacked quickly and with leg muscles taut so that the leg does not yield.

First method (traditional approach): with stronger (tackling) foot starting further back, attack the ball with the inside of the foot or instep.

Second method: leading with their stronger foot, the defender takes their opponent by surprise by going for the ball straightaway, using the leading foot, i.e. the one closest to the ball.

Side-on and sliding tackles
A defender tackles side-on when an opponent is running with the ball and the defender runs alongside them in the same direction; the defender can execute the tackle when they reach the line of the ball. The defender uses the inside of the instep of the foot furthest away from the attacker, pivoting on the other foot and turning their body towards the opponent.

The sliding tackle is used when the defender is unable to tackle side-on, intervening with the near foot (outside of the instep) or far foot (inside of the instep). Doing this can present a tactical risk, as once the defender is on the ground – if they have failed to win the ball – they are unable to defend.

1.4.3.11 Anticipating and intercepting a pass

An **interception** is made when a defender breaks up an attacking move by going straight for the ball.

In **anticipating** play, a defender cuts out a pass intended for the player they are marking.

- In order to reach the ball before an opponent, the defender should be well positioned on the passing angle and should avoid making contact with their opponent (keeping them roughly an arm's length away).
- The defender needs to read the path of the ball and be on their toes (sense of anticipation).

The defender needs to be very careful, because if they miss the ball they will put the whole defence in danger.

1.4.3.12 Defending the goal

A player defends their team's goal by putting their body between the forward on the ball and the goal, positioning themselves along a straight line between the attacker and the goal. The defender must not turn away (e.g. because they are afraid of being hit) if their opponent shapes to shoot, as this makes it easier for the attacker to dribble past them, in which case the goal would be left exposed. After the opponent has taken their shot, the defender must run back quickly to provide cover in case the keeper fails to hold onto the ball. If the defender slides in to try to defend the goal they must be sure they can win the ball; otherwise it is better that they stay on their feet as long as possible.

1.5 GROUP TACTICS

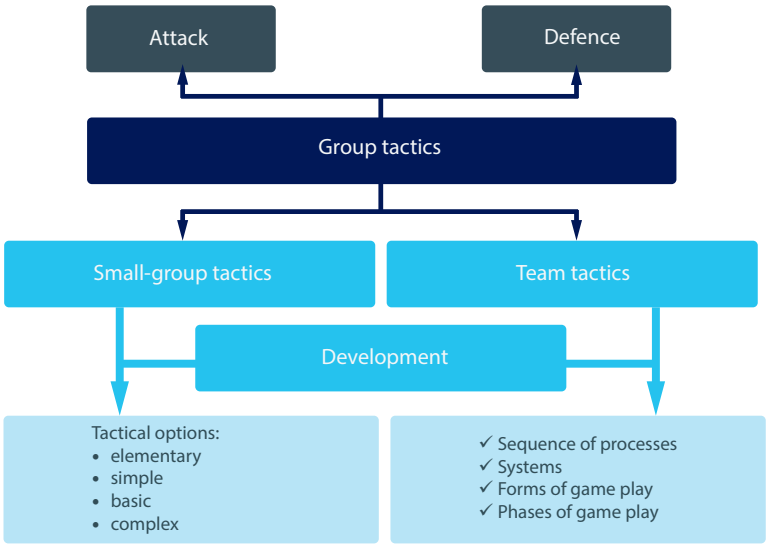
1.5.1 Introduction to group tactics

The group-based dimension of play is what makes team sports so rich in a tactical sense. As players begin to play in combination, they move beyond the world of individual tactics (without abandoning them) and enter into the world of **group tactics**. We will discuss the varying actions that must be managed and coordinated within group play, by teams as a whole and small groups of players within a team:

1. Small-group technical/tactical options
2. Tactical processes (complex tactical options)
3. Phases of play
4. Forms of game play
5. Systems

These actions may include a group of two or three players (**small-group tactics**), or the whole team (**team tactics**).

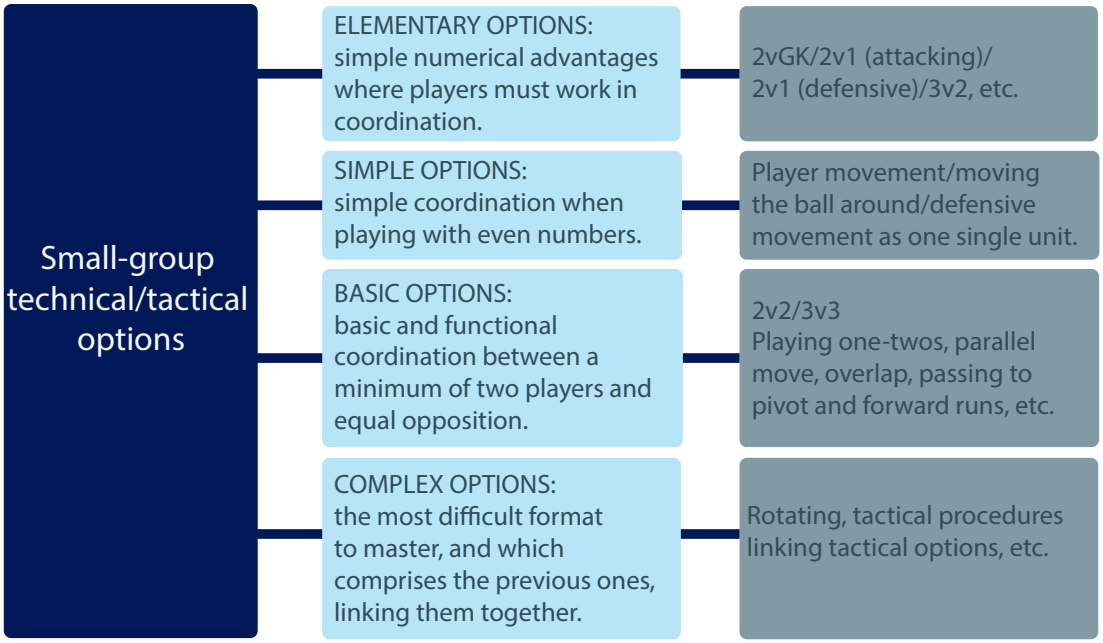
An outline of group tactics



Based on the *Conceptual Map of the Preparation of Group Tactics* (Antón, J. L., 1998)

1.5.2 Small-group tactics

Small-group tactics are used with a minimum of two players in conjunction with the individual tactics and core concepts they possess, the aim being to achieve a common tactical objective (this objective will be formed according to the general principles of game play). Small-group tactics represent the halfway point between individual and group tactics, and are based on the former as a means of improving and facilitating the latter. Options for teamwork amongst various players, in attacking as well as defensive areas, will be referred to as small-group technical/tactical options. Small-group technical/tactical options are categorised as follows:



Classification based on J.L. Antón (1998).

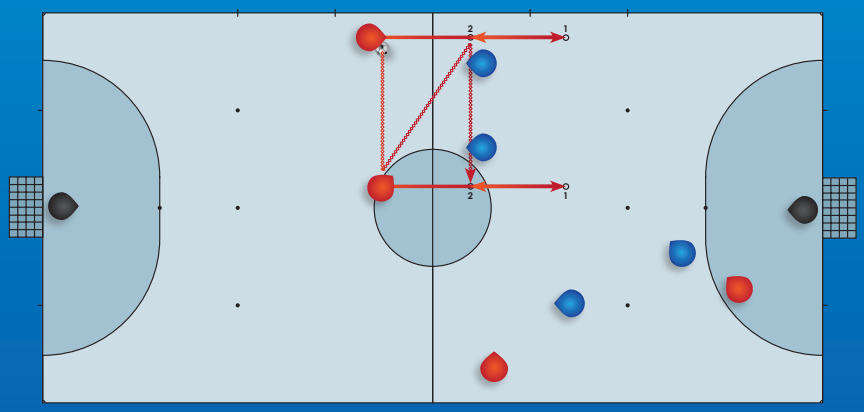
In the following section, all of the small-group technical/tactical options are categorised, with attacking concepts listed separately to defensive ones. The most important features of each type of play will be discussed further in the sections below:

Attacking technical/tactical options with two players	Playing in pairs/pass and move/pass, move and drop back/ player receiving the pass feints/back-door cut/one-two; parallel/ diagonal/crossing (positions)/overlap/block/block and roll/screen/isolation/vertical pairs/playing in pairs with the pivot/ elementary options for two players (2vGK/2v1+GK)/basic options for two players in an attacking transition (2v2).
Attacking technical/tactical options with three players	Playing in a three with the pivot/decoy run to free up a passing angle/attacking triangles/creating and taking advantage of an indirect block/letting the pass go to another player (or dummy)/dragging defenders away/playing in threes (e.g. parallel and diagonal simultaneously)/elementary options for three players (3v1+GK/3v2+GK)/basic options for three players in attacking transition (3v3).
Defensive technical/tactical options with two players	Defence against a 2v1 or players in support/defending against pairs/cover and switching/switch marker/'jumping'/line of pressure created by two players/defending a 2v3.
Defensive technical/tactical options with three players	Defensive triangles/controlling the space (and pressing) according to the position of the ball and direction of play/ defensive rotation between three players (cover and switching)/defending the three-player attack with pivot/ defending the three-player attack/defending a 3v4.

Technical/tactical attacking options for two players

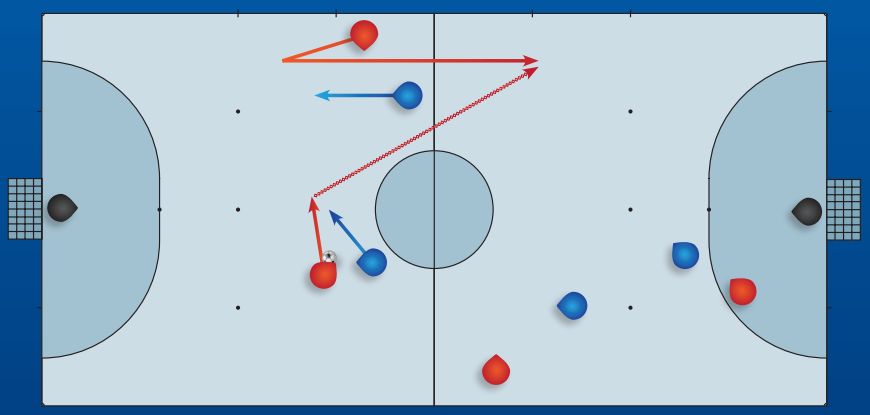
1

Playing in pairs



2

Back-door cut with player on the ball reading the play and playing a pass



1.5.2.1 Small-group technical/tactical attacking options

Technical/tactical attacking options for two players
This is a means for two players to work in tandem; it covers the majority of options discussed in the following sections, as well as numerous other forms of game play.

Back-door cut with player on the ball reading the play and playing a pass
A player drops back down the wing towards their goal, taking their marker with them, thereby creating space that they can then run into behind the marker.

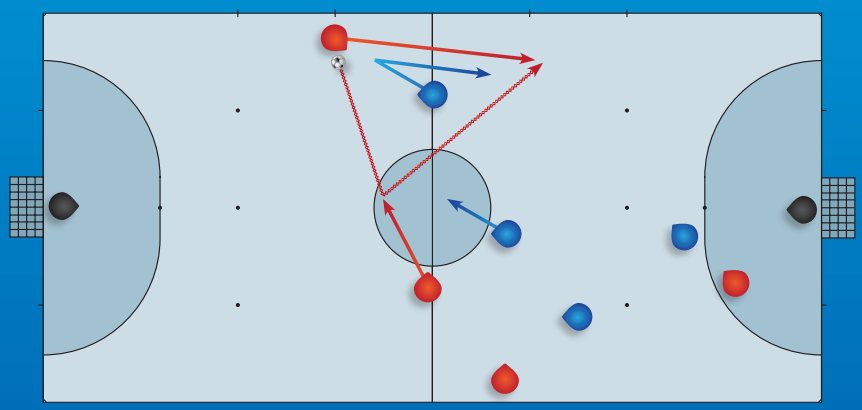
One-two
A player passes to the supporting team-mate and then runs off the ball into space behind the marker to receive the ball back from the supporting player. This option is normally used in 2v2 situations to create a 2v1, by drawing a defender away from their zone.

Overlap
This is where two team-mates cross over. An attacker goes on a bending run from their position around the player in possession, aiming to receive the ball or cause confusion in the defence at the moment of the crossover. This confusion can then be exploited by the player on the ball.

Parallel move
An attacker runs off the ball (not necessarily after a pass) into the space behind the defender marking the player in possession, in order to receive a pass. This is known as a parallel run because it is normally made when the ball is on the wing and the player making the move off the ball receives the pass down the line.

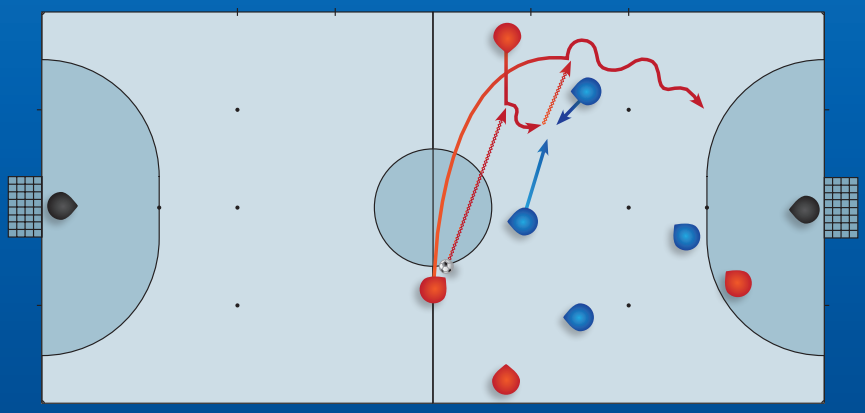
3

One-two



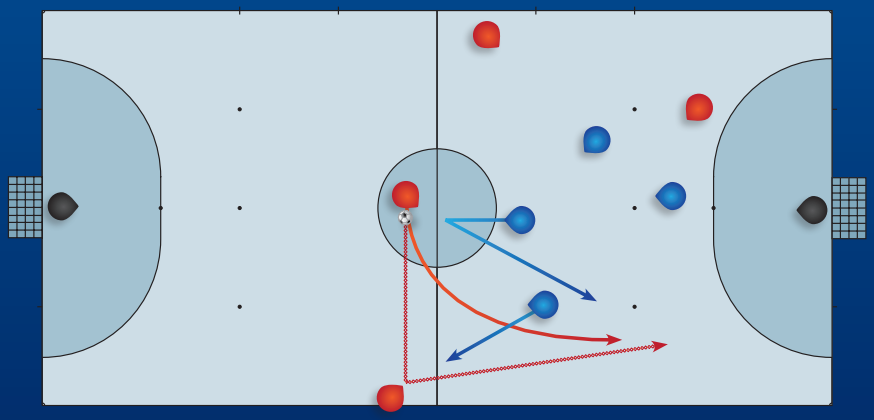
4

Overlap



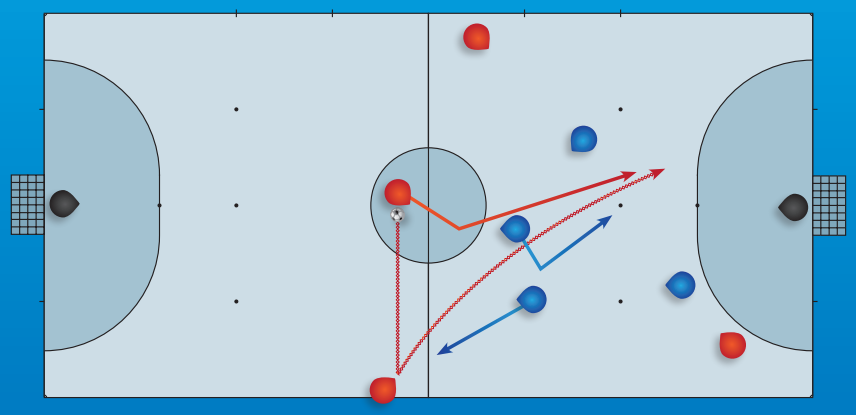
5

Parallel move



6

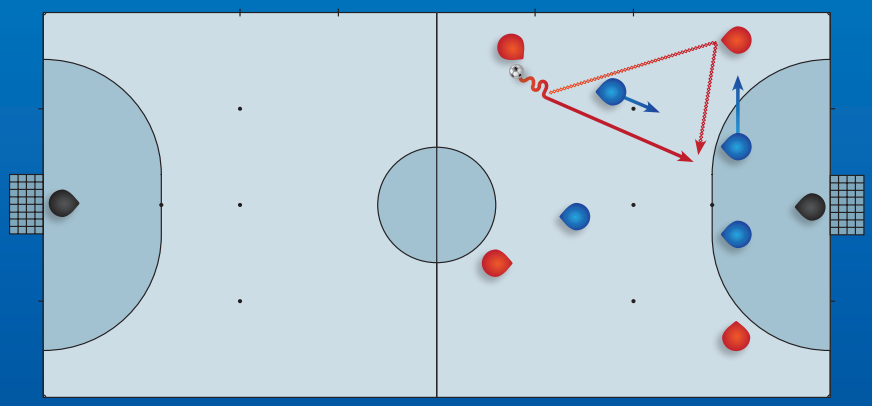
Diagonal move



Diagonal move
An attacker runs off the marker (not necessarily after a pass) into space behind the defensive line in order to receive a diagonal ball from the team-mate in possession. This move is known as a 'diagonal' because the ball is received diagonally relative to the horizontal and vertical axes.

7

Vertical pairs

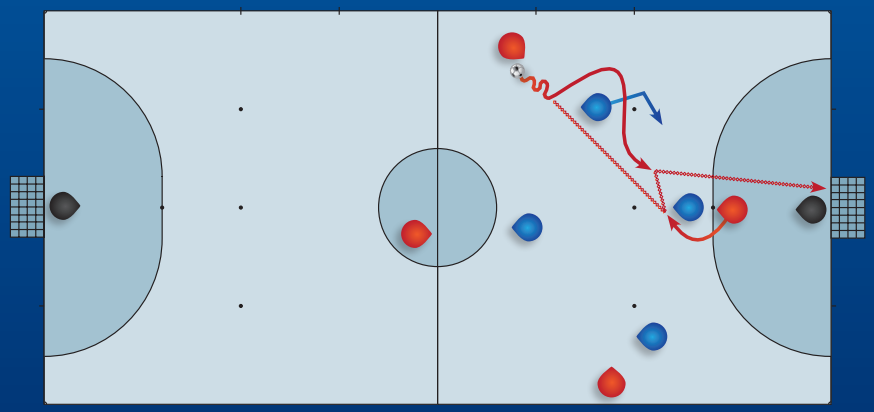


Vertical pairs
This includes game situations with two players where one is much deeper than the other, creating a large space between the defensive lines. In 'horizontal' pairs, the players work together in a 2v2 against the same line of defence, whereas playing in 'vertical' pairs they play in a 2v2 against defenders from different lines of defence.

Play between the pivot and one other player
This applies to all match situations with vertical pairs formed by a player passing the ball and the pivot, who receives the ball from deep.

8

Pass, forward run and lay-off from pivot



Elementary technical/tactical options for two players
A straightforward numerical advantage of 2vGK and 2v1. These advantages mainly arise from an attacking transition or when the line of defence has been broken, which creates a temporary numerical advantage until the defensive line drops back and reorganises.

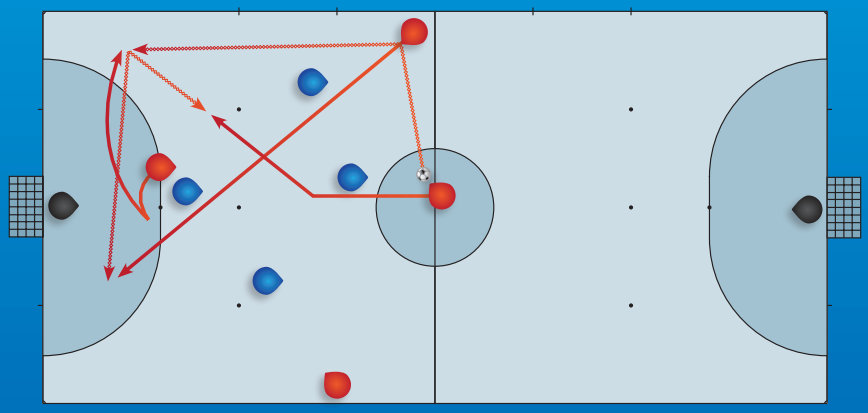
Basic technical/tactical options for two players in an attacking transition situation
A 2v2 in a positional attack against an organised defence is not the same as an attacking transition where both attack and defence have equal numbers.

Three-player attack (with pivot):
Generally speaking, all moves involving the pivot are executed with two players making a forward run. There are various options to three-way-play, just as there are with vertical pairs including the pivot. However, in this scenario more options are available due to a second player making a forward run.

Technical/tactical attacking options for three players

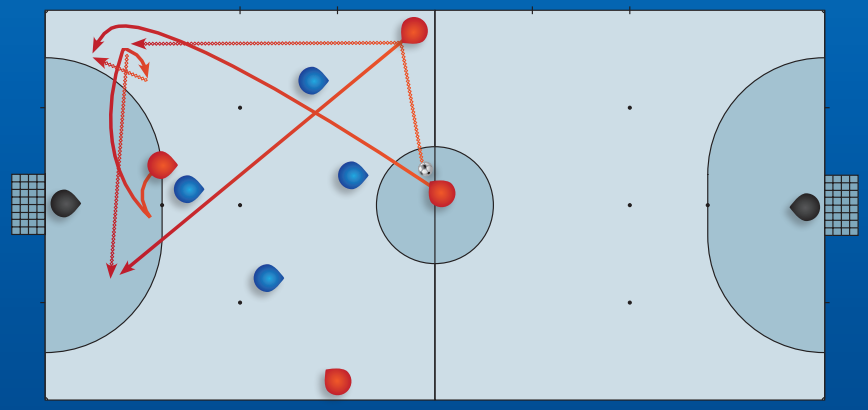
9

Pass to pivot with two players making a forward run (at back post or outside the area)



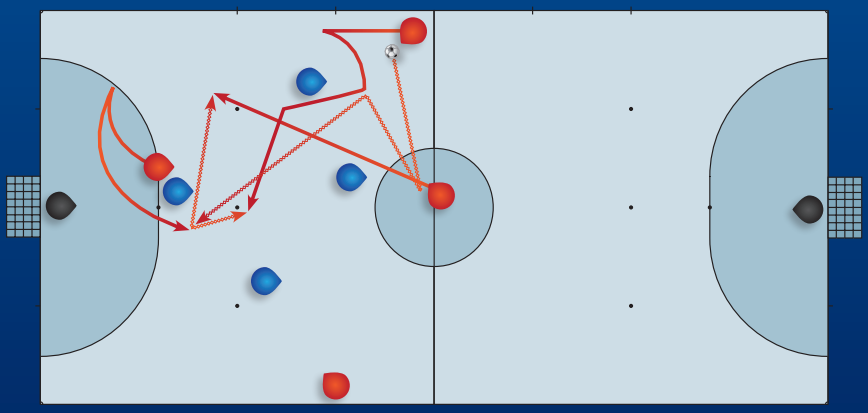
10

Pass to pivot with two players making a forward run (at back post or overlap)



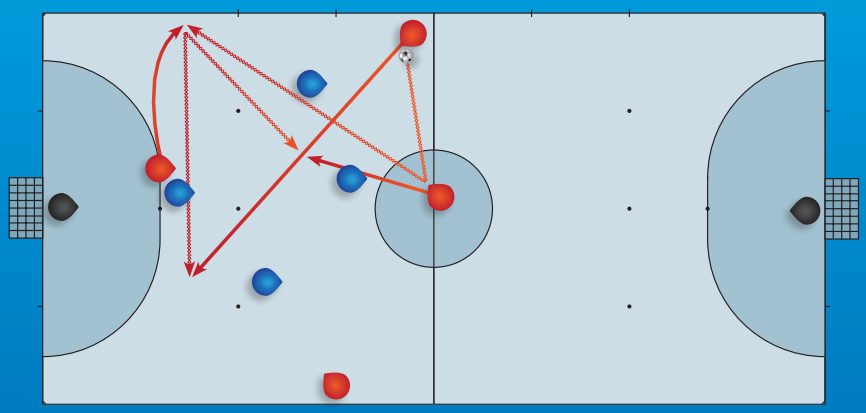
11

Playing in pairs with pass to pivot allowing two players to make forward runs



12

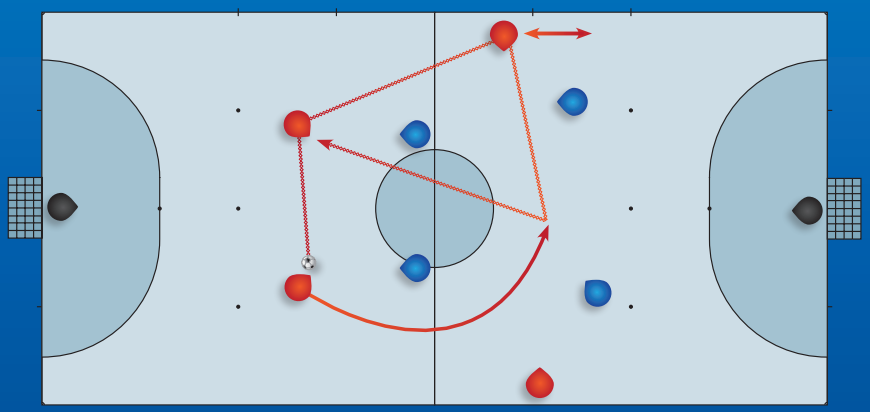
Going wide to create a 'false' pivot



Decoy run to free up or create a passing angle
Movement off the ball in order to free up space or create a potential passing angle is a technical/tactical option for three-player combinations.

13

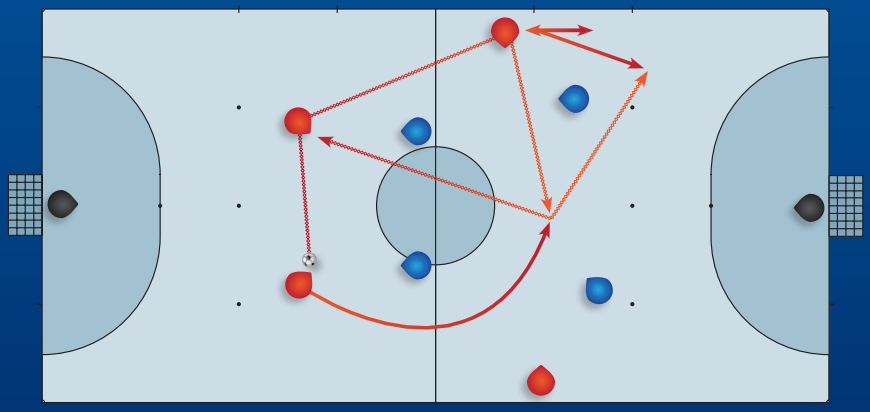
Attacking triangles (passing triangles)



Attacking triangles
Generally speaking, the aim of having players form triangles, with the ball on one corner of the triangle, is to create a situation that enables the player in possession to receive support at all times, with various passing angles being created. This prevents the defence from pressing the ball.

14

Attacking triangles (one-twos)



Dragging defenders away
Although this move can be executed by one player in a 1v1, it can also be employed by up to three players. Space is created by separating and breaking up the defensive cover, thereby enabling successful 1v1 situations to be created, provided that the players running off the ball do so in a direction away from the 1v1 situation.

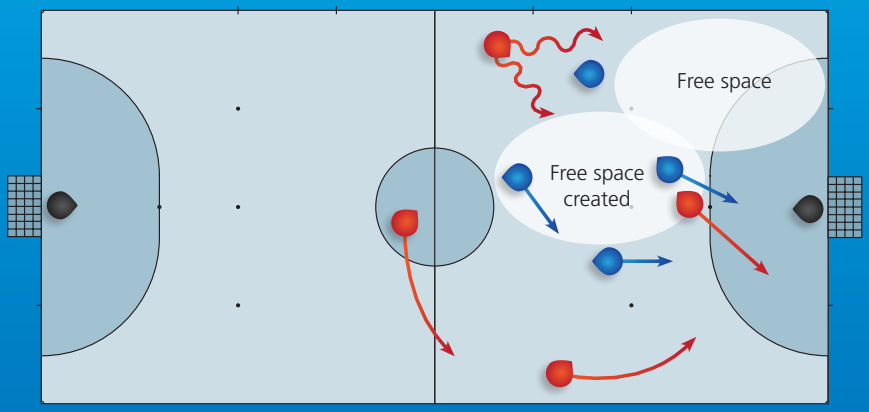
Three-player attack
Any passing move involving three players, regardless of their movement or positions. For example, players making parallel and diagonal runs off the ball, with a pass then being made to one of the two options.

Elementary small-group technical/ tactical options for three players
Outnumbering the opposition in a 3vGK (unlikely), 3v1, or 3v2. As with numerical advantages with two players, players must attack with speed and accuracy to take advantage and score.

Basic technical/tactical options for three players in an attacking transition situation
Although a 3v3 is more complex than a 2v2 transition, as an equal-sided situation offering many small-group options for slowing the attacking transition down in a defensive sense, it also gives attackers, who are looking to take advantage of the transition, the chance to create opportunities for finishing on goal quickly.

15

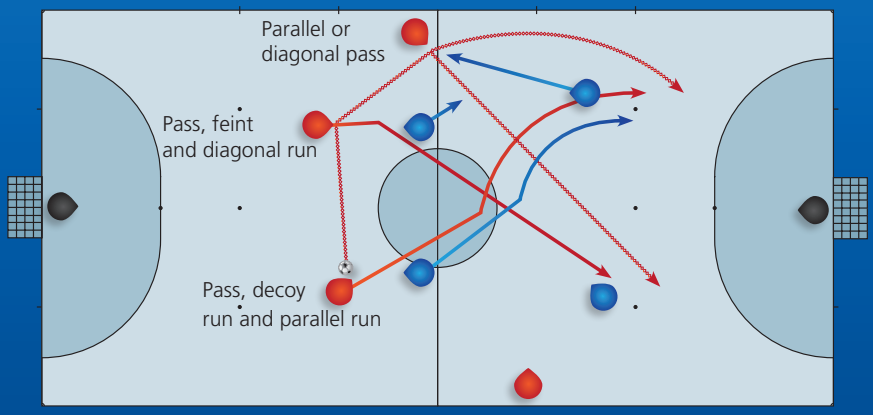
Three players dragging defenders away



Two options in breaking past the defender in a 1v1 when the defender is not being covered by one of their team-mates.

16

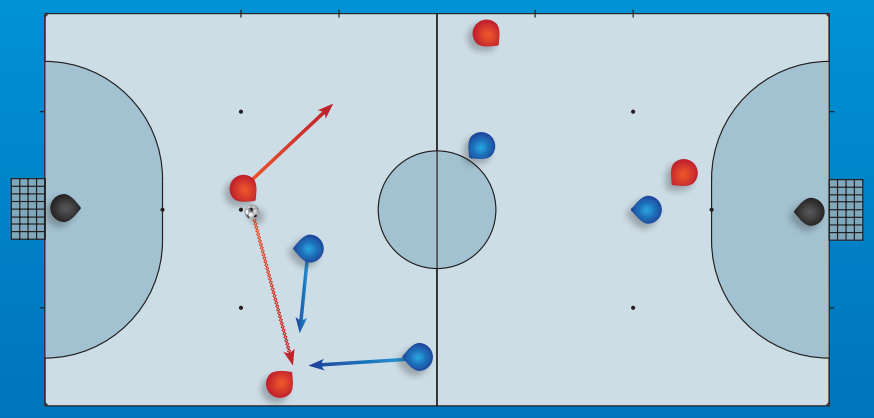
Three-player moves: parallel and diagonal moves



Technical/tactical defensive options for two players

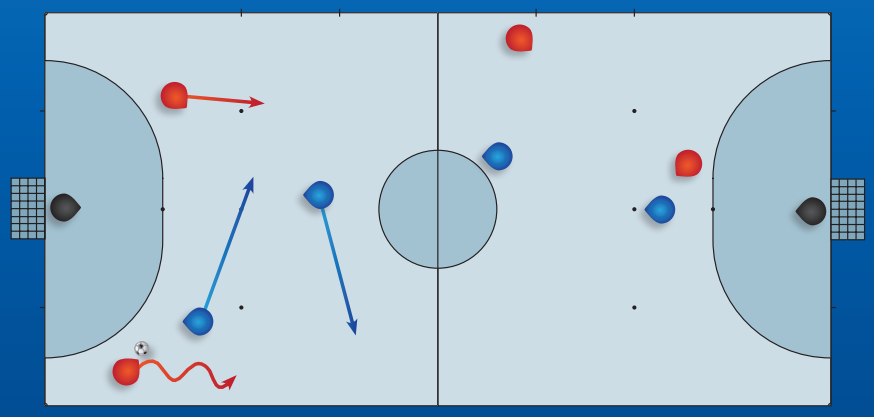
17

2v1 defence



18

Covering and switching



1.5.2.2 Small-group technical/ tactical defensive options

Defence in a 2v1 or defensive support
A defensive move where two defenders work together to put pressure on the player in possession, trying to stifle the opposition and close down the passing angles, and pressing the ball with the aim of regaining possession.

Covering and switching positions
This is a defensive tactical option for two players. A defensive player moves out of position to cover an attacking move or player and their defensive team-mate swaps positions with them in order to provide balance to the shape of the defensive system.

Defending against pairs
Defence in a 2v2; defending against a one-two; defending against an overlap; defending against attacking play in pairs (with the pivot), etc.

Switching marker
When two defenders switch between the opponents they are marking.

Jumping
This is a variation on switching markers and involves defenders 'jumping' from one attacking player on the ball to another, with one defender going to mark the player in possession and a second defender moving across to mark the attacker that the first defender was marking previously.

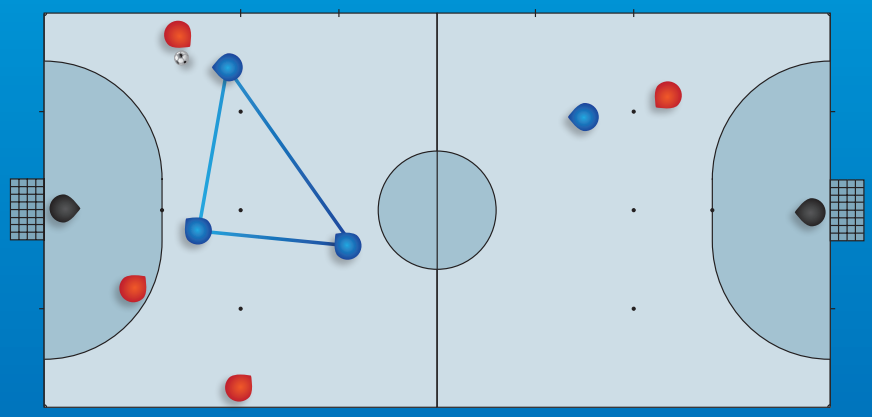
Two players creating a line of pressure
Two defenders press the ball in a coordinated way and close down the passing angles to prevent the ball from passing the first line of defence.

Defending when outnumbered in a 2v3
A defensive move which is executed by two defenders when at a numerical disadvantage during a transition of play. The defenders take up wide and staggered positions in order to try and force the player in possession to move towards the side of the court where numbers are equal.

Technical/tactical defensive options for three players

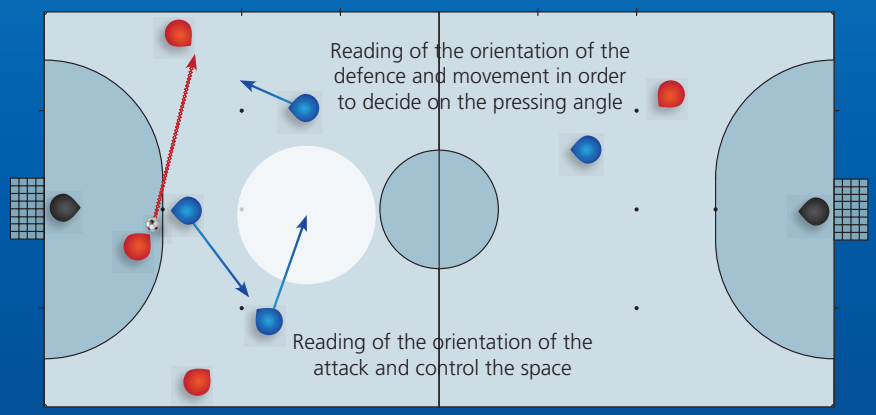
19

Defensive triangles



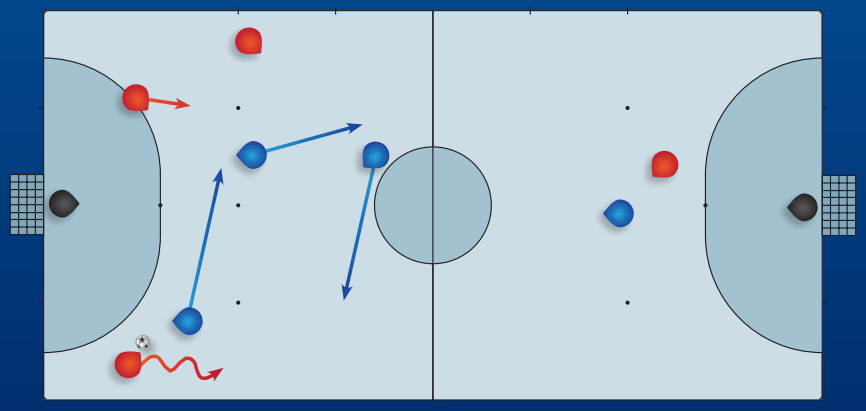
20

Defensive rotation for three players covering and switching



21

Defensive rotation with three players covering and switching



Defensive triangles
The rational occupation of space by three defenders, with two players usually forming a first line in relation to the position of the ball, and the third commanding the space on a second line in order to provide cover or to switch marking duties with one of the players on the first line.

Controlling space relative to the position of the ball and the shape of the attack
This defensive triangle can alter its shape according to the position of the ball or direction in which the player in possession is taking play. The coordinated reading of the game by these three defenders is a fundamental core small-group concept in the development of defensive play.

Defensive rotation between three players
This is a scenario that has already been discussed in the context of three defenders covering and rotating. One of the defenders comes across to cover the player who has been beaten, with the other two defenders moving in the other direction to reorganise the defence.

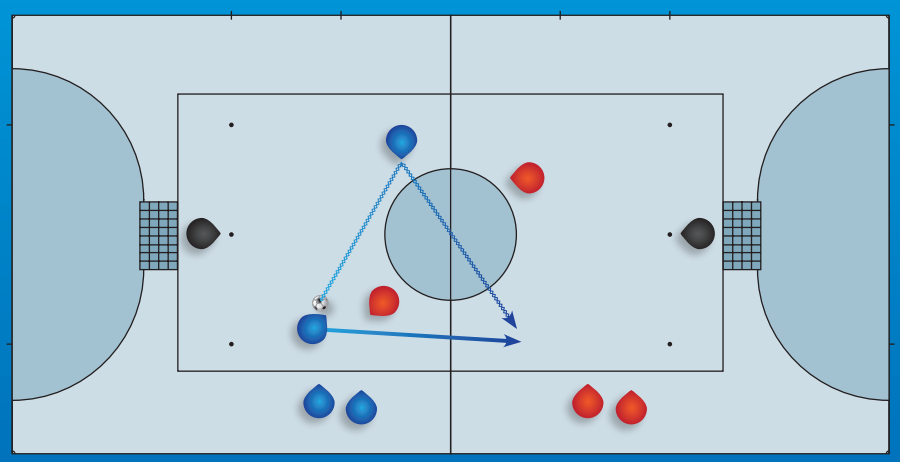
Defending against a three (with a pivot)
A scenario where a pass is made to a pivot, who has two attackers making forward runs. The defence is facing a situation close to their goal with the risk of conceding a goal-scoring opportunity.

Defending a 3v4
A numerical disadvantage which occurs in transitions of play when four attackers push forward in an attacking transition and one of the defensive players is not behind the ball. Similarly, a positional defence can also find itself outnumbered in a 3v4 when a player has been sent off. This will be discussed and analysed further in the section on systems.

13
adidas

2v2 drill in a 28x15m area

22



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Core attacking and defensive concepts. Two-player combinations. Playing in pairs. Core defensive concepts involved in cooperation between two players.

OBJECTIVES
To improve decision-making skills in group attacking and defensive aspects of the game, starting with a 2v2 scenario. To work on basic small-group technical/tactical options.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8-10 plus goalkeepers.

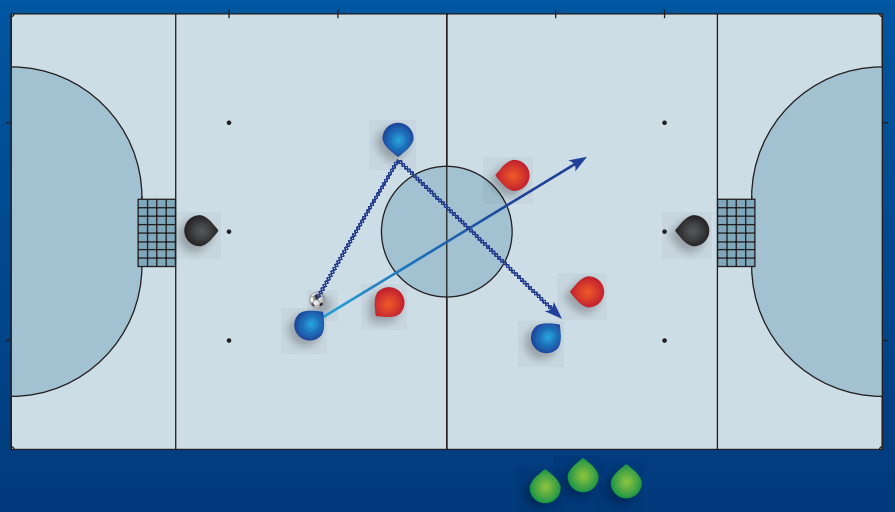
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- A 2v2 plus goalkeepers is played in a 28x15m playing area.
- Whenever the ball goes out of play, it goes back to the goalkeeper of the team who would normally be awarded the kick-in.
- The session helps players to improve the application of technical/tactical options.
- Change pairs every two minutes.

VARIATIONS
- Increase the playing area to 28x20m.
- Unlimited number of touches until the first goal, then three touches until the second goal, then two touches until the third goal, one touch after the third goal except after regaining possession (when two touches are allowed).

3v3 drill in a 28x20m area

23



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Core attacking and defensive concepts. Playing in pairs and threes. Core defensive concepts in team play and controlling space between two/three players.

OBJECTIVES
To improve decision-making in the group side of the game, starting with a 2v2 and 3v3 scenario. To work on basic small-group technical/tactical options in attack and defence.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
9 plus goalkeepers.

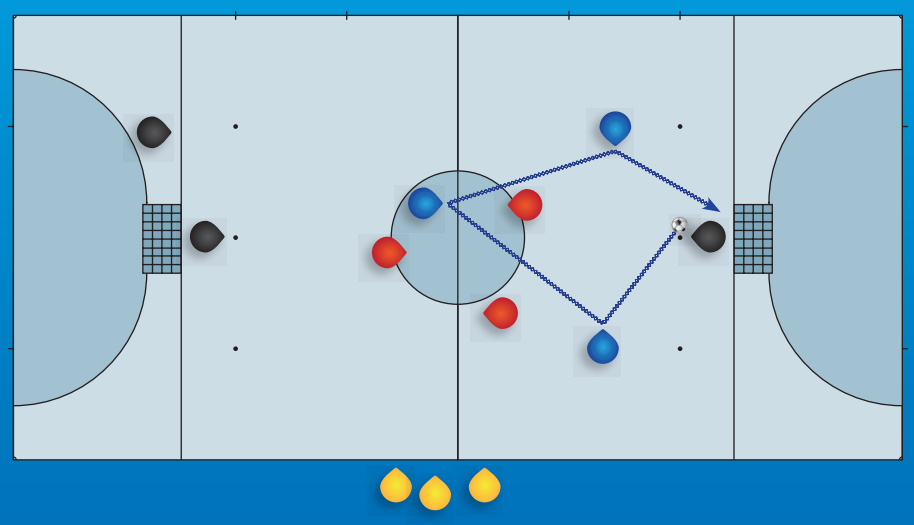
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 3v3 plus goalkeepers, played in a 28x20m zone.
- Whenever the ball goes out of play, it goes back to the goalkeeper of the team who have the kick-in.
- This drill helps players apply technical/tactical options better.
- The three-player team waiting off the court switches with one of the teams on the court every two minutes.

VARIATIONS
- Unlimited number of touches until the first goal, then three touches until the second goal, then two touches until the third goal, one touch after the third goal except after regaining possession (two touches).
- Players cannot return a pass to the team-mate that passed the ball to them (except when finishing on goal).

3v3 in a 28x20m playing area, bringing the ball out under pressure and finishing on either goal, with restrictions

24



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options. Direct counter-attacking and finishing on goal quickly.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
Core individual attacking and defensive concepts. Elementary (2v1, 3v2) and basic (2v2, 3v3) small-group technical/tactical options. Peripheral vision of the surrounding area. Speed and accuracy in executing technical skills.

OBJECTIVES
To use and manage basic small-group technical/tactical options to develop play. To use elementary small-group technical/tactical options to create opportunities for finishing on goal quickly in situations where the attack outnumbers the defence in a 2v1 or a 3v2. To manage changing situations in the game space and field of vision, and thereby come up with solutions and create situations that enable opportunities to finish on goal quickly.

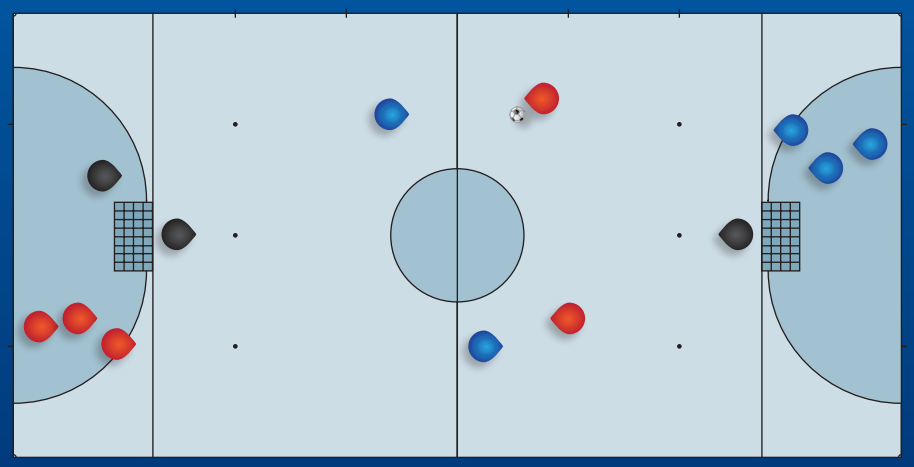
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
9 plus goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 3v3 in a 28x20m playing zone.
- Whenever the ball goes out, play restarts from one of the goals.
- The team in possession has to cross the halfway line as if attacking the other goal, at which point they can attack either of the goals.
- Teams can change the direction of their attack whenever they see an opportunity to create a numerical advantage.
- There is a time limit on each attack: after crossing the halfway line, the attacking team has four to six seconds in which to finish on goal.
- Three teams of three players who rotate every three minutes.

VARIATIONS
- Limit the number of passes allowed in setting up an opportunity to finish on goal after crossing the halfway line (maximum of one).
- Teams work on basic small-group technical/tactical options (in a 2v2 and 3v3), learning how to play their way out when under pressure from the opposition, as well as on elementary technical/tactical options (1vGK, 2v1, 3v2), learning how to take advantage of numerical advantages in the final third.

Drills with 2v2, 3v3, and 4v4, substituting the player who loses possession

25



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options in counter-attacking.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Core technical/tactical concepts. Command of peripheral vision of the surrounding area in situations where there is an equal number of players and where there is a numerical advantage. Small-group technical/tactical options.

OBJECTIVES
To encourage players to make a quick switch in transition after regaining possession of the ball in order to make the most of a numerical advantage as quickly as possible. To work on elementary, basic and complex small-group technical/tactical options.

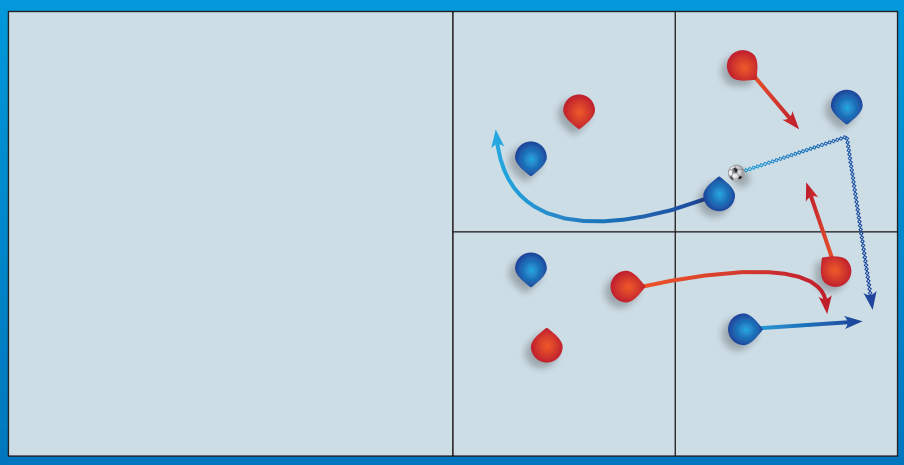
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
9-12 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Play begins with a 2v2 in a 28x20m playing area and three substitutes per team, positioned behind the goal line opposite to the goal their team is defending. The game is always played with a 2v2; a player who loses possession must swap with a substitute and cannot participate in the defensive transition after losing the ball. This rule ensures that the game is played with a 2v1 plus a defender running back to defend (i.e. the substitute entering the court). Two games are played lasting three minutes each.
- Another two games with the same rules are played lasting three minutes each. This time, the game is played with a 3v3 and two substitutes per team behind their respective goal line. This ensures a 3v2 scenario plus a defender running back to defend.
- For the last two games (again three minutes), a 4v4 is played plus one substitute per team behind their respective goal line. The rules are the same as for previous variations.

Possession drill with 5v5 in a 20x20m area. Both teams must have a player in each of the 10x10m squares

26



LEARNING UNIT
Group and individual tactics.

PHASE
Sport development.

CONTENT
Occupying and create space. Logically occupying space. Peripheral vision of the surrounding area. Perceptive/decision-making abilities.

OBJECTIVES
To develop and improve visual perception and decision-making in the game with and without the ball. To understand how to occupy space in order to create space and passing angles through elementary and basic small-group technical/tactical options aimed at maintaining possession.

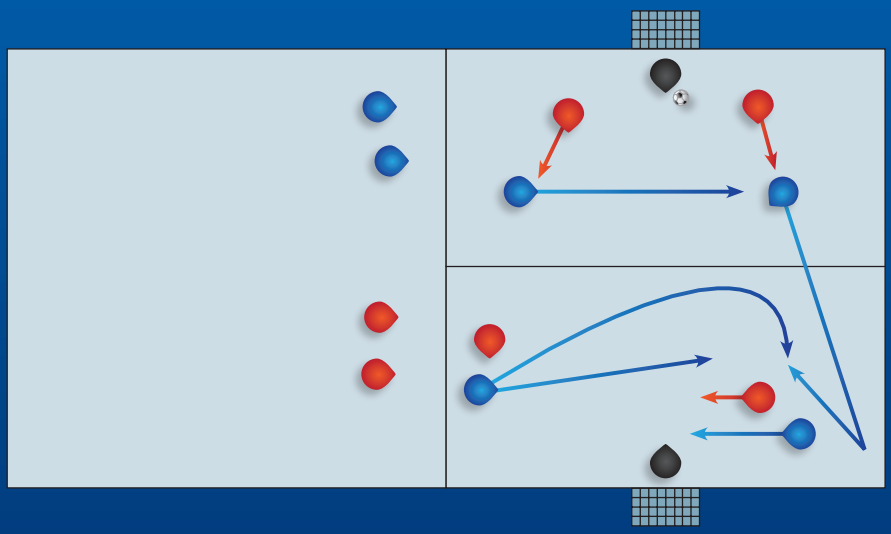
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10.

EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs and cones.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Divide the half-court into four 10x10m squares.
- A possession exercise is played with the rule that attackers and defenders must always have at least one player in each square.
- Players can move freely between the squares in the half-court as long as the previous rule is met. 2v2, 2v1, and 1v2 ball-retention situations and circulation of ball and players.
- Once players have mastered this exercise, two goals can be introduced and both teams are allowed to finish in either goal once they have made a specified number of passes or have 'overcome' the opposition in each of the four squares.

4v4 in a 20x20m area, splitting into a 2v2 in 10x20m

27



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition.

CONTENT
2v2. Feinting. Quick and accurate execution of technical skills when finishing on goal (control, pass and shoot). Defending against a pair of players.

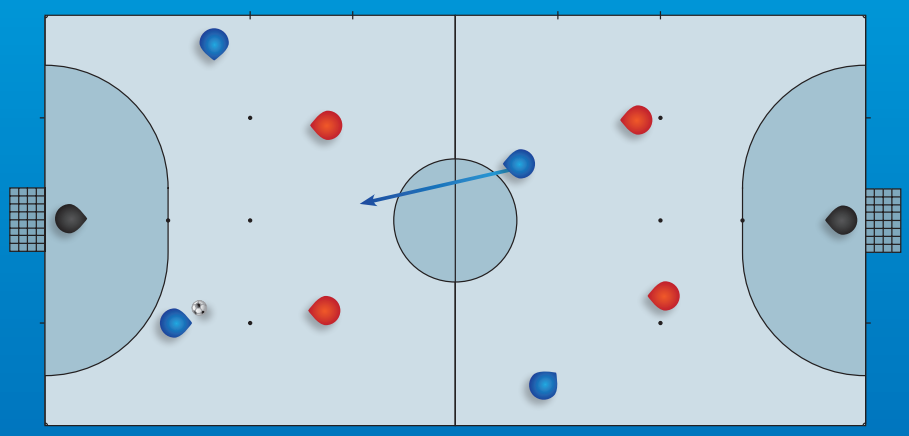
OBJECTIVES
To make better use of feints when receiving the ball in 2v2 situations, either with back to the defender or when facing them. To adapt finishing techniques to the lack of time and space in game play. To improve the concept of playing in pairs and vertical pairs. To use drill variations to work on elementary small-group technical/tactical options (3v2 and 2v1).

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8-12 plus two goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 2v2 in each area of the court. Neither defenders nor attackers can leave their playing zone. Both teams can score in either goal.
- Limit the amount of time that the ball is allowed in each zone. For example, after 8-10 seconds the ball must switch to another zone.
- Feinting can be worked on when playing in pairs as well as when receiving the ball from another zone; the attacker feinting with the defender at their back.
- Players making the pass are allowed to move into the zone where their team have taken possession, creating a 3v2 advantage. This player can then only return to their previous zone if a goal is scored; if not, then their team will be outnumbered by 1v2 in their previous zone.
- Rather than allowing the passer of the ball to switch zones, another option is to allow the player who did not make the pass to switch (decoy run).

2v2 in each half of the court. Support for a 3v2 when bringing the ball out under pressure or in finishing on goal

28



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Small-group technical/tactical options. Core tactical attacking concepts. Introduction to numerical advantages and disadvantages. Elementary technical/tactical options in a 3v2.

OBJECTIVES
To improve small-group technical/tactical options for maintaining possession, developing play and finishing on goal. To improve the grasp of core technical/tactical concepts when at a numerical advantage or disadvantage of 3v2 and 2v1.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8 plus goalkeepers.

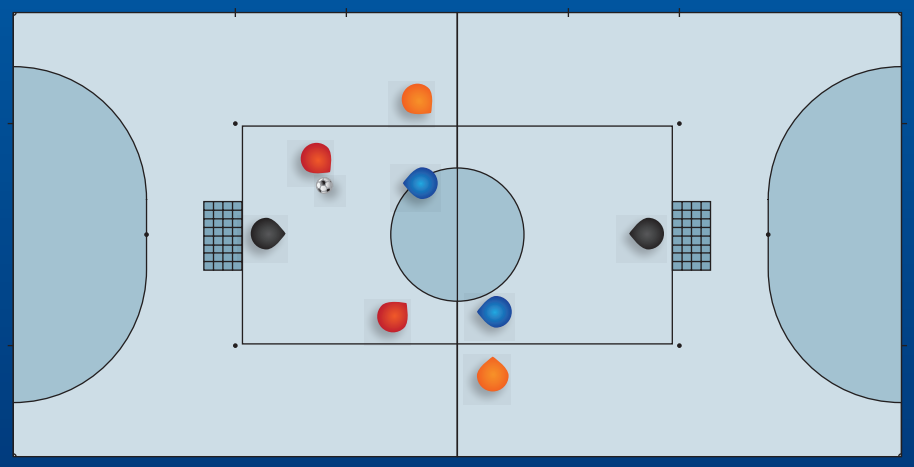
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Drills are executed with real game play of 4v4 plus goalkeepers, positioned as a 2v2 in each half of the court. The primary rule is that players cannot cross the halfway line from either side of the court.
- One of the players from the team in possession of the ball may switch halves to create a 3v2 advantage. This can be done either when the team is bringing the ball out of defence (moving from the attacking to the defensive half) and in finishing on goal (moving from the defensive to the attacking half).

VARIATIONS
- Players are only allowed to switch halves for a limited amount of time (e.g. five seconds).
- The player switching halves to create a 3v2 can only take a limited amount of touches (e.g. one or two).

2v2 + external jokers in 18x9m (rules in place for the use of the jokers)

29



LEARNING UNIT
Small-group technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Small-group technical/tactical options. Core tactical attacking concepts.

OBJECTIVES
To improve small-group technical/tactical options for maintaining possession, developing play and finishing on goal.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
6 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- The drill involves real game play with 2v2 plus 'joker' wingers and goalkeepers on an 18x9m (volleyball) court. Players can take two touches
- The rules for using the jokers are as follows:
  - Whenever a pass is played to the joker, the joker cannot play a return ball to the player who played the original pass.
  - Once the joker is brought into play, they can only be involved again once the other joker has been involved in the play.

VARIATIONS
- One of the jokers is allowed to position themselves on the goal line.
- One of the jokers must be positioned on the touch line and the other on the goal line, with the two of them allowed to switch positions.

1.5.3 Team tactics

Team tactics are complex tactical elements that involve all the players in a team. Adopting a coordinated and pre-planned approach, they apply individual and group technical/tactical options in order to meet the specific attacking and defensive objectives that have been set.

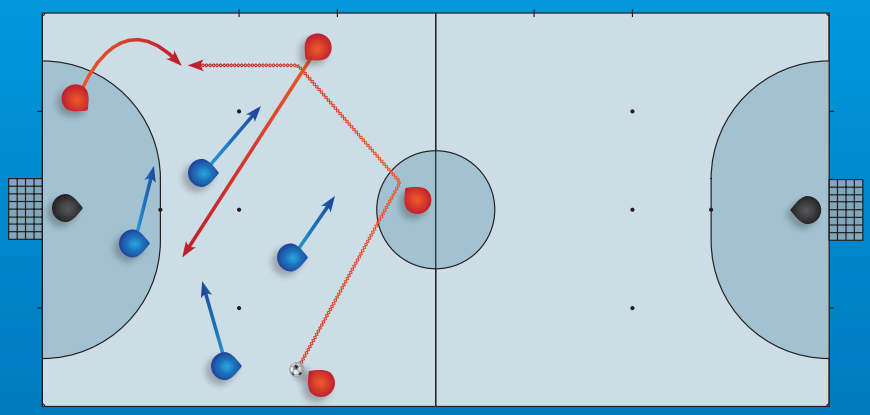
1.5.3.1 Attacking team tactics

Group tactical attacking options: some of the tactical options mentioned previously in the section on small-group technical/tactical options offer a global vision of play. As a result, they also fall within the category of team tactics, as they represent basic tactical aspects that the coach has worked on with the team.

- **Recycling of the ball:** moving the ball quickly and accurately from one part of the court to another, continually passing the ball to break down the opposition defence. This concept can also be used as a group option to maintain possession, to make it difficult for defenders to cover each other, or to break down a defence which is shifting from side to side as a single unit.
- **Distribution of space:** rational distribution and occupation of space means that positions are taken up in accordance with the team's system. Here, the concepts of **depth** and **width** are fundamental.
- **Creating/occupying/using space:** this is a core group concept that can be made use of by individual players. Players move off the ball to create space, taking with them the defenders who are marking them, and dragging them into a particular area of the court in order to create space for a team-mate to move into when receiving the ball. To enable the team to create and play in free space, players must execute **movement off the ball.**
- **Attacking rotations:** positional rotations of three or four players, who free up and occupy space in a specific order of rotation.

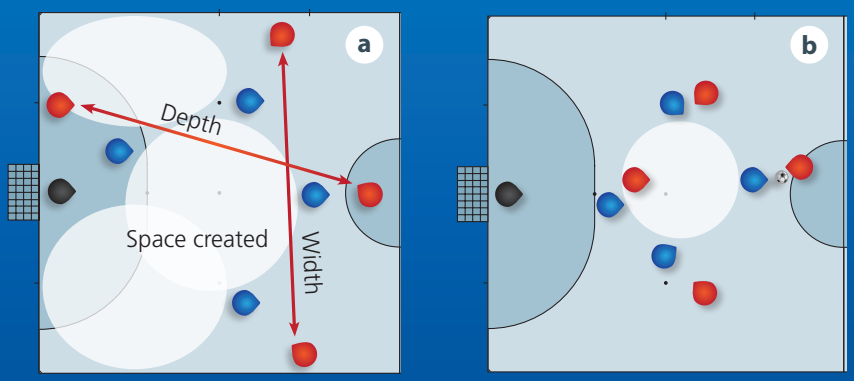
Circulation of the ball

30



Depth and width

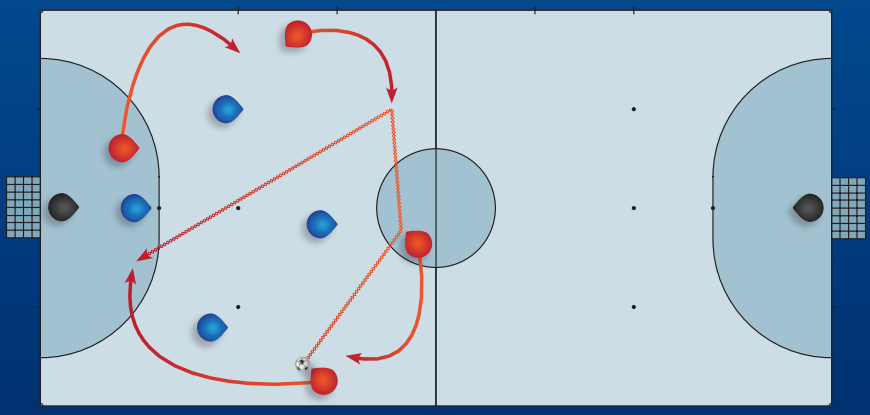
31



Without depth or width there is little space between the defensive lines.

Attacking rotations

32



- **Switching between off-the-ball runs and providing support:** as well as being a basic core individual concept, support play is also a group option as part of a team approach, especially in terms of the fact that it alternates off-the-ball runs into space and close support for the player in possession.

- **Controlling the pace of play:** it is sometimes necessary to change the style, speed or pace of our play or base it on a different game objective.

- **Dragging defenders away and using the space created:** the concept of dragging defenders away and using the space created can involve two, three or four players, including the player who benefits from the space created to set up a 1v1 situation.

- **Combination play and pre-rehearsed moves:** these are combination moves and technical options, executed with and without the ball, which are practised in training and pre-rehearsed.

Attacking systems of play: although attacking systems are referred to and included in this section, playing systems involve the formation, distribution and positioning of players in attack (basic organisation) and as such do not come under the category of team tactics. These systems will be discussed further in section 1.6. However, the tactical processes that are used to develop a game plan formulated according to the selected system are part of team tactics. They include the following:

- **Rotations:** a group tactical option that involves making movements in putting together an attack, with players switching positions and roles with the intention of opening the defence up while maintaining a positional balance, all with a view to creating advantageous situations for finishing on goal.

- **Movements involved in finishing on goal:** playing systems include manoeuvres and movements which are developed specifically with the aim of creating opportunities to finish on goal.

Attacking phases of play: team tactics must include the use of basic core individual concepts and small-group tactical options in every phase of attacking play (opening-up, counter-attack, quick attack, positional attack).

Tactical processes with four players: the continuous combination of several technical/tactical options involving every member of the team. This group process is based upon individual and group tactics. Ultimately, in order for group play to be coherent as a whole, every aspect must be adapted to a group-based notion of play.

Forms of attacking game play: forms of play refers to the style with which the team performs movements and actions in games. It provides the basis for player decision-making in the application of the core individual and small-group concepts and tactical options at their disposal.

1. **Pre-rehearsed play:** moves which have been pre-drilled so that the technical/tactical elements used during the game become automated. As a consequence, decision-making is practically eliminated. Training is based on the repetition of rehearsed moves and pre-drilled technical skills.

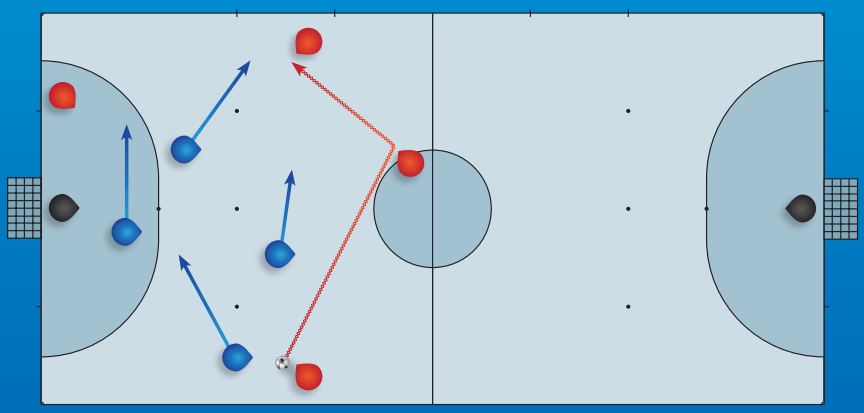
2. **Play based on decision-making:** the choice of which core technical/tactical concepts to execute is made by the player and forms the basis for the actions taken in game play. The objective is for players to choose the best and most effective option. The cognitive component (tactics) and motor component (technique) overlap. The player must constantly think and analyse the game and act accordingly. The player is free to make their own decisions, but core technical/tactical concepts and decision-making abilities are worked on during training in order to achieve the most effective results.

   Recommended training methods for coaching play based on decision-making: break down the tactical elements if they can be transferred to real game play; do not provide the players with all of the information, allow them to discover it for themselves; gradually increase the difficulty of the exercises as the players improve their command of situations; try to find more complex situations than those encountered in competitive games; provide global training sessions which encourage the players to think; change the number of players and work on all of the small-group technical/tactical options; use a range of variables and conditions during drills (see the Designing Drills section in Theory Unit 3: Teaching Methodology and Methods).

3. **Guided play:** inclusion of one or two pre-rehearsed moves, but then continuing with a decision-making game plan.

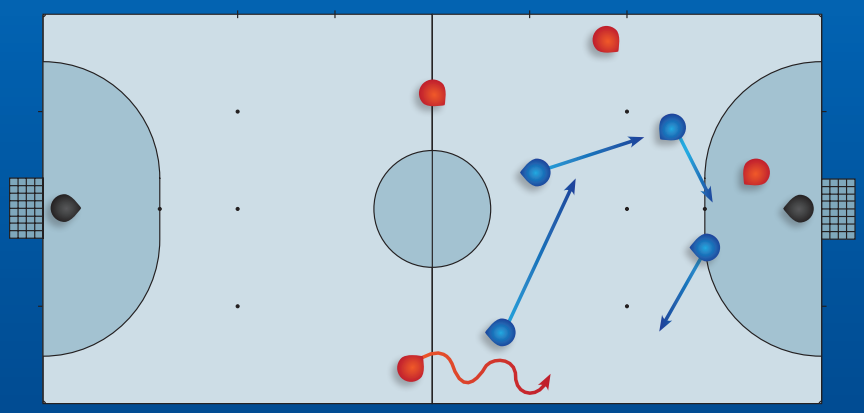
Defensive movement as one single unit

33



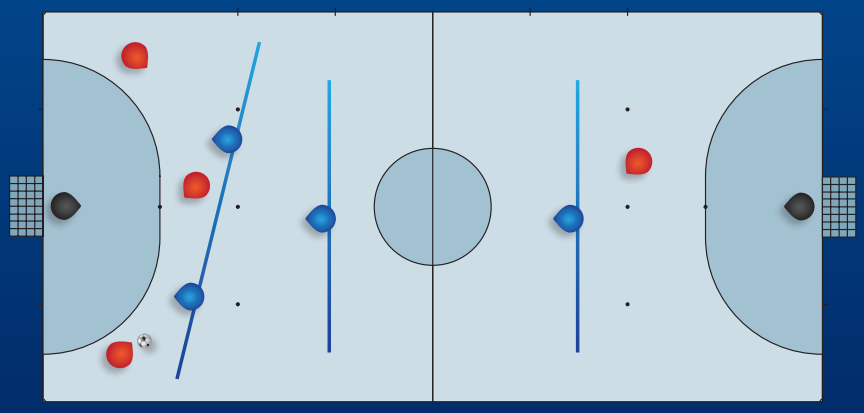
Defensive rotation with four players

34



Defensive lines

35



1.5.3.2 Defensive team tactics

Group tactical defensive options: some of these tactical options have already been discussed in the section on small-group technical/tactical options. Due to their global nature, these options can also be applied to team tactics, as they represent core tactical concepts that the team possess in addition to the core concepts imparted by the coach.

- **Defensive movement as one single unit:** this is a move executed by the defence in unison, with players moving together as a single unit in response to a change in the position of the ball. The objective is to maintain the distance between lines of defence and the covering system.
- **Defensive rotation:** the movement executed by defensive players when covering and switching in order to readjust the position of the defence. When these moves are executed in a specific order, with players rotating in the same direction, they are called defensive rotations of two, three or four players.
- **Defensive reorganisation:** whenever the defence is pulled out of position, several changes of marker or position are sometimes necessary in order to reorganise it.
- **Rational occupation of defensive space:** regardless of the defensive system employed, the defensive space must be occupied in a rational and logical way, making use of small-group and individual technical/tactical options: e.g. commanding the space, floating cover, etc. Rational occupation of space also involves maximising the number of defensive lines.
- **Changing the type of defence:** game situations where the type of defence is modified during play, because there is a need to change things up or to confuse the opponent.

- **Changing tactical defensive objectives:** this can involve a change in intensity, organisation, or rational occupation of space, executed by the defence at a given moment in the game.

- **Defensive wall:** this is a technical/tactical option that can include between one and four players (or even five if the goalkeeper joins it), depending on the position of the free-kick.

Defensive phases of play: we are already aware of the defensive phases of play (positional balance and buying time, dropping back, defensive organisation and positional defence). Team tactics take into account all of these phases and the use of the core concepts and options required for each one.

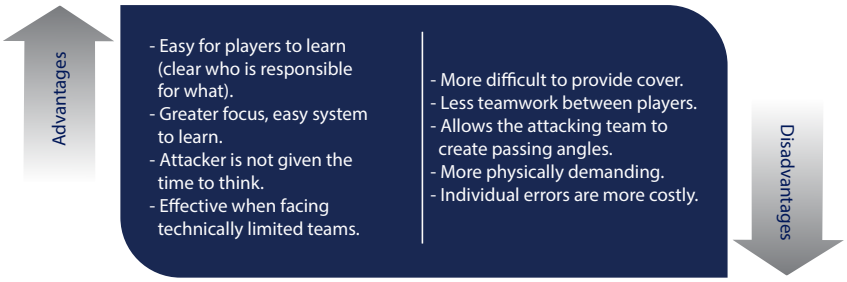
Tactical processes involving four outfield players: the linking-together of various defensive technical/tactical options by the team as a whole.

Defensive systems of play: these will be covered in greater depth in the next section. As already stated with regard to attacking systems, they do not strictly fall under the category of team tactics, but we highlight them in the sense that the tactical movements and procedures used to maintain and execute them are tactical options.

Types of defence: provides a framework so that the team understands how to respond to attacking movements. Specific attention must be paid to the position of the ball and the opponents, the space on the court and the passing angles.

1. **Man-marking system:** in this type of defence, the defenders have an individual responsibility for the attacker whom they are marking.

Advantages and disadvantages of the man-marking system



2. **Zonal system:** the players are responsible for a specified area of play depending on the location of the ball. Each defender is responsible for the attackers who pass through their zone, as well as for closing down the passing angles in this area of play.

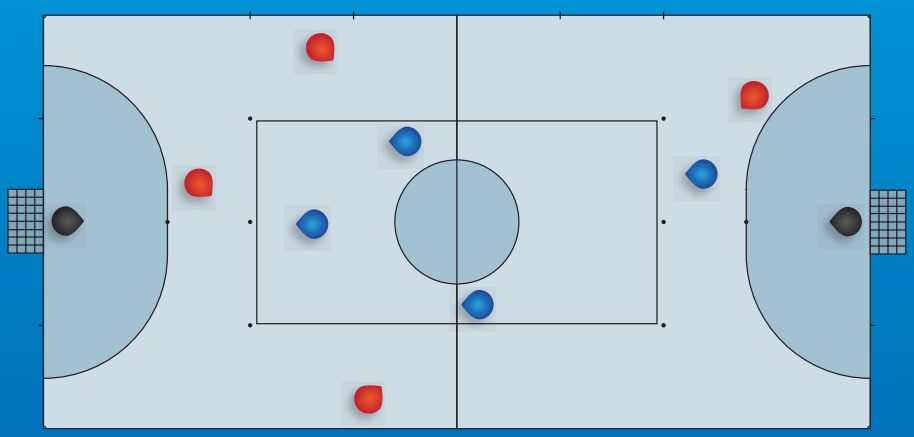
Advantages and disadvantages of the zonal system

3. **Mixed system:** a type of defence where man-marking and zonal systems are combined, with some players marking a player and others defending a zone.

4. **Switching system:** in a switching defence, defenders continually switch between marking different opponents in a system involving continuous covering and switching. The objective is that the first line of defence does not drop back in relation to the ball. Both the wingers and the defender are required to pick up the players that drop short with or without the ball. This system involves a man-marking defence where defenders switch markers according to the guidelines given by the coach. Generally speaking, this is a defensive system that combines positive aspects of both the man-marking and zonal systems. The guidelines for the switches can be founded on the making of decisions based on the game situation (e.g. pressing the ball, position of the opponent, direction of play, etc.) or can be based on clearly defined and more specific instructions from the coach.

4v4 in a 40x20m zone with one-touch passing in an 18x9m zone

36



LEARNING UNIT
Team technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Proficiency.

CONTENT
Small-group and team technical/tactical options. Core tactical attacking concepts. Rational occupation of attacking space.

OBJECTIVES
To improve small-group and team technical/tactical options for keeping possession of the ball and developing play. To occupy space as a group. To bring depth and width to the play.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8 plus goalkeepers.

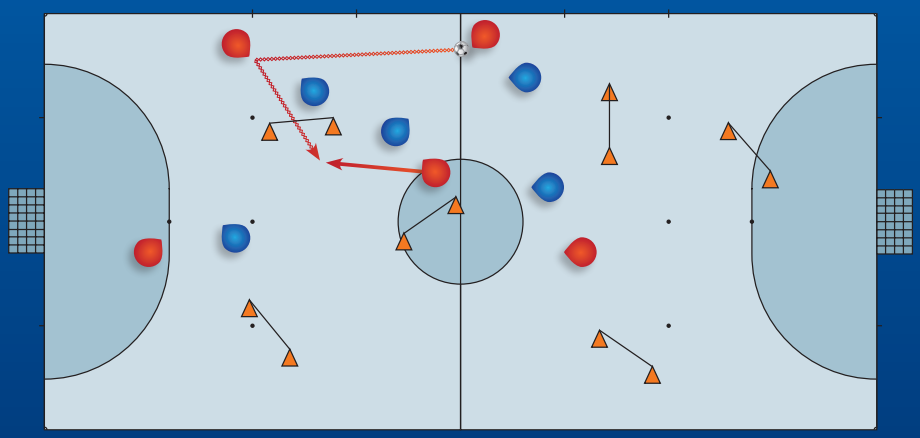
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Game-play drill with conditions. Players are only allowed to take one touch in the 18x9m zone (volleyball court).
- This drill focuses on the importance of playing with width. Two players take up positions on the flanks and one player is positioned high up and must always remain outside of the volleyball court.

VARIATIONS
Variation for defensive control of space: if the ball is on one of the flanks and outside the volleyball court, no defenders are allowed on the opposite flank.

Possession drill with goals/passing in six goals

37



LEARNING UNIT
Team technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Proficiency.

CONTENT
Small-group and team technical/tactical options. Core attacking and defensive tactical concepts. Keeping the ball moving. Defensive movement as one single unit.

OBJECTIVES
To improve the small-group and team technical/tactical options for maintaining possession by recycling the ball quickly. To improve defensive movement as one single unit, so that the defence moves as one in defending the goals, depending on the position of the ball.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10.

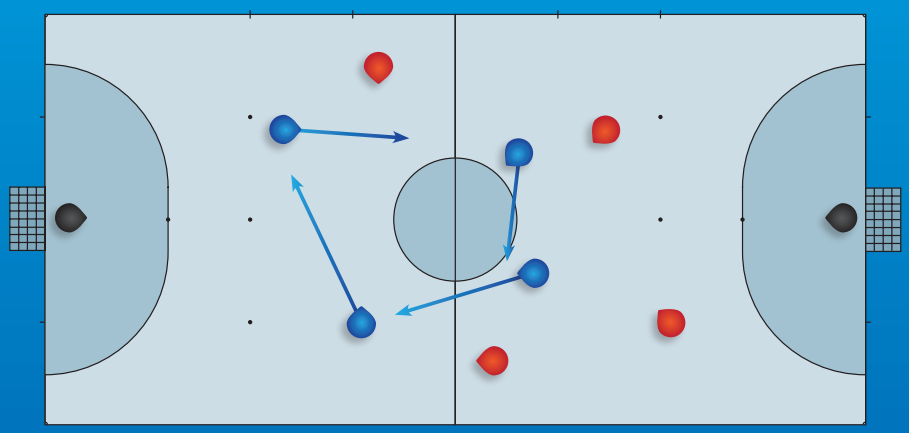
EQUIPMENT
Balls, bibs and cones.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 5v5 played within a 40x20m playing area, with six goals formed with cones and positioned anywhere on the court, facing in any direction.
- Teams must keep possession of the ball by making effective use of passing; passes played to a team-mate through one of the goals, in either direction, count as a goal.

VARIATIONS
- Limit the number of touches to encourage rapid recycling of the ball (e.g. two touches only).
- Introduce an attacking joker, with a rule that a pass to the joker through one of the goals is worth triple.
- Goals can only be scored through the goal from the outside in (this encourages the players to open out, move the ball to the outside of the court and look to score with an infield pass).

Real game conditions; defensive disorganisation caused by forced changes

38



LEARNING UNIT
Team technical/tactical options.

PHASE
Proficiency.

CONTENT
Team attacking and defensive technical/tactical options. Core small-group technical/tactical concepts. Defensive rotation. Analysing attacking opportunities while the defence is reorganising itself. Quick attack.

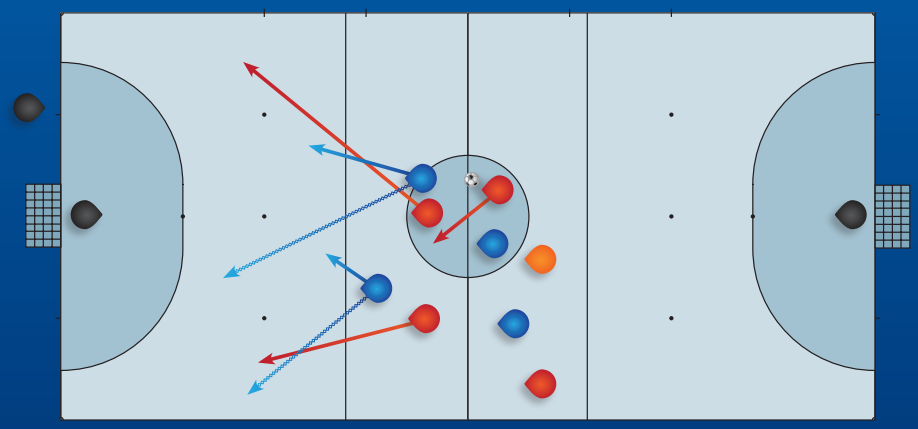
OBJECTIVES
To assess the options available for executing a quick attack, evaluating the difficulties faced by the opposition defence in reorganising itself. To reorganise defensively as quickly as possible by means of rotation.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8, 10 or 12 outfield players plus goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 4v4 + GK.
- When the coach shouts or blows their whistle, every player on the defending team must switch markers, either through defensive rotation or by switching markers in pairs.
- The attacking team must take advantage of this moment of defensive disorganisation and launch a quick attack.
- The coach must blow for changes once the defensive team has dropped back, but before the attacking team has begun to build a positional attack.
- The defensive team will not always switch markers in an orderly manner and with all players acting in synch. The attacking team must read the situation and weigh up the alternatives available.

4v4 + joker. Possession exercise along a central strip of the court. The coach determines the direction in which players attack

39



LEARNING UNIT
Opening up and building a counter-attack.

PHASE
Proficiency.

CONTENT
Team options in opening up and building an attacking transition. Core defensive concepts. Occupying and creating space. Peripheral vision of the surrounding area.

OBJECTIVES
To improve basic aspects of keeping and recovering possession, with the aim of developing visual perception skills following the regaining of possession. To introduce players to the concept of opening-up and building counter-attacks.

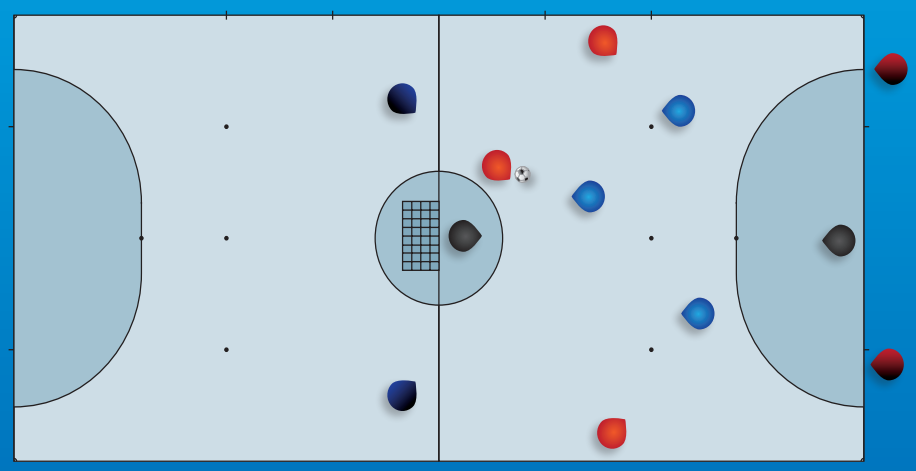
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
9 plus goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Two teams of four plus a joker. The aim is to keep possession of the ball within the centre of the pitch with a joker supporting the team in possession. Rules for the team in possession can be varied: unlimited number of touches; two touches, etc.
- The coach names a goal, at which point the player in possession must launch an attack towards that goal. Weighing up the situation, the players must organise themselves quickly, opening and building up play to take control of the centre of the court and occupy space on the wings. The defence tries to buy time and drop back.

VARIATIONS
- Limit the amount of time allowed to execute the attack to 4-5 seconds. The coach can decide whether to allow the joker to replace one of the players in the counter-attack or not.
- Restricting play to the centre of the pitch means that the opening-up phase has to be quick and the build-up short.

3v3 in a 20x20m with jokers on the goal line (two per team)

40



LEARNING UNIT
Team tactical options in a 3-1 formation.

PHASE
Proficiency.

CONTENT
Team options in a 3-1 formation. Playing with width and linking-up with the pivots. Small-group options in playing with two, three players, etc. Defending against forward runs.

OBJECTIVES
To improve team attacking skills to seek out passing angles to the pivots (rapid recycling). To work on finishing after two/three-player move with pivots. To improve defence by closing down passing angles and preventing the opposition from pushing forward.

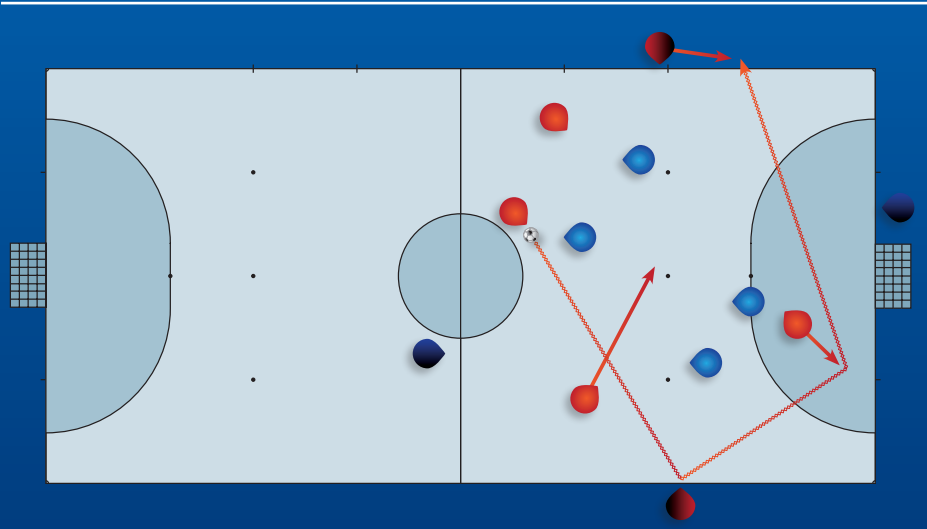
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 3v3 playing in a 20x20m area, with two jokers per team positioned on the goal line, one on either side of the goal.
- The attacking team must link up play with one of the jokers before finishing on goal. After linking up with the joker, the player receiving the ball has a maximum of two touches before they must finish on goal. If they do not finish on goal, they must link up with a joker again before attempting to shoot.

VARIATIONS
Instead of the player who passes the ball (to the joker) finishing on goal, one of the other two team-mates must do so (this encourages forward runs from two or three players and decoy runs on the passing angle to the pivot).

4x4 with external jokers

41



LEARNING UNIT
Team tactical options for maintaining possession of the ball.

PHASE
Proficiency.

CONTENT
Team options such as keeping the ball moving. Rational occupation of space. Creating/occupying/using space.

OBJECTIVES
To improve small-group and team tactical options for maintaining/regaining possession. To apply attacking triangles and switches in play. To keep the ball moving.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
12.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 4v4 played in a 20x20m area with four jokers positioned outside the court (one on each of the four sides). Play with two touches. The objective is to keep possession of the ball and score points.
- Whenever a player passes to a joker, the joker must pass the ball to a different player on the same team.
- Points are scored in the following ways: after a pass to a joker, the player receiving the ball from the joker plays a one-touch pass to an adjacent joker (playing in triangles); after a pass to a joker, the player receiving the ball from the joker passes to the joker opposite, taking two touches (rapid recycling of the ball with switch in play).

1.6 PLAYING SYSTEMS

1.6.1 Definition of playing systems

The term „playing systems" refers to the layout, distribution and formation of players for attack (basic organisation) and defence (determined by the type of defence employed). As we have already discussed in section 1.5, systems themselves do not fall under team tactics. The initial formation of players on the court is the starting point for the implementation of various tactical moves and movements. In addition, individual and group tactics are developed in order to execute the game plan as set out by the coach and in line with the chosen playing system.

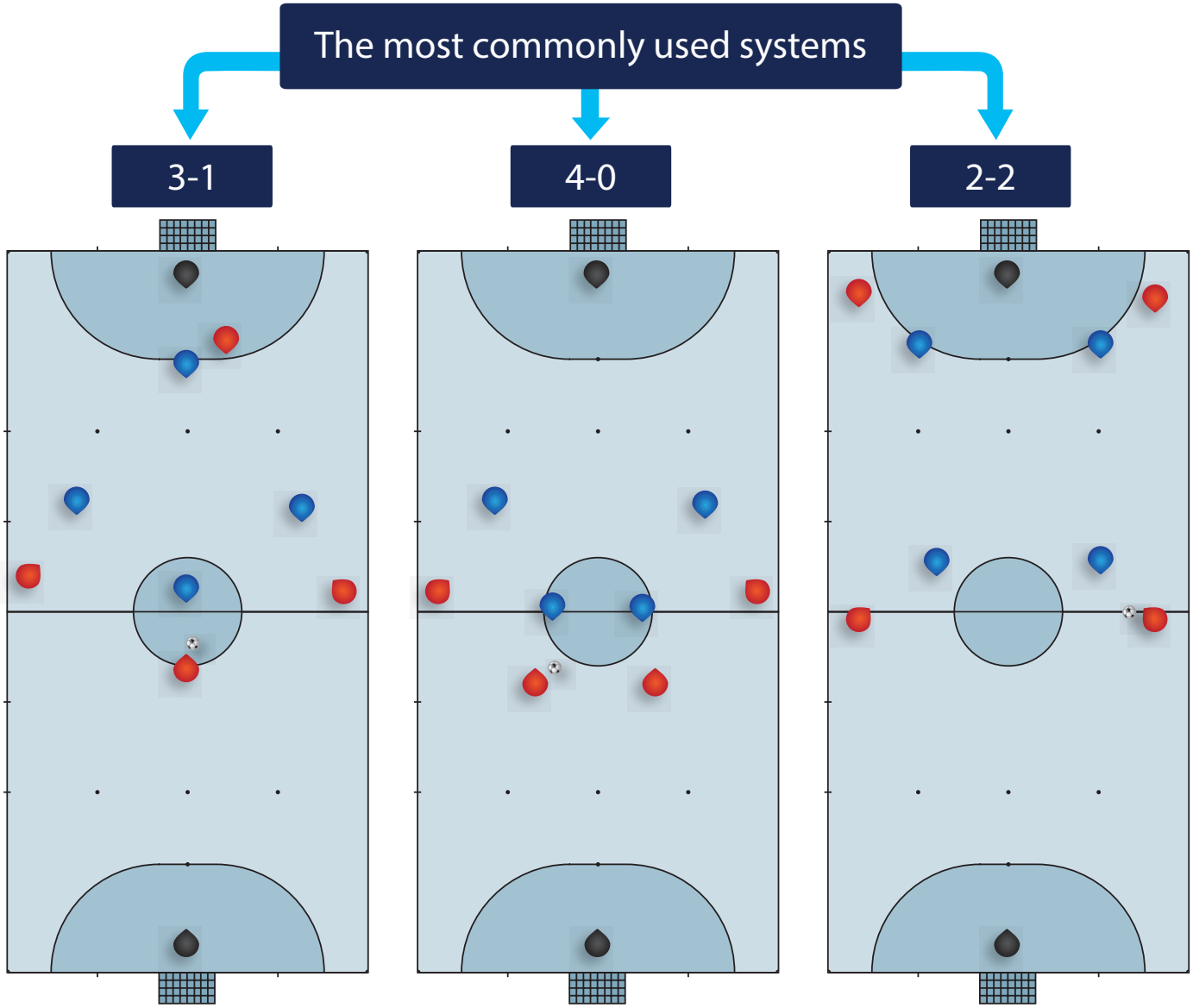
1.6.2 Attacking playing systems

These are the positional systems employed for attacking in positional play, and refer to the initial layout, formation and distribution of players across the area of play. Based on their initial formation, players can then change their position while trying to maintain positional balance and a similar shape to the positional set-up envisaged by the system. A distinction should be made between playing systems, rotations and specific movements.

Playing systems must take into account the need to support the player in possession and the balance of the defence, in maintaining positional balance. The system or systems that a coach chooses to employ will depend on the players at their disposal and whether these players can perform the specific roles required. The playing systems employed will depend on the space to be attacked and type of defence chosen by the opposition.

AREAS OF PLAY			
Playing in the defensive third. Breaking out of defence when under pressure from a high defensive line.	Attacking against three-quarter-court defences.	Attacking half-court defences.	Attacking in opposition half against a closed defence.

In a 4v4 positional situation, the most commonly used systems are as follows:



1.6.2.1 The 3-1 system

The 3-1 is a traditional formation that fell out of favour due to excessive use of the 4-0 system. However, due to rule changes, the 3-1 is gradually making a comeback and its influence is increasing again.

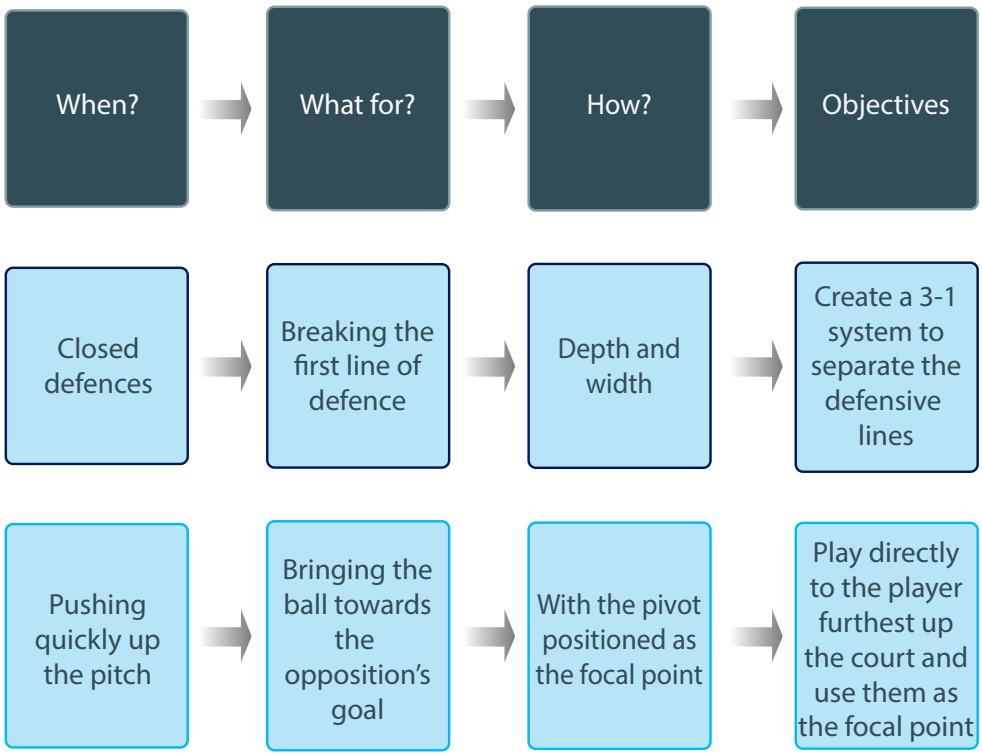
The formation:

- A defender: provides balance to play, must be a good passer and possess a strong shot from outside the area. Must have a command of defensive balance.
- Two wingers: good in 1v1 situations, good passers, must play close to the touch line to give width to the play and open up angles to enable passes to the pivot. Wingers should ideally be able to use both feet and be adept at switching between defensive and attacking phases.
- A pivot: the key player in the system; a good finisher, who is able to see the whole game; can play with their back to goal and shield the ball. Must give depth to the play.

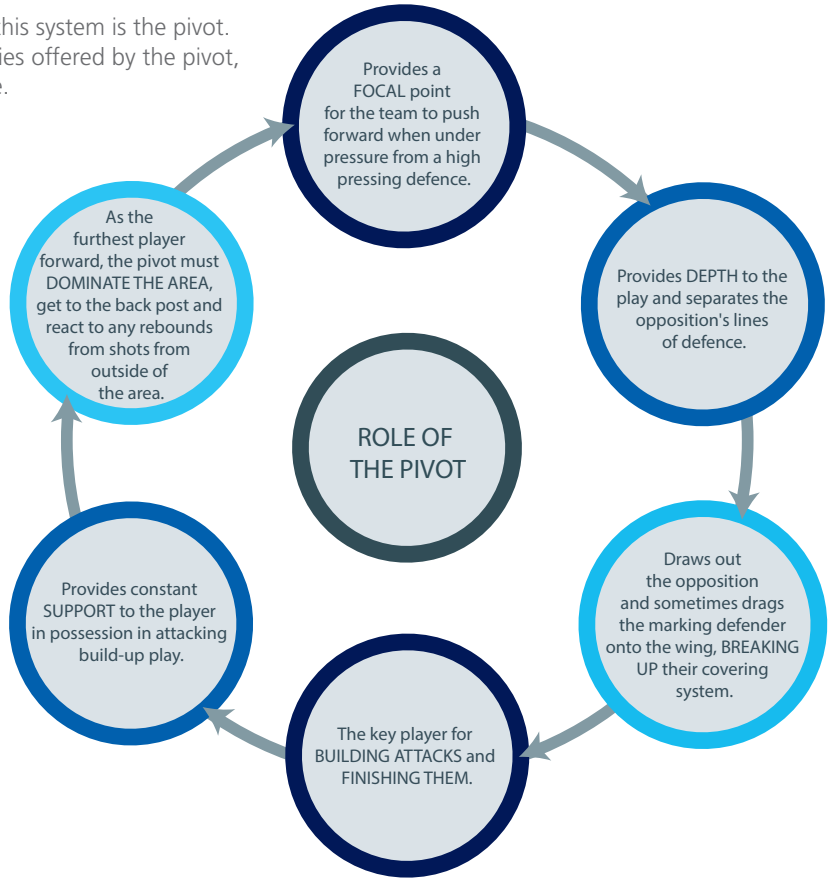
The system allows for rotation and movement without overly disrupting positional balance, which is vital for an effective attack. The player in possession always has simple passing options available from players in support, which makes it a suitable system for controlling the game and the pace of play. This is not a system that is vulnerable to counter-attacks if the build-ups is patient and intelligent, as it offers numerous and varied solutions in providing a balanced defence, with one or several players always behind the ball.

This system allows players to take up space through off-the-ball movement, as it provides depth and width to the play, which are fundamental to it.

It is highly effective for attacking tight defences or pushing up the court quickly (breaking out of defence when under pressure from the opposition).



The most specialised role in this system is the pivot. Without the particular qualities offered by the pivot, its use would not be possible.



The variations to the pivot's role that can be adopted in a 3-1 system are as follows:

Central pivot

The pivot plays in the centre, in front of the opposition defender and available to receive the pass.

Roaming pivot

- The pivot drops onto the wings, appears in the centre or in behind the defender in order to feint or do a back-door cut.
- The pivot plays in the centre, in front of or behind the opposition defender, moving out to one of the wings, leaving the other free (normally the side of their weaker foot) for link-up play in pairs or parallel and diagonal moves.

False pivot

The pivot plays on the wing, either left or right, depending on which is their stronger foot.

One of the main uses of the 3-1 system is breaking forward when under pressure from the opposition, using the pivot as a focal point to advance play up the court quickly. The objective is to take play forward, away from the area initially proposed by the defence. Striving for depth and width, the 3-1 system stretches the lines of defence and creates space in which to build an attack.

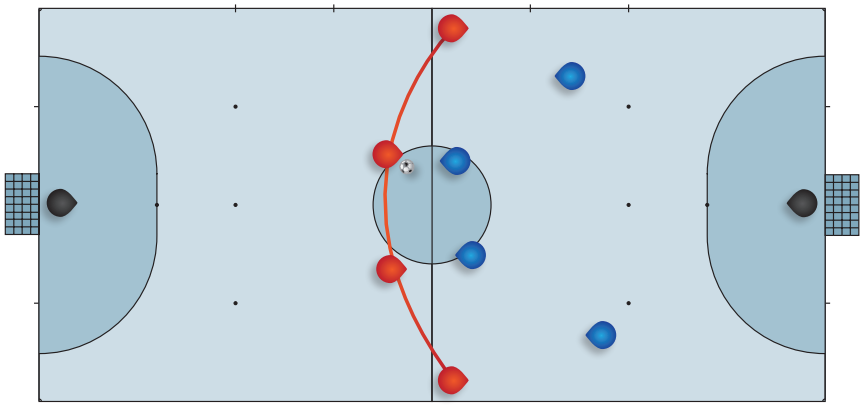
1.6.2.2 The 4-0 system

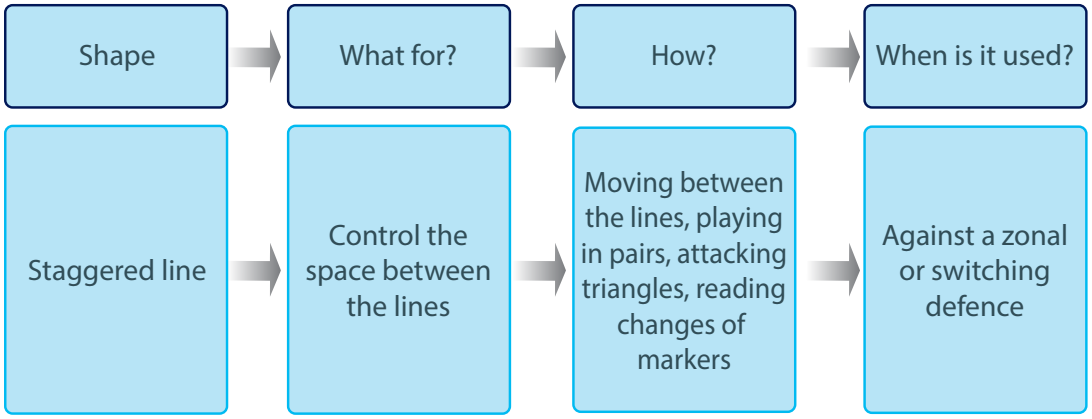
The 4-0 system places each player in the same line of attack (flat or staggered). An advanced focal point is not used to begin with. Instead, the attacking formation attempts to break down the lines of defence and create space in behind. Its main characteristics are as follows:

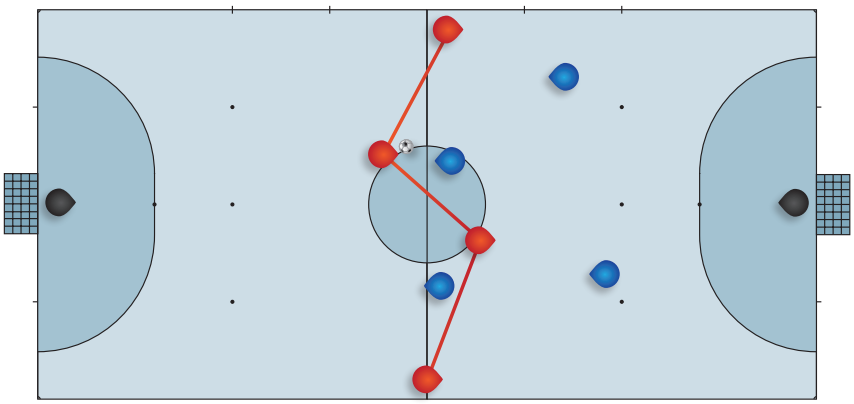
- Requires versatile players and is less rigid than a 3-1 system.
- Causes greater physical and mental exertion on the opposition defence.
- Makes maintaining possession of the ball easier, with several players supporting.
- When playing against a defence with a man-marking system, it is possible to break the opposition's defensive cover and create space behind the defence in the final third.
- When playing against a defence with zonal and switching systems, the team must attack the space between the lines.
- A reduced number of defensive lines compared to the 3-1 system.
- Effective for creating and occupying space.
- It is a difficult system to implement when playing against closed defences.
- There is an increased risk to defensive balance as the team is practically playing in a line.
- It requires constant movement and rapid recycling of the ball.
- It allows the attacking team to draw the central defender out of position.

Variations of the 4-0 system

Shape	What for?	How?	When is it used?
Four players in a line	Attack in behind the defence	Movement, technical/tactical options with parallel and diagonal moves	Against a man-marking defensive system



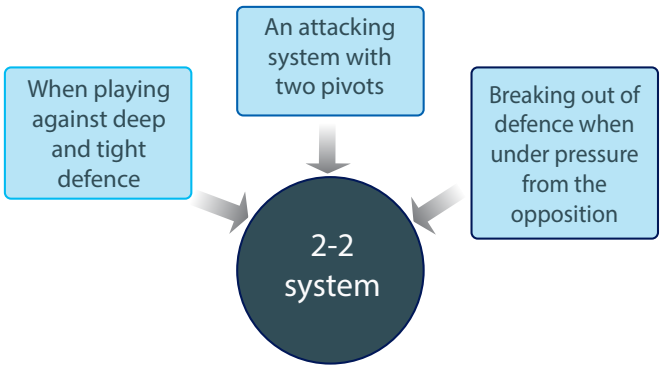




1.6.2.3 The 2-2 system

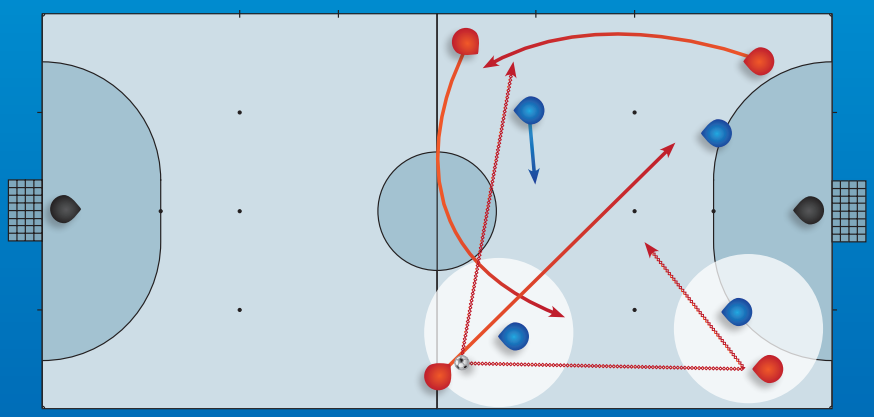
In this system the four players are positioned in two lines of attack. Often used in grassroots futsal due to its rational use of space on the court, it can be characterised as follows:

- It is more static than the 4-0 and 3-1 formations and offers fewer opportunities for rotations.
- It is rarely used at the highest level of the game.
- It is deployed in response to certain game situations, mainly by a losing team that wants to create 1v1 situations.
- Players in the first line of attack must be quick, adept in 1v1 situations, and have good passing and finishing skills.
- The system can also be used with two pivots.
- One of the objectives of the 2-2 system is to break up the defensive lines and cover. It also provides little guarantee of defensive balance, however.
- Traditionally, this system has often been deployed to break out of defence when under pressure from the opposition.



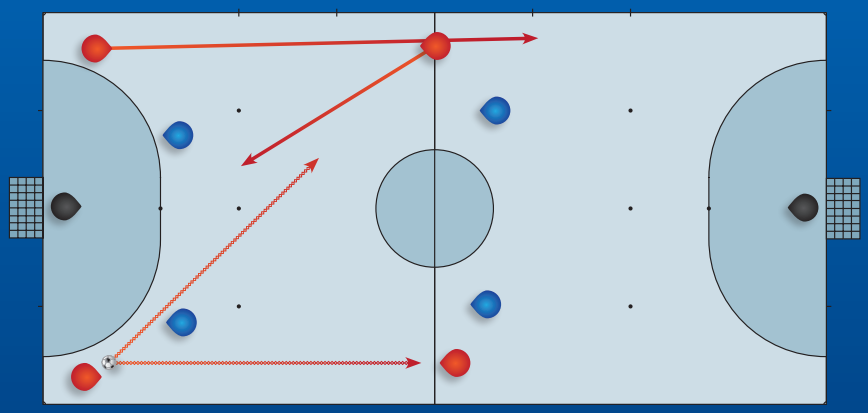
2-2 system in positional attack

1



2-2 system for breaking out of defence when under pressure from the opposition

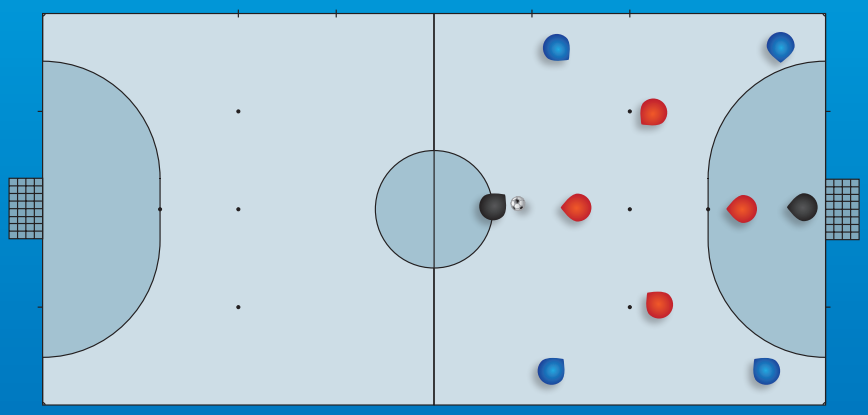
2



Main systems within a 5v4 attack

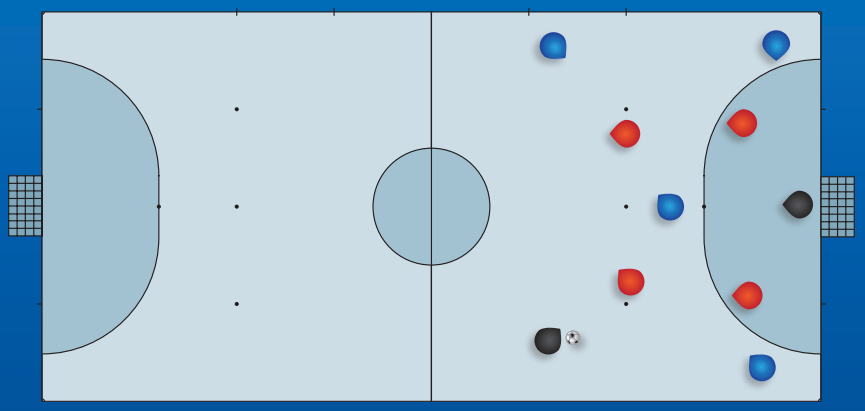
3

3-2 attacking system



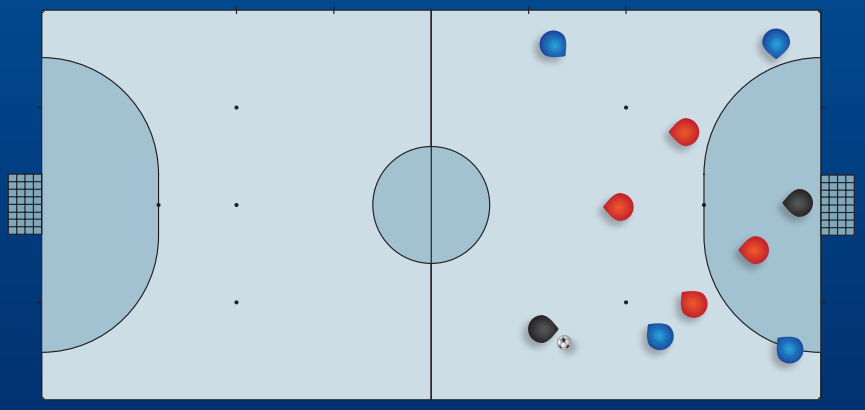
4

2-1-2 attacking system



5

2-1-2 attacking system with overlaps on the flank



1.6.2.4 Special situations: 5v4

This is the 5v4 attacking system of play, which is permitted by the Laws of the Game and regulated by them. It offers the following advantages and disadvantages:

ADVANTAGES

- Useful when the team is losing and there is little time remaining in the match.
- Useful when attacking closed defences.
- Gives the team a numerical advantage.
- Allows the team to pause and evaluate the situation if necessary.
- Creates uncertainty and psychological pressure in the opposing team as they do not have control of the game.

DISADVANTAGES

- A loss of possession could result in a goal being conceded.
- The goal is left unguarded.
- It requires a great deal of concentration and discipline in order to avoid errors.

Use of the 5v4 system

- The system is mainly used in special circumstances by a team that is losing.
- Its use has expanded into situations where the scores are level and where a team is looking to gain a numerical advantage in order to score and take the lead.

It is also used in the following circumstances:

- As a tactical resource to attack tight defences.

- By a team that is winning in an attempt to maintain possession and prevent the opposition from getting the ball and attacking their defence.
- To break up the rhythm of the game when the opposition is dominating.

Most of the systems are flexible and allow for changes or switches in formations (from 3-2 to 2-1-2, etc.), with positions being changed when it comes to finishing moves.

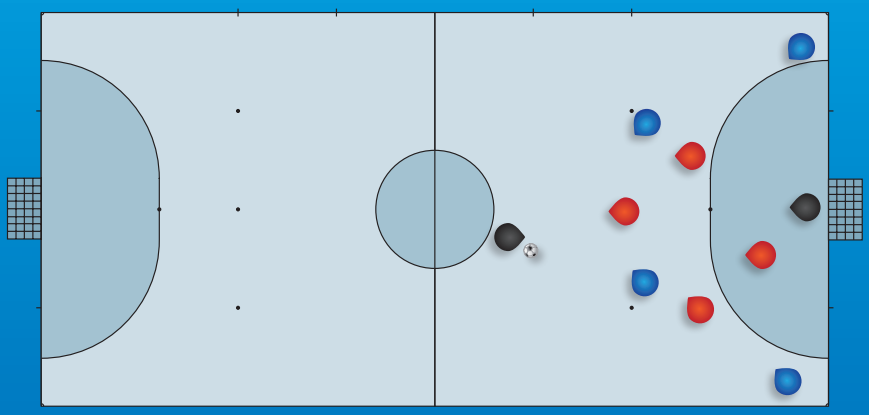
1.6.2.5 Special situations: 4v3

As with the 5v4, the 4v3 scenario is provided for within the Laws of the Game and arises following the sending-off of an opposition player, providing the team with a numerical advantage for two minutes, or less if the team awarded the advantage scores a goal.

In such cases, various attacking positions can be adopted, with the attack taking into account the positioning of the three opposition defenders. Another decision that needs to be made in this scenario is whether the players in the first line of attack should play 'inside-out' (i.e. left-footed player on right wing), which is an approach regularly adopted by the players in the second line of attack (near the corners).

6

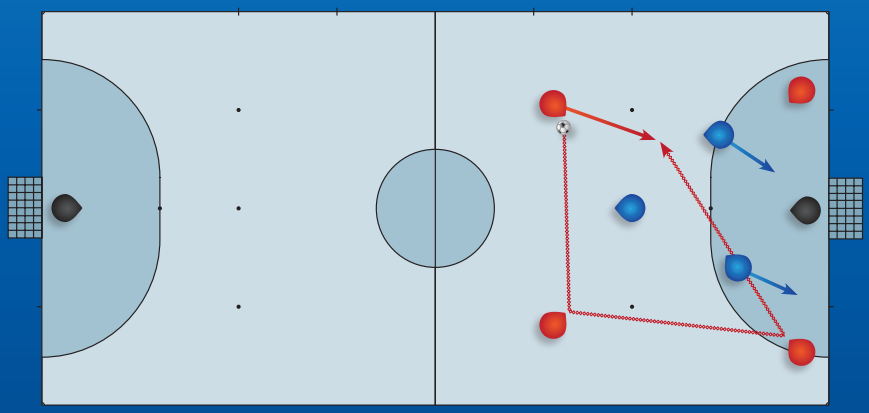
1-2-2 attacking system using a pyramid formation



Main systems within a 4v3 attack

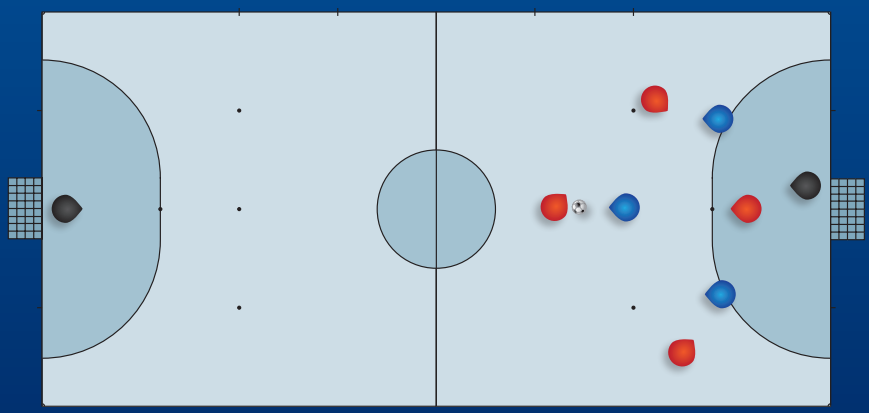
7

2-2 attacking system



8

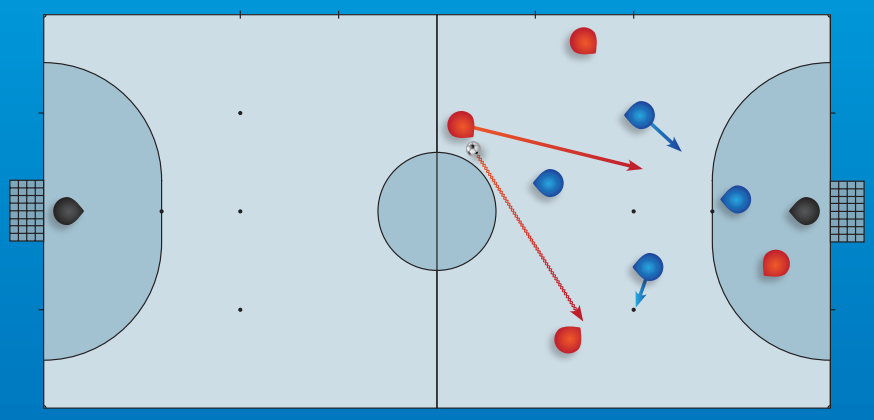
1-2-1 attacking system



Zonal defensive systems

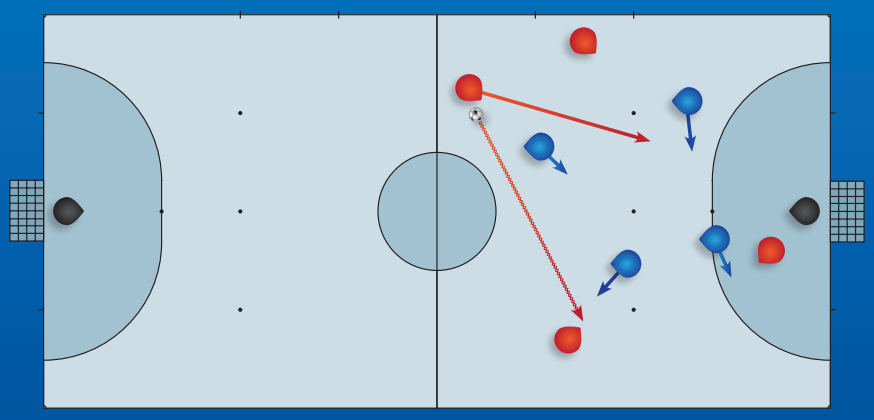
9

Half-court 1-1-2-1 zonal system



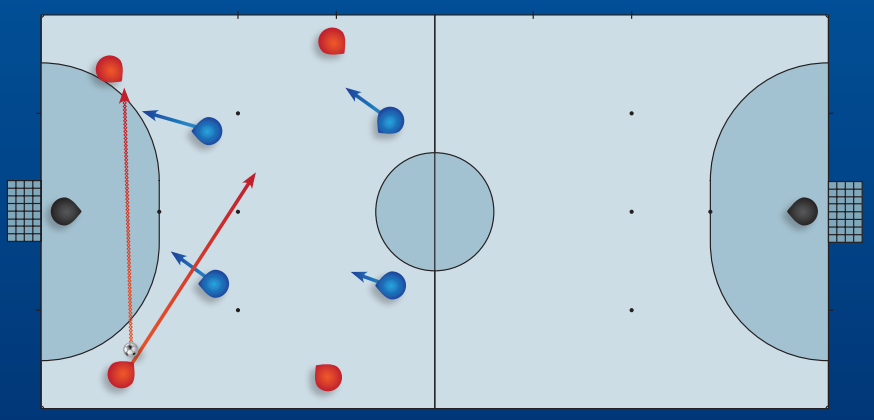
10

Half-court 1-2-2 zonal system



11

Three-quarter-court 1-2-2 zonal system



1.6.3 Defensive playing systems

Defensive systems are used for defending in positional play, and concern the initial layout, formation and distribution of the players on the court. Starting from their initial formation, the players can change position when trying to occupy defensive space in a rational way. The way they do so will depend, at all times, on the type of defensive system being deployed (zonal, man-marking, mixed, switching defence) and the game plan set by the coach. Within each type of defensive system (each of which is described in detail in section 1.5), there is a range of variations.

The defensive system used may also be determined by the area of the court to be defended. The same defence might adopt a whole-court high pressing defence, or a three-quarter-court open defence, a half-court positional defence, or a closed defence behind the halfway line.

1.6.3.1 Zonal defensive systems

Attacking movements will, of course, determine the defensive formation used by a zonal defence. However, in general, zonal defences usually adopt either a diamond formation (1-1-2-1) or a square formation (1-2-2), with the latter being mainly used in a high pressing defence or in a half-court defence.

1.6.3.2 Man-marking defensive systems

The shape of a man-marking system is determined by the movement of the attacking players, which means it is not possible to maintain a set position within a specific system of play. However, depending on the area of the court where the team begins defending (high pressing defence, three-quarter-court open defence, half-court positional defence or a closed defence behind the halfway line), the players' initial positions can be maintained until the attack attempts to break into the defensive space and the defenders pick up opposing players and man-mark them.

In a man-marking system, formations are invariably only attributed to half-court defences, where the defence normally adopts an initial formation of 1-1-2-1 until markers pick up their opponents and the opposition team launches its attack.

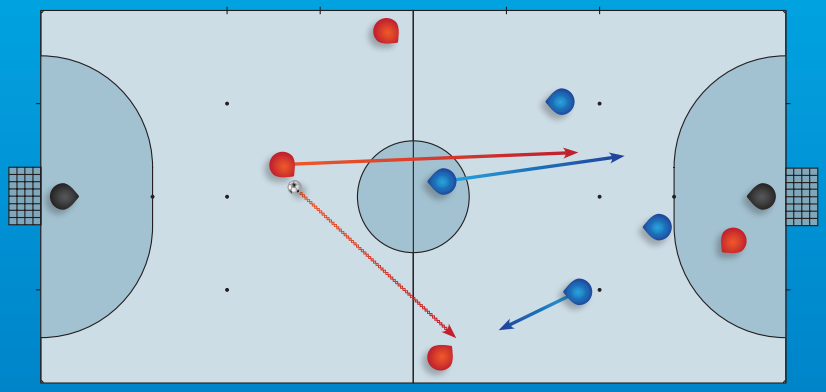
1.6.3.3 Switching-defence systems

Switching defences normally adopt the starting formations shown in the adjacent diagrams when using a high pressing defence or a half-court defensive set-up.

Man-marking defensive systems

12

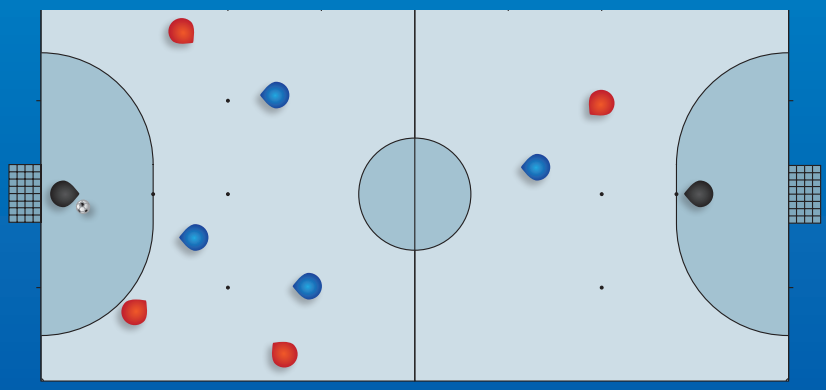
Half-court 1-1-2-1 man-marking system



Switching-defence systems

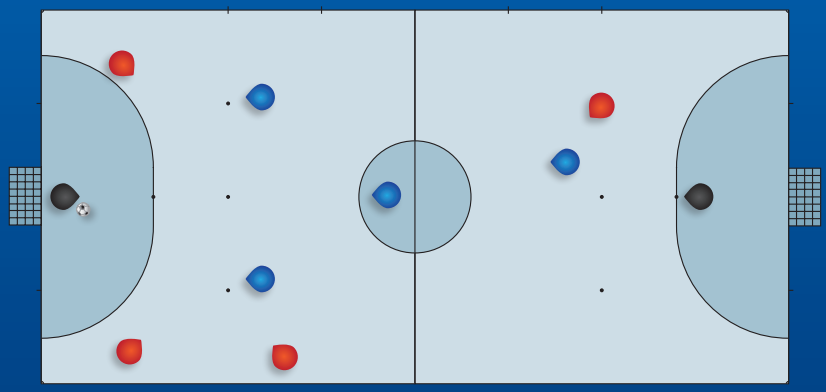
13

Whole-court 1-1-2-1 switching-defence system



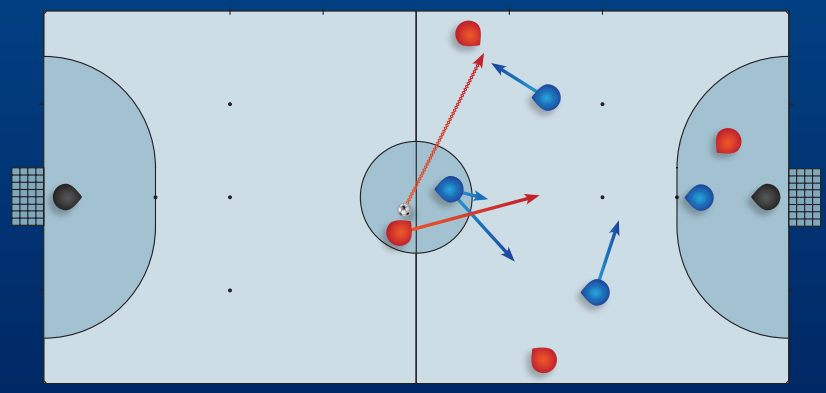
14

Whole-court 1-1-1-2 switching-defence system



15

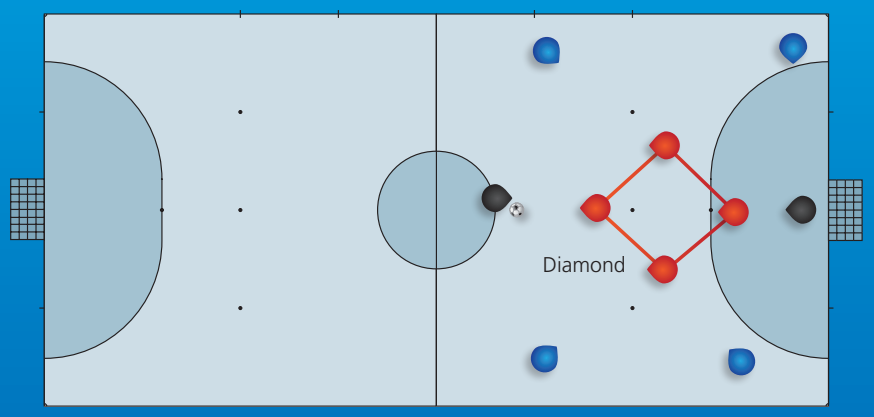
Half-court 1-1-2-1 switching-defence system



Most common 4v5 defensive systems

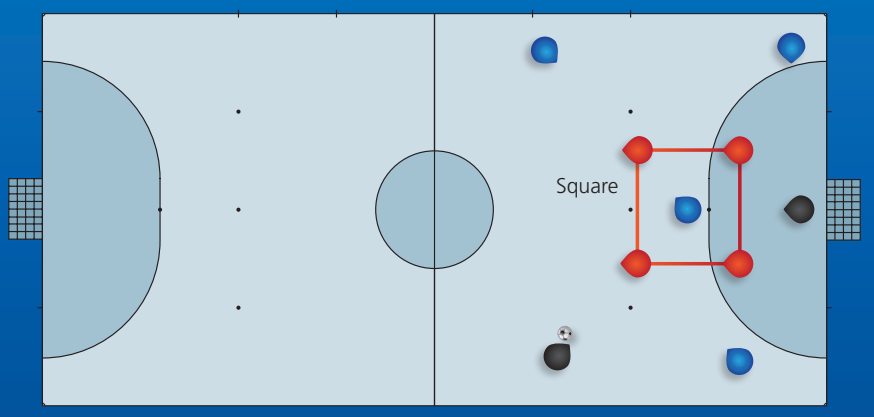
16

1-1-2-1 defensive system



17

1-2-2-defensive system



1.6.3.4 Special situations: 4v5 defence

Various defensive systems may be adopted when the opposition chooses to create a 4v5 advantage by bringing on a flying goalkeeper. To some extent, the particular system chosen will be determined by the attacking formation.

- The defence normally adopts one of two defensive systems: 1-1-2-1 or 1-2-2.
- Aspects to take into account: zonal marking with zones selected according to the shape of the playing system; defensive movement as one single unit; closing down the passing angles; defensive positioning (normally central); zonal positioning, which is always determined by the position of the ball at that exact moment; not allowing the lines of defence to separate; shared tactical goal (containing or pressing); movement accompanied by visual command of the playing area; preventing shots from outside the area (paying close attention to the stronger foot of the players in the opposition team's first line of attack).
- Transition between defensive systems: from the 1-1-2-1 system to the 1-2-2 and vice versa according to the attacking system in use.
- It is essential to be aware of the key technical qualities of the attacking players.
- Players should not rush to finish on goal after regaining possession. They should only take clear shooting opportunities or maintain possession in order to avoid defending for large periods of the game at a numerical disadvantage.
- Press the opposition in their half to prevent them from developing play easily.

1.6.3.5 Special situations: 3v4 defence

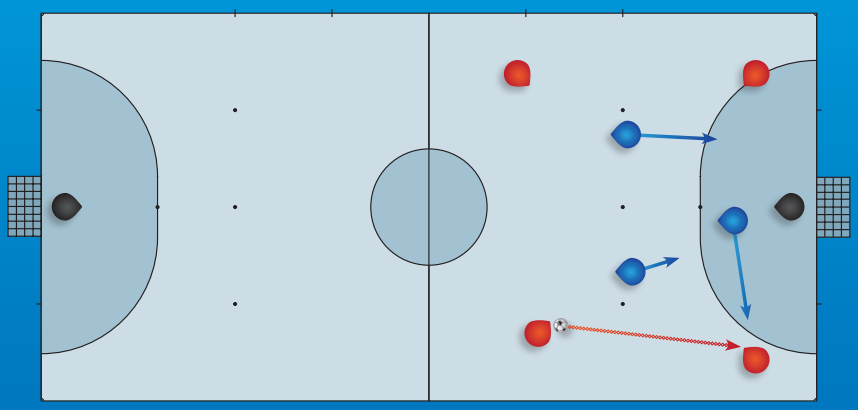
The most commonly used systems in situations where the defence is outnumbered 3v4 after a player is sent off, and which are still able to offer positional mobility and flexibility in response to the position adopted by the attack and the location of the ball, are shown in the diagrams.

Just as with the 4v5, in situations where the defence is outnumbered 3v4, the defending team often alternates between 1-2-1 and 1-1-2, depending on the position of the ball and the attackers.

Most common 3v4 defensive systems

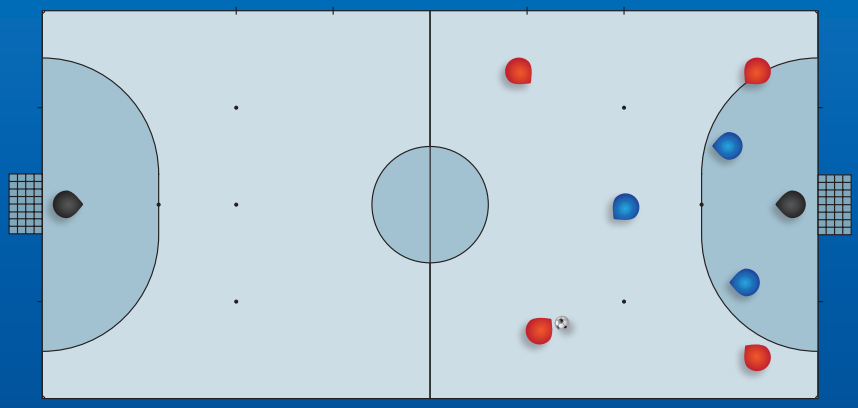
18

1-1-2 defensive system



19

1-2-1 defensive system



1.7 SET-PIECES

1.7.1 Introduction

In futsal, set-pieces are actions that take place when play is restarted, either after a foul has been committed, when the ball goes out of play, or at kick-off. Set-pieces are a part of the game model for any team. They occur regularly during the match and represent an important tactical gambit for engineering shooting opportunities. The opportunity they present for restarting play allows teams to plan and rehearse specific moves, giving them time to position themselves and execute coordinated movements between the players.

Set-pieces involve attacking and defensive play, and players must be trained to deal with both situations.

1.7.2 Basic theory: types and concepts

The range of set-piece scenarios is wide and extensive. If we were applying the strict definition of the term, we would need to discuss all those actions during the game where play is restarted after a stoppage. However, in reality, we are referring more specifically to situations during the game in which the objective is to seek a quick finish by restarting play with rehearsed routines, a direct shot at goal or a quick free-kick, corner or kick-in with an element of surprise. With this in mind, we will restrict the types of set-pieces covered to the following: **corners; kick-ins in the attacking, middle and defensive third; free-kicks with a wall; free-kicks without a wall, kicks from the second penalty mark, penalties, kick-offs.**

There are several criteria we can use to categorise set-pieces:

1. According to the position on the court (kick-ins and free-kicks): attacking, middle or defensive third (free-kicks and kick-ins); central, on the wings or in the corners (free-kicks with a wall).
2. According to the type of set-piece and the routine involved: quickly taken/direct/simple/complex/combination.
3. According to the type of defence used to defend against the set-piece: man-marking defences, zonal defences, mixed defences and alternative defences for set-pieces.

Concepts to take into consideration at set-pieces:

- **Category of set-piece:** as described above.
- **Position of the ball:** position in which the ball must be placed to take the set-piece.
- **Set-piece signal:** verbal, visual or positional signals which inform the team about which move is to be executed.
- **Set-piece start signal:** this is sometimes used after the set-piece signal to indicate the start of the sequence of movements to be executed.
- **Starting positions:** positions on the court that all the players adopt before the set-piece is taken.
- **Movements:** the movements executed by the players during the move.
- **Timings:** the time set for all the various movements involved in the set-piece to be executed, with the objective of creating and occupying space at the right moment.
- **Base or main move:** the initial plan for a set-piece sequence, which is tailored specifically to suit our objectives with respect to creating finishing options.

- **Variations:** the moves which start from an initial model or base move that can be used to execute variations in the movements, timings and finishing options, etc.
- **Sequences:** the pre-established series of moves to be executed in a specified order.
- **Core technical/tactical concepts:** the concepts used within the set-piece move to achieve specific aims and objectives.
- **Defensive system:** the initial positioning adopted by the opposition's defenders with respect to the attackers and space, and the type of response to the attacking movement.
- **Set-piece taker:** the player tasked with delivering the set-piece.
- **Roles:** the main strategic functions performed by each player during the move.
- **Finishing options:** when devising a set-piece move, different movements can be envisaged in creating a range of options for finishing it off.

1.7.3 Attacking set-pieces

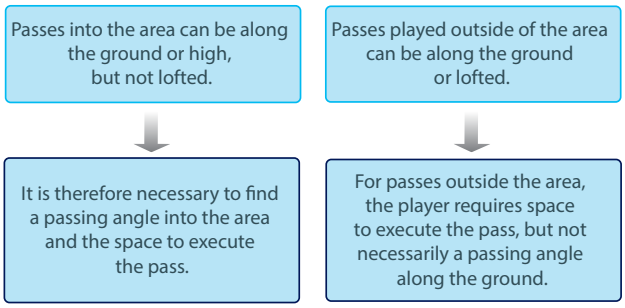
1.7.3.1 Attacking roles

Players can assume different roles at a set-piece and they may also have several or alternating roles within the same move. These roles include the set-piece taker, the finishing option, decoy or support players whose role is to create space for team-mates, players providing defensive balance, etc. Normally, the different roles should complement each other. All roles are equally important, although the ultimate success of the move undoubtedly rests on the role of the set-piece taker.

The set-piece taker's qualities: peripheral vision and reading of the events on the court; decision-making ability; passing ability; ability to deliver a well-weighted pass to enable finishing; ability to conceal the intended direction of the pass; ability to play the ball at the right time as part of a set-piece routine; ability to read the game after the set-piece has been taken; ability to tactically interpret information compiled by scouts on the opposition; ability to make use of their stronger foot (i.e. are they playing on the opposite wing?); ability to evaluate risks and understand the team's needs, taking into account the score and the time remaining.

1.7.3.2 Corners (attack)

Corner-kicks are strategic elements with very rigid characteristics, as they are always taken from a fixed point (on the left or the right). As a result, any variations that may occur are triggered by the type of opposition defence and by the attacking movements made. The importance of the area as a defensive space must be taken into consideration.



1.7.3.3 Kick-ins (attack)

A kick-in occurs when the ball crosses the touch line. Kick-ins are an important type of set-piece as they occur regularly throughout the game. They can be categorised as follows:

1. **Kick-ins in the attacking third:** these are taken from anywhere between the corner at the opposition end of the court and 15m along the touch line. In this area of the court, the optimal outcome of the set-piece is to finish on goal. In these situations it is important to command the zone.
2. **Kick-ins in the middle third:** these are executed along a 10-15m section which is considered the centre of the court. The objective will not only be to execute a pre-rehearsed move in order to create a direct opportunity to finish on goal; the rehearsed move must also include movement which helps the team to maintain possession. Additionally, in many cases the rehearsed move

must tie in with the positional attacking system that the team wishes to employ. The team must look to occupy space rationally to ensure there is a flow to their play.

3. **Kick-ins in the defensive third:** these are taken in the defensive area of the court, around 25-30m from the opposition goal. Rehearsed moves can have two different objectives: creating opportunities to finish on goal or developing play while evading opposition pressure.

1.7.3.4 Attacking free-kicks with a wall

Free-kicks with a wall may be awarded in any area of the court (except for fouls committed inside the area, which result in a penalty) and provide the opportunity for a **direct** shot on goal unless they have been signalled as an **indirect** free-kick. As the set-piece taker usually has an angle to shoot from, the defensive team will form a wall, in which the number of players will depend on various factors such as: the area of the court where the free-kick is awarded; how close it is to the goal; the shooting angle; the confidence of the defending team and goalkeeper, and their ability to read the situation from a tactical point of view. Previously, we made the distinction between direct and indirect free-kicks (the award of which is determined by the referee, based on the offence committed); however, free-kicks with a wall can also be classified **according to their position on the court** (defensive, middle or attacking third, central, on the wings, in the corner) and by **the number of defenders in the wall**.

There are other questions and core concepts relating to free-kicks with a wall that need to be addressed in greater depth. These include: the suitability of the set-piece for an attempt on goal; the stronger foot of the set-piece taker; and taking a direct shot at goal (depending on the shape and response of the defence).

1.7.3.5 Free-kicks without a wall, kicks from the second penalty mark and penalties

Free-kicks without a wall or kicks from the second penalty mark are awarded after the team has already been awarded five free-kicks in one period. These are direct free-kicks and require that a shot be taken straight at goal.

A penalty is awarded when the referee signals a foul inside the opposition's penalty area. This must also be used to take a direct shot at goal.

All of these types of set-piece require specialist set-piece takers, players with both the technical and the mental ability to execute this kind of play.

1.7.3.6 Kick-off

A kick-off is a rehearsed move, the ultimate objective of which is to create a shooting opportunity through a short phase of play at the start of either half and when a team restarts the game after conceding a goal.

1.7.4 Defending against set-pieces

Defending against a set-piece involves a series of actions executed by the team without possession. The aim is to defend against the opposition's set-piece-based attack and prevent them from taking the set-piece quickly or by surprise before the defence has organised itself.

1.7.4.1 General considerations for defending against set-pieces

Both the set-piece and the type of defence used to counter it can vary greatly depending on the type of action involved. As we have observed, there is a wide range of set-pieces and there are notable differences between defending a corner, a kick-in or a free-kick with a wall. We will focus on defending against the following set-pieces: **corners, kick-ins (in the attacking and middle third) and free-kicks with a wall.**

1.7.4.2 Different ways to defend set-pieces

The defensive system adopted by the team defending against a set-piece involves the initial positions taken by defenders in relation to the attackers and the area of the court in which they are defending the set-piece, as well as any instructions and strategies for dealing with the movements made by the attacking players.

Man-marking defence: a defensive set-up in which each defender is responsible for marking and sticking with one of the attackers. A man-marking defence provides a greater sense of individual influence and involvement, but on occasion can also allow the attackers greater opportunities to create and occupy space and passing angles.

Zonal defence: type of defence where each player defends a zone that could potentially be a dangerous area for attackers to finish from. Zonal defences demand a great deal of communication between all of the players and the coordination of their actions.

Mixed defence: a defensive set-up which is a mix of man-marking and zonal systems. Either different defenders within a team adapt to different systems, or the team as a whole switches from one system to another while the ball is out of play or play has been stopped.

1.7.4.3 Defensive roles at set-pieces

The defensive positions that players take up when defending against the different types of set-piece will largely depend on the individual attributes of each player, on the type of defence employed, and on the squad of players available to the coach. Depending on the defensive situation, there are specific defensive roles to be carried out, the performing of which will need to be optimised in line with the players available.

1.7.4.4 Core defensive concepts for set-pieces

In addition to the core technical attacking concepts executed during game play, with or without the ball, there are other core technical/tactical concepts that are based on them and which acquire greater relevance at set-pieces. This is due to their repeated use or to their unique application to these types of actions. The ability to make use of these attacking elements and concepts is a basic requirement for putting defensive systems together in response to set plays.

Similarly, there are core defensive technical/tactical concepts that assume particular importance as part of defensive set-pieces due to the fact that time and space are limited and that decision-making is a key factor. Core defensive concepts for handling set-pieces are: **position on the court; body position; visual command of the playing area; commanding the space between defender and attacker.**

1.7.4.5 Defending corners

We have already seen the importance of defending set-pieces, the types of defence that can be employed (man-marking, zonal or mixed), the core concepts that players must master, and various other general considerations that inform what is a key aspect of the game at elite level. With free-kicks or kick-ins, the position of the ball varies and this can influence the defensive strategy adopted. However, in the case of corner kicks, the position of the ball is fixed.

1.7.4.6 Defending kick-ins

The defensive response to kick-ins will depend on the distance of the ball from the goal, as the kick-in may be taken at any point along any part of the touch line. The closer the kick-in is to the defending team's goal, the more critical it is from a defensive point of view, as it will pose a greater direct threat in terms of creating an opportunity for shooting on goal. In such situations, it is crucial to defend the penalty area and the zone around it. The most common types of defensive systems used against kick-ins are **man-marking** and **zonal defence**.

1.7.4.7 Defending free-kicks using a wall

The closer a free-kick is to the defending team's goal, the more important it is to defend against it using a wall, given the increased likelihood of a direct shot on goal. The wall and all of the defenders must be at least five metres away from the ball. The number of players in the wall will depend on the area of the court in which the free-kick is awarded and the distance from goal. The more central or the closer to the defending team's goal, the greater the number of defenders in the wall (three is standard). If the free-kick is at an angle in relation to the goal, the defending team can deploy fewer players in the wall (normally two). Finally, if the free-kick is further from the goal or is indirect, the defending team may opt to deploy a wall comprising a single player. Given that they may be called into action, the goalkeeper must position themselves correctly, and this will depend on the number of players in the wall.

1.7.5 Methods for training set-pieces

It is not enough to practise set-piece routines in training sessions. Adequate time must be devoted to the development of set-piece scenarios, from understanding, incorporating and practising different types of set-piece, to improving the core technical/tactical concepts involved in this aspect of the game. We have already looked at the various aspects and elements that require attention with regard to set-pieces. An approach needs to

be developed that incorporates all of these factors and that can be transferred into real game play. A suitable balance must be found between creating rote set-piece moves which can be executed with practised precision, and developing decision-making skills with respect to the various set-piece scenarios in order to enhance and improve the players' grasp of the core concepts involved. We will now look at the methodology required for coaching set-pieces.

SELECT THE SET-PIECE MOVES

Design the set-piece and decide on the movements for each player involved.

↓

INTRODUCE THE SET-PIECE MOVES

Explain the move using a white board/printed diagrams.

↓

WATCH THE MOVES IN ACTION

Show real examples of the moves to bring the idea to life.

↓

WATCH THE MOVES ON DVD

Practise examples of the execution of the move and options available.

↓

PRACTISE WITHOUT ANY OPPOSITION

Set-piece signals, position on the court, movements, timings, speed, etc.

↓

REPEAT AND AUTOMATE

Create automatic reactions and timings, create/occupy space, pay attention to the stronger foot of the set-piece taker, body position, etc.

↓

WITH OPPOSITION AND TWO SET-PIECE TAKERS

Options for the set-piece taker, shooting options, learning to read and coping with the defensive response.

↓

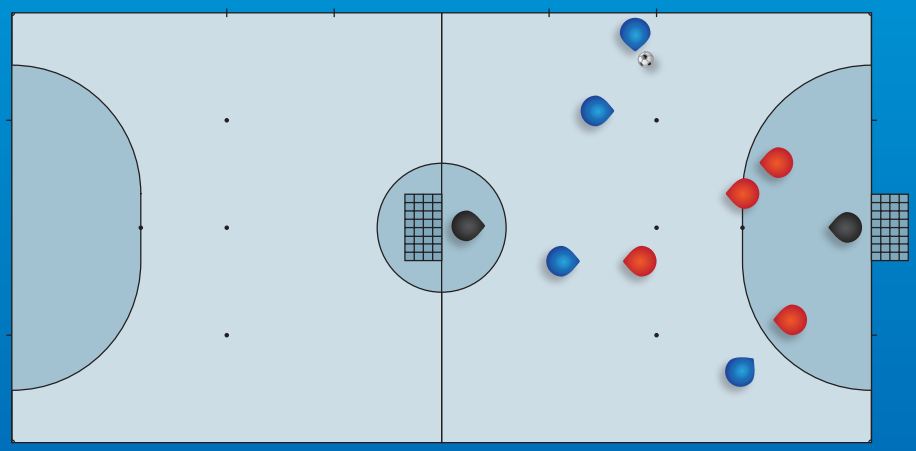
REAL GAME PLAY

Speed and precision, developing options and variations, reading the defence, core technical/tactical concepts, assigning roles, etc.

1.7.6 Drills for training set-pieces

Coaching set-pieces in real game play situations

1



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Corners, kick-ins, free-kicks. Core concepts and options in attacking set-pieces.

OBJECTIVES
To acquire and improve core concepts and options at set-pieces with a view to creating opportunities for finishing on goal at corners, kick-ins and free-kicks through pre-rehearsed situations and reading the game.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8 plus goalkeepers.

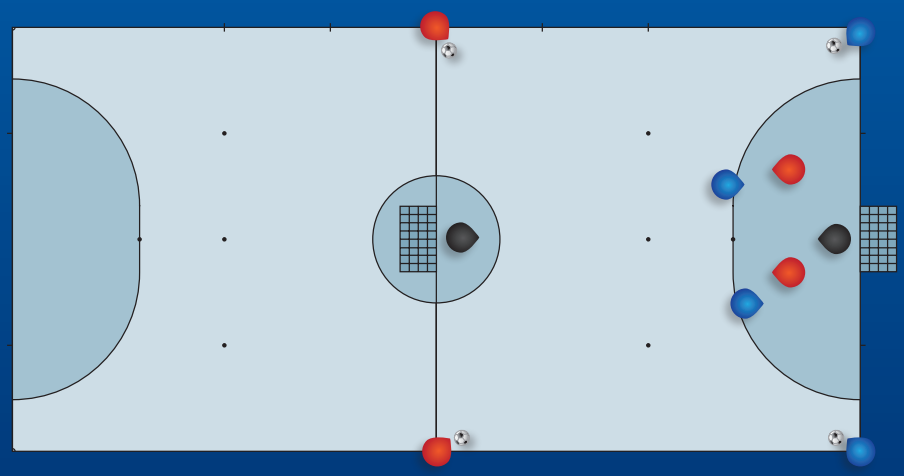
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 4v4 drill plus goalkeepers in a 20x20m playing area. Real game play in which rules apply to the taking of the set-piece. Whenever the ball goes out of play or play is stopped as a result of an offence being committed, the team restarting play does so in the manner determined beforehand: a corner kick, kick-in or free-kick.
- We use this drill so that we can work on the full repertoire of pre-rehearsed routines in real game play and on learning them, while also improving our grasp of the core concepts and options needed to develop them. Attention must be paid to the importance of reading the game when it comes to making decisions about the movements to be made and to the decision-making of the set-piece taker.

VARIATIONS
Allow players to take two touches to make play more dynamic and ensure the ball goes out of play more.

Core concepts and options at set-pieces

2



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Corners, kick-ins, free-kicks. Core individual and group concepts and options in attacking set-pieces.

OBJECTIVES
To acquire and improve core concepts and options at set-pieces with a view to creating opportunities for finishing on goal at corners, kick-ins and free-kicks by means of group technical/tactical options.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

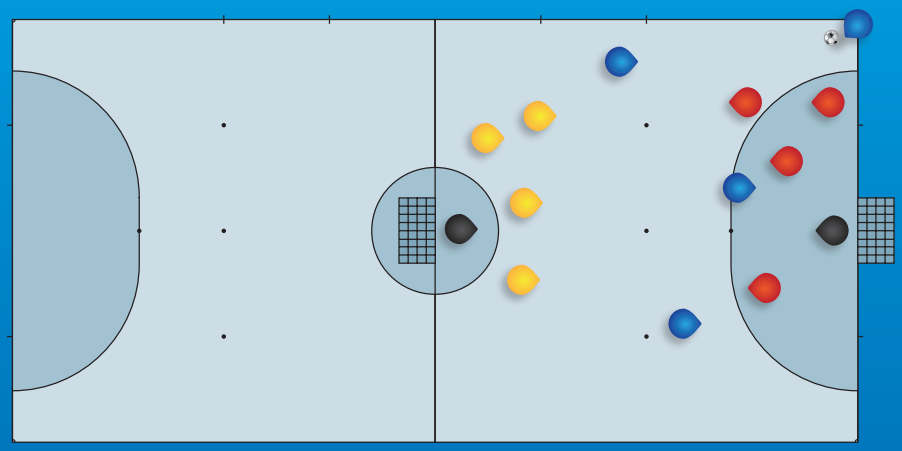
DRILL DESCRIPTION
- We start with a 2v2 on the court and two set-piece takers per team, positioned in the corners at the end their team is attacking. 2v2 real game play with the rule being that whenever the ball goes out of play, play is restarted with a corner kick.
- On the court we work on set-piece strategy with equal numbers of players, with no spare defensive player. When a goal is scored, the team scoring the goal can decide to change the number of players (from 2v2 to 3v3 or vice versa) or change the type of set-piece (from corners to kick-ins or vice versa).

DRILL DYNAMICS
The players on the court are substituted at regular intervals (every two minutes, for example). It is important that only one player is substituted at a time, so that the pairs are always different.

VARIATIONS
Players must take two touches.

Coaching variations in set-piece plays

3



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and team tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Corners, kick-ins, free-kicks. Core individual and group concepts and options in attacking set-pieces. Variations in attacking set-piece plays.

OBJECTIVES
To create, recognise and learn set-piece variations on the basis of the initial pre-rehearsed move, finding different options when it comes to creating opportunities for finishing on goal at corners, kick-ins and free-kicks by reading the game in accordance with changes in the type of defence.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
12 plus goalkeepers.

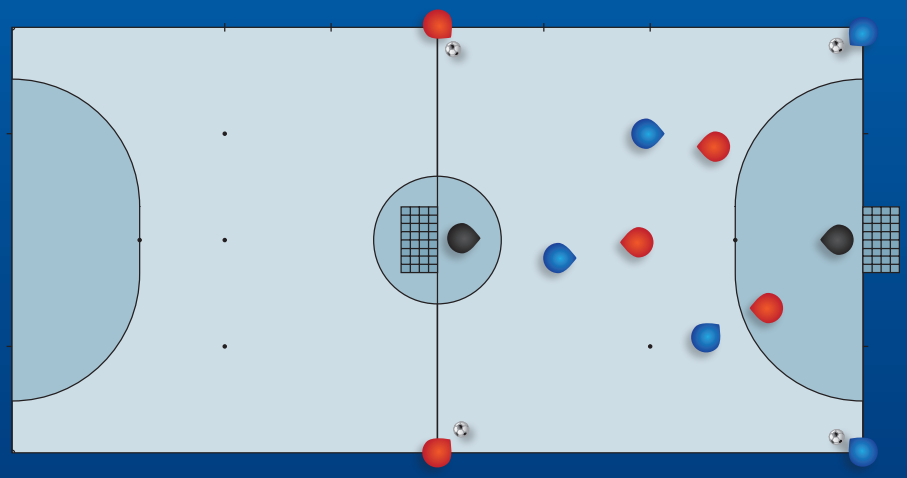
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- The drill can be carried out with 12 players (three teams of four) or 11 (three teams of three plus two set-piece takers, with one of the set-piece takers joining the three-player team that is defending, as a defender), plus goalkeepers. The drill takes place in a 20x20m playing area.
- One team takes the same type of set-piece five times in a row, making variations as they do so and interpreting the changes in the type of defence.
- The defences vary between zonal, mixed and man-marking systems, depending on the choice of the defending team or the express instructions of the coach (with or without the attacking team knowing).

ROLE-CHANGING BETWEEN TEAMS
Attack-rest (feedback)-defence. The type of set-piece can be changed every time one team takes over from another in attack.

Creating and learning automatic movements in set-piece plays

4



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Corners, kick-ins, free-kicks. Core concepts and options in attacking set-pieces. Automatic movements, positioning and movements.

OBJECTIVES
To acquire and improve core concepts and options at set-pieces with a view to creating opportunities for finishing on goal at corners, kick-ins and free-kicks through pre-rehearsed situations and reading the game. To make the positioning of players an automatic process that takes into account which side of the court the set-piece is taken.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

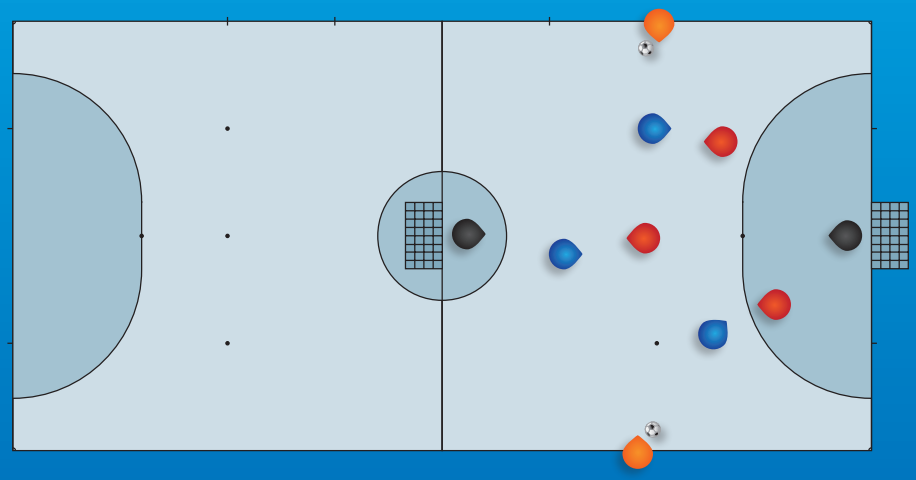
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
3v3 drill in a 20x20m playing area with four set-piece takers in the corners, two on each team.

DRILL DYNAMICS
- The coach names the set-piece taker, who takes all the set-pieces for their team and indicates each of them. Each team attacks the same one goal throughout. Depending on which side of the court the set-piece is taken and the players on the court, they should organise themselves quickly so as to make the most of the options offered by the set-piece play indicated by the taker, carrying it out in such a way that the movements they make and the timing of them become automatic.
- The defending team comprises only three players, creating more opportunities for finishing on goal.
- Set-piece takers can be changed every so often or, if their role is specified beforehand, they can stay where they are.

Quickly taken set-pieces in real game play situations

5



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Corners, kick-ins. Core concepts and options in quickly taken attacking set-pieces.

OBJECTIVES
To acquire and improve core concepts and options at set-pieces with a view to creating opportunities for finishing on goal at corners and kick-ins by restarting play quickly and reading the game.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
8-12 plus goalkeepers.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

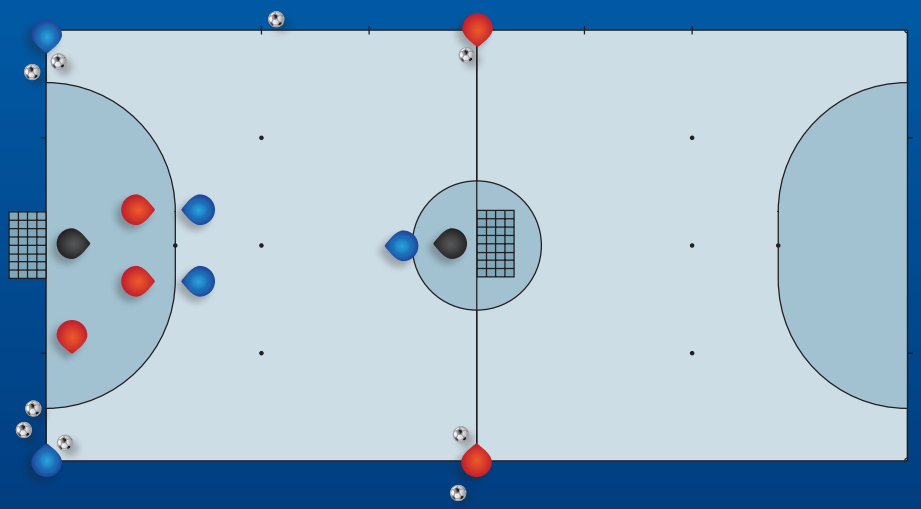
DRILL DESCRIPTION
- 3v3 real game play in a 20x20m playing area with two set-piece takers (one on each side of the court). Whenever the ball goes out, the set-piece taker on the opposite side of the court restarts play.
- Play is restarted quickly, thus demanding concentration and watchfulness in both defence and attack. The aim is to create opportunities for finishing on goal quickly.

DRILL DYNAMICS
Alternate with three teams rotating at intervals.

VARIATIONS
Switch around at corner kicks, with four set-piece takers.

Core concepts and options in dead-ball situations and in second-phase play

6



LEARNING UNIT
Individual and group tactics.

PHASE
Skills acquisition/proficiency.

CONTENT
Corners. Core concepts and options in attacking set-pieces.

OBJECTIVES
To acquire and improve core concepts and options at set-pieces with a view to creating opportunities for finishing on goal at corners, at both the first attempt and in second-phase play, by assessing the best option following the opening movements.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus goalkeepers.

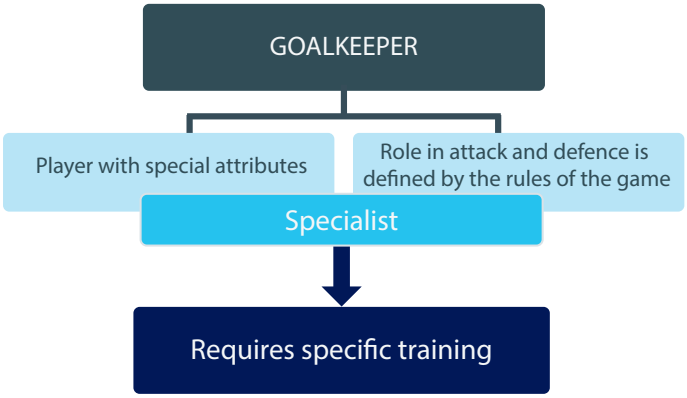
EQUIPMENT
Balls and bibs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
- Core concepts and options in the taking of set-pieces and in second-phase play.
- A 3v3 is played, with play restarting with a corner-kick (with four set-piece takers being stationed in each corner) whenever the ball goes out.
- A 2v2 is played at each corner kick, with a defender being added as a spare player, along with an attacker, who hangs back and only takes part in play when receiving the ball, though they can only finish on goal after linking up with one of their team-mates.
- Players must attempt to finish on goal in the 2v2 situation (from the dead-ball situation) or in real game play with the 3v3 situation (in second-phase play).
- Important: in 2v2 players should look to finish on goal. If there is no opportunity to do so, a 3v3 should be played in second-phase play. In defence, please note the importance of switching positions after the set-piece is taken. Assess risks when the set-piece is taken.

DRILL DYNAMICS
Set time limits for games and change teams and set-piece takers depending on the number of players.

1.8 SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR GOALKEEPERS

1.8.1 Introduction



It is important to identify the various actions in which the goalkeeper plays a central part during the course of a match. With this in mind, we need a training programme that focuses on specific concepts and elements, with drills that enable development to be monitored.

1.8.2 Defensive actions performed by the goalkeeper

The goalkeeper's defensive actions can be categorised as follows:

DEFENSIVE	Adopting the right body shape	Awareness of the positioning of different parts of the body prior to performing a task.
	Positioning	The ball is the key point of reference. Command the area.
	Movement	Constant awareness of positioning. Maintain balance when shifting position.
	Feints	Aim to create doubt in the opposition without losing position.
	Saving & gathering the ball	Good handling of the ball (hands in the "W" position) and get body behind the ball.
	Clearances, parrying & rebounds	A key objective is to not allow the opponent a second shooting opportunity.
	Diving	Decide if the ball can be caught or if it should be cleared or parried. Perfect diving technique.
	Rushing out	Judge the trajectory of the ball and the position of the opposing player. Make the right decision.

1.8.3 Attacking actions performed by the goalkeeper

The goalkeeper's attacking actions can be categorised as follows:

ATTACKING	Kicking & throwing	Correct handling of the ball and selection of the correct distribution option, taking into account the positions of team-mates and opponents.
	Support	Communication with player in possession so that the ball is played back in the best way.
	Awareness	Concentration, enabling anticipation and a rapid response to situations.

1.8.4 Training methods for goalkeepers

Drills for goalkeepers should be designed to develop and improve responses in four key areas, all of which are interlinked and which contain the core aspects needed to build a specialist training programme. These four key areas are:

- technical;
- tactical;
- physical;
- psychological.

Technical:

- Identifying and becoming familiar with the actions carried out by a futsal goalkeeper, as well as developing an understanding and command of how the goalkeeper interacts with the team.
- Coordination in the design of the drills between those responsible for the tactical aspects (the coach) and the physical aspects (the fitness coach) of the training programme.
- Taking into account the individual attributes of goalkeepers.
- Helping players to recognise and correct errors with regard to positioning and body shape.
- Interacting with goalkeepers (i.e. providing assessments, offering opinions).

Tactical:

- Striking a balance between the more analytical work carried out in the goal with the work carried out together with outfield team-mates on the court.

Physical:

- The level of technical/tactical work should take into account the physical workload of players in order to prevent muscle or ligament problems (among others).
- Appropriate physical work should be introduced to complement other parts of the training session, as this will improve and accelerate the players' ability to execute other skills and their success rate.

Psychological:

- Paying special attention to emotional aspects and behaviours that may manifest themselves in training sessions and impact on the response of keepers (who are not isolated individuals) when they come to perform their tasks, potentially undermining the general performance of the team:

✓ Achieving maximum concentration in games and in training.

✓ Learning to accept the possibility of errors and to live with their consequences.

✓ Exuding confidence.

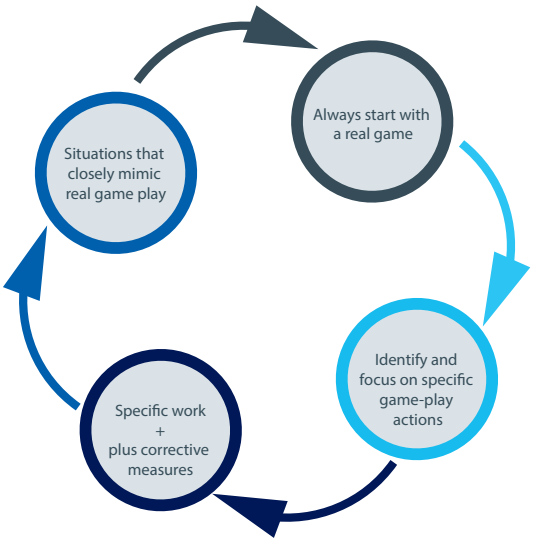
✓ Training to improve (compete).

✓ Working with a team-mate and pushing each other on.

Organising specialist work for the goalkeeper

Specialist goalkeeper training does not start and end with the various elements worked on in the goal. This training forms a part of an on-going process that recurs on a cyclical basis.

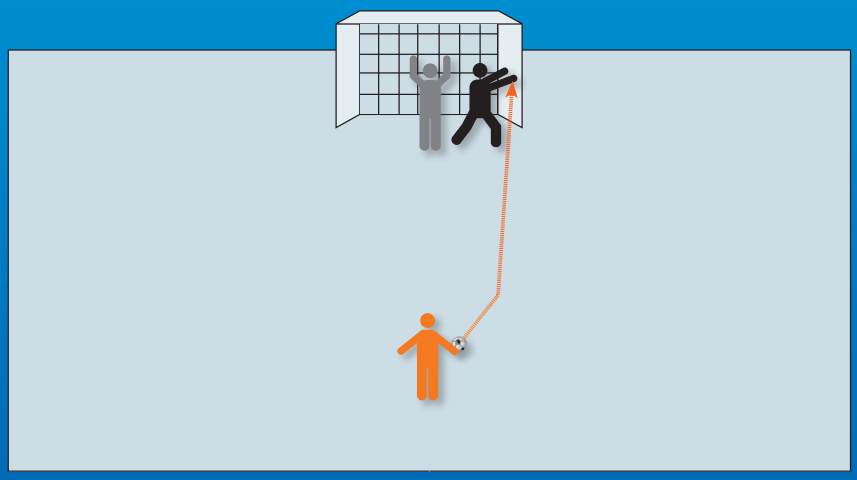
In summary, our work as coaches and trainers must focus on providing and developing tools for the goalkeeper that will help them to fully master the core technical/tactical concepts and enable them to decide **which** technical responses are required in any given situation and **how**, **when** and **where** to execute them. The goalkeeper does not play as an individual, but as a member of a team. As a result, they must observe what is happening on the court at all times. The goalkeeper must be presented with dynamic, fluctuating situations that occur at the fastest possible speed, are not repeated, and which require quick decision-making and extremely precise execution.



1.8.5 Training drills for goalkeepers

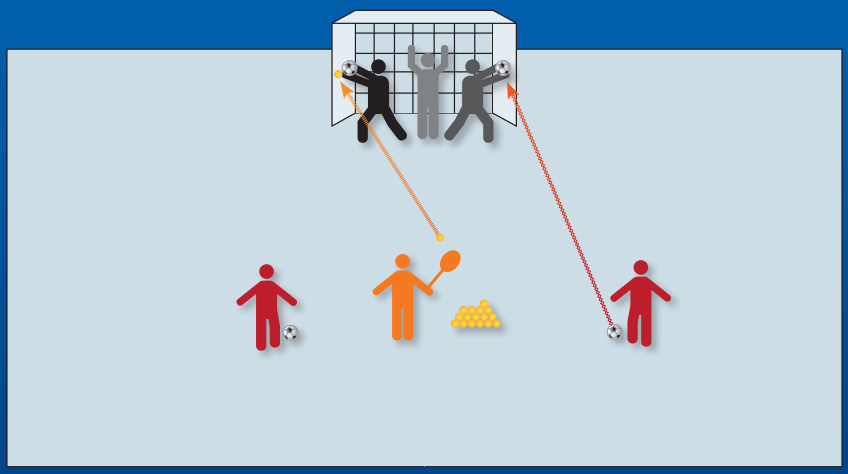
1. **Lateral movements in the goal and use of the hands to parry shots**
   The goalkeeper stands just off the goal line. The coach throws rubber balls at the goalkeeper, either on the full or bouncing them off the ground. Balls can be thrown towards one side of the goal and then the other alternately, or randomly without the keeper knowing where they will be thrown.

1

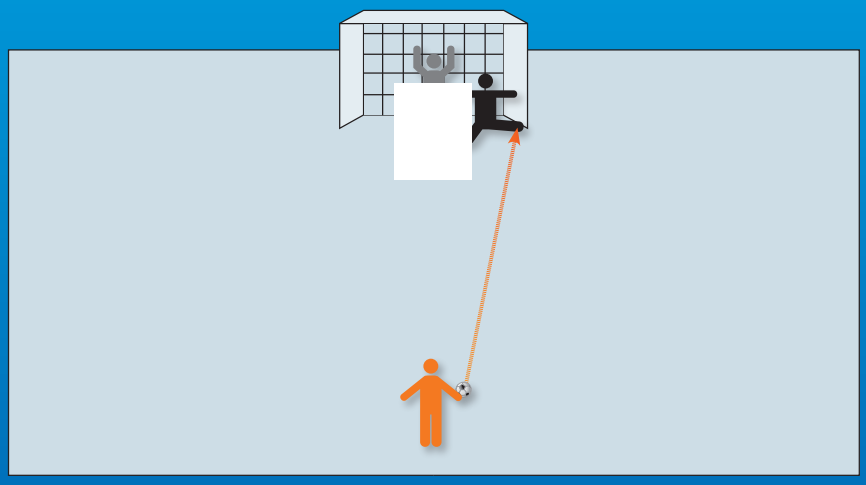


2. **Lateral movements in the goal, and saving and holding onto the ball**
   The goalkeeper stands in the centre of the goal. A player is stationed opposite each post. They both have several futsal balls. The coach stands in the centre of the area, with a basket of tennis balls within easy reach. The goalkeeper moves along the goal line to one side and stops and holds on to a shot from one of the two players. The shot can either be in mid-air or without the keeper knowing where it will go. Still holding onto the ball, the keeper then moves along the line to the other side of the goal. The coach fires a tennis ball in the direction of the goalkeeper, who parries it firmly with the futsal ball in their hands. The action is repeated on alternate sides of the goal.

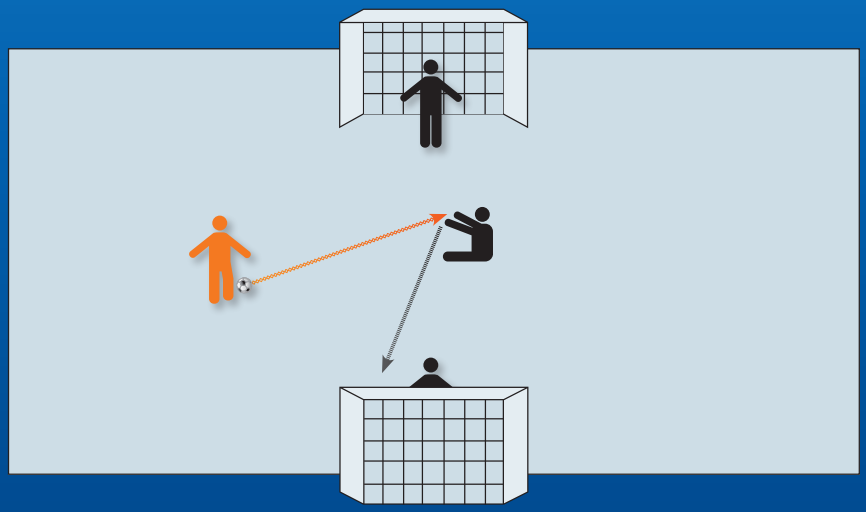
2



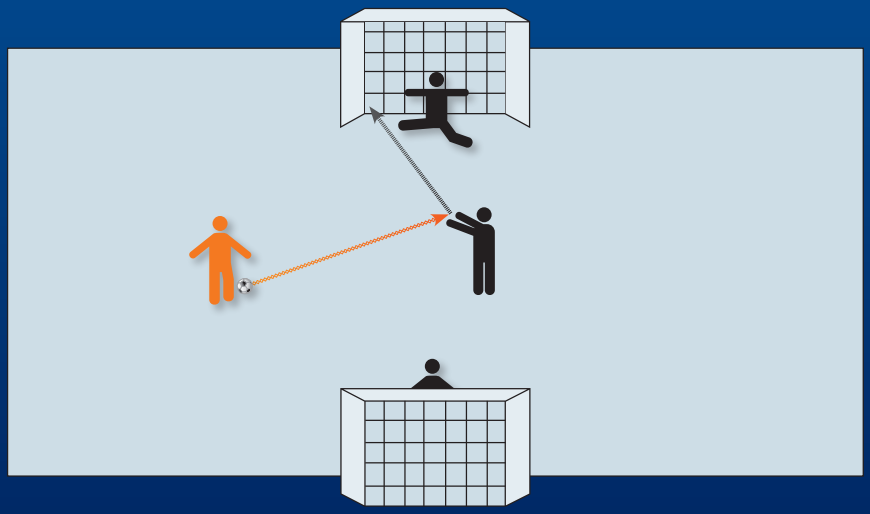
3



4a



4b



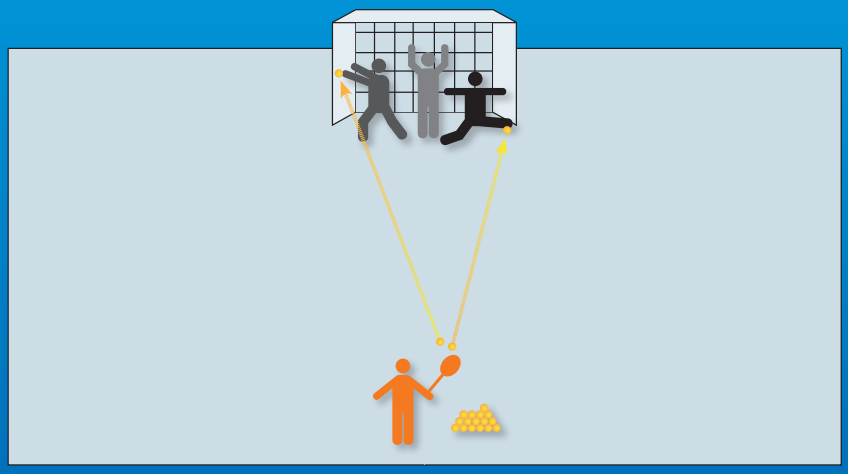
3. **Diverting of low shots with legs (hurdle step) with line of sight blocked**
The goalkeeper stands just off the goal line. To restrict their vision, a screen is placed about two or three metres in front of the goal. The coach hits low shots towards the goal, choosing whether to warn the keeper when they are shooting or not. The keeper must deflect the shots with their legs. This same drill can also be used by keepers to practise saving shots with their hands by diving to either side of the goal or to practise using their hands to parry rubber balls thrown at different heights, as in Drill 1.

4. **Diving and parrying mid-air shots with the hands**
The goalkeeper sits down in the centre of the area. Two goals are positioned facing each other – one in the standard game position and the other on the six-metre line, with a goalkeeper in each goal. The coach, standing to one side, hits low or mid-air shots towards the keeper positioned in the middle of the goal. The keeper must dive and divert the shots towards one of the goals, the idea being to score a goal in them. Smaller goals can be used to make the keeper's task harder and help them work on accuracy. The coach may also vary the starting position of the seated goalkeeper, with them adopting a standard position before diving to push the ball away.

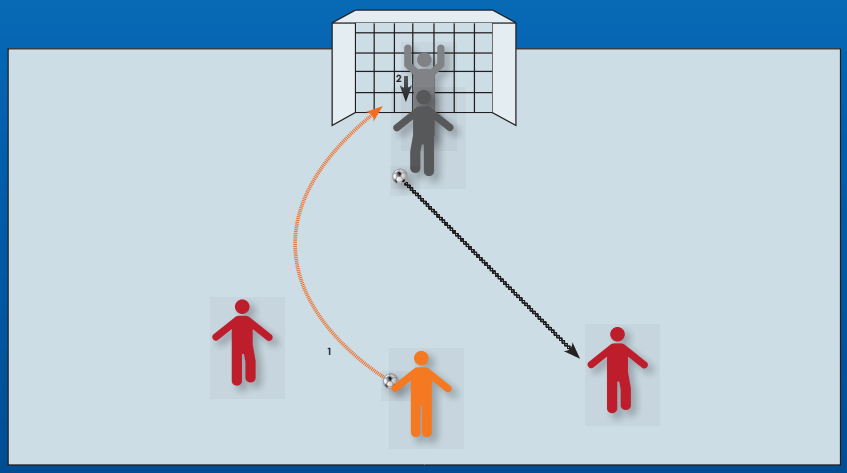
5. **Parrying the ball with hands or feet at different heights**
The goalkeeper stands just off the goal line. From a position nine to 10 metres away, the coach uses a racquet to hit tennis balls towards goal at different heights, which the keeper must push away with their hands or feet, depending on the height of the shot.

6. **1v1 against the goalkeeper**
The coach throws a ball in the air and the goalkeeper comes off their line, tries to control it and then runs with it to the edge of the area. The coach then nominates one of two attackers waiting on the touch line. The goalkeeper passes the ball to the nominated player and comes out to defend in a one-on-one situation. Attacks can end with the first attempt on goal or continue until a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play.

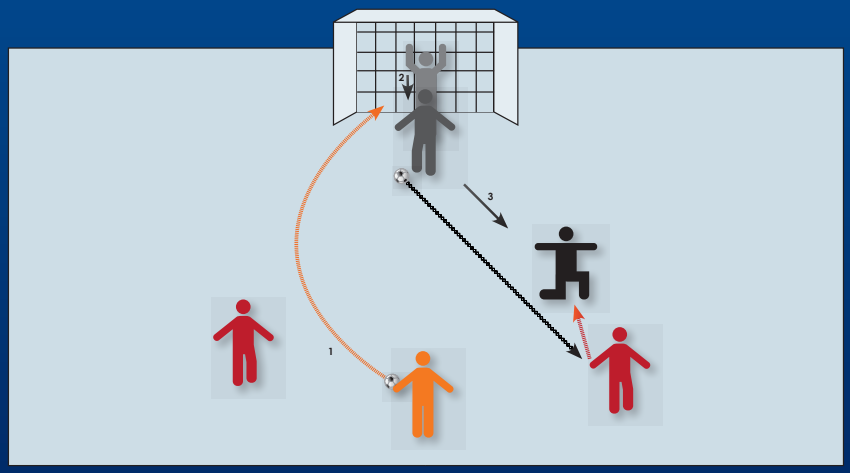
5



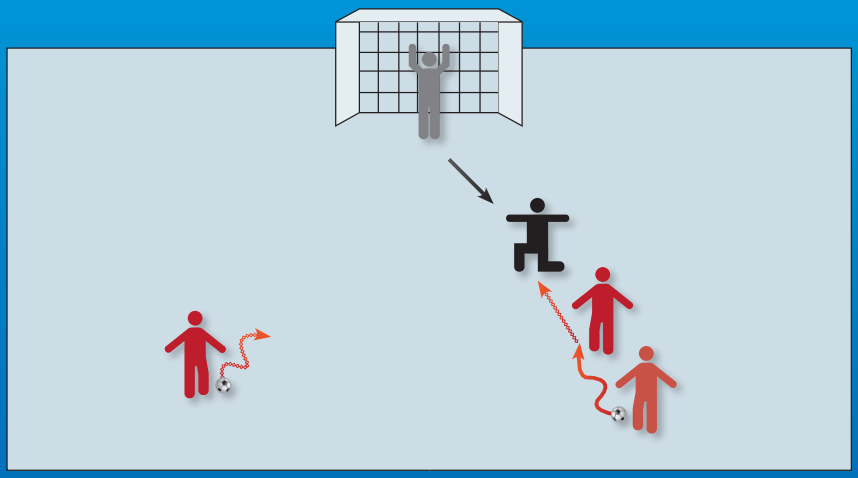
6a



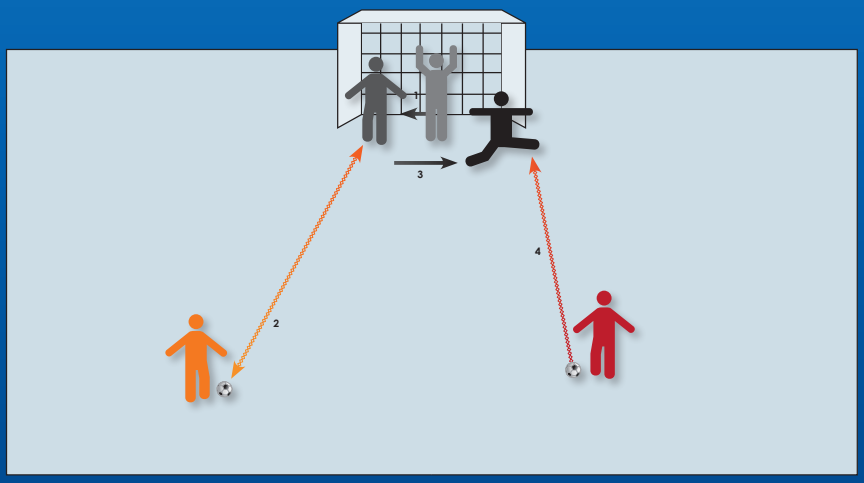
6b



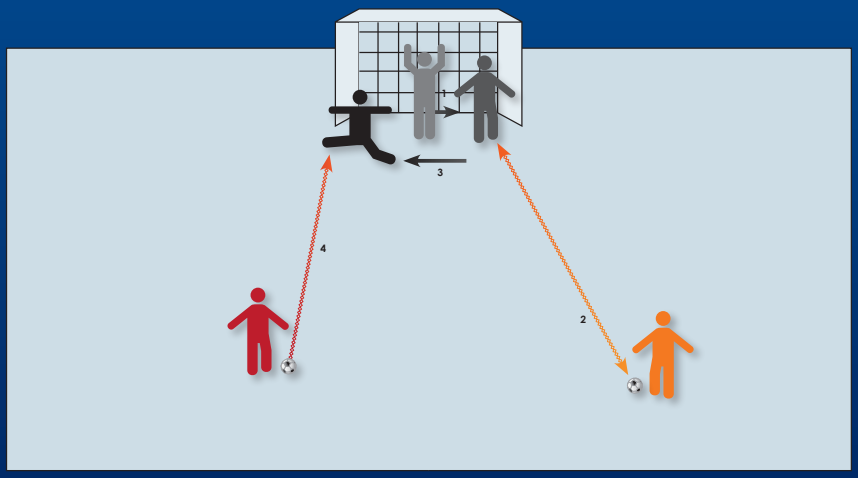
7



8a



8b

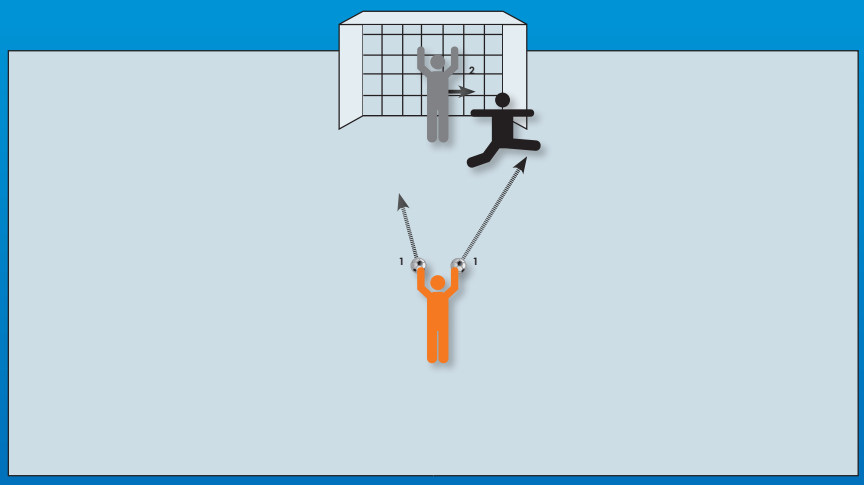


7. **1v1 against the goalkeeper**
Three players take up position 10 metres out – one in the centre and one on either flank – and then run with the ball towards goal. On reaching the penalty area two of them stop, while the other continues and tries to score a goal. The goalkeeper does not know which player will shoot on goal and comes out in order to defend the goal. Attacks can end with the first attempt on goal or continue until a goal is scored or until the ball runs out of play. The drill can also be developed into an attacking scenario in which the attackers outnumber the defenders. To create this scenario, the three outfield players start from a position further out and stop nine metres from the goal. The player nominated to shoot on goal then passes to either of their colleagues, combining with the player receiving the ball in trying to score a goal. The outfield player who did not receive the pass joins the keeper in trying to prevent the two attackers from scoring.

8. **Pass and divert with hands or feet**
The goalkeeper stands in the middle of the goal and then moves to one side. The coach passes a ball along the ground to them. The keeper must play the ball back to the coach with a first-time pass. The keeper then moves across to the other side of the goal and saves a shot. They do not know how high the shot will be and must use their hands or legs to divert the ball.

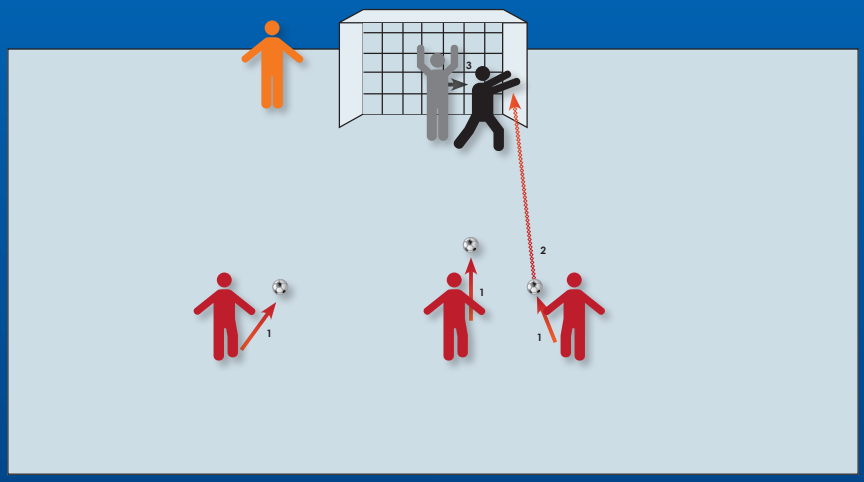
9. **Reaction drill using hands or feet to divert the first of two shots**
The goalkeeper stands just off the goal line. The coach takes two futsal balls or two tennis balls or a combination of both, and throws them at different speeds, one after the other, so that they reach the goal at virtually the same time, with the keeper having to save the first ball to reach them. The drill can be changed slightly by allowing a little more time between throwing the balls, giving the keeper the chance to decide which one to save first before moving to save the second.

9

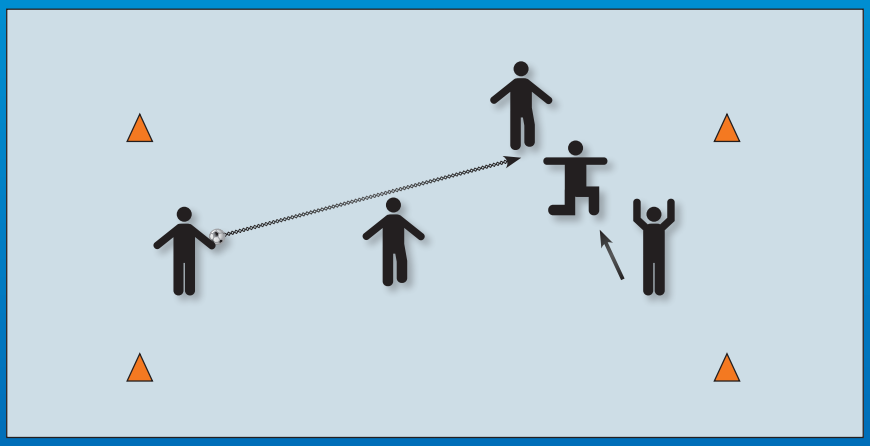


10. **Reaction drill using hands or feet to divert a series of shots**
The goalkeeper stands in the goal. Two or three players – depending on the required degree of difficulty – take up position nine to 10 metres from the goal. The coach stands in a position (behind the goal, for example) where they can indicate which of the players will shoot. All three players will shape to shoot, however, without the keeper knowing who will eventually do so. The drill can be made harder by allowing the player(s) not nominated to shoot to then take their shot(s).

10



11



11. **Throwing the ball out followed by 1v1 on the keeper**
This drill takes place in a 20x20m area. Each half of the drill area is occupied by a player – one an attacker and the other a defender. Neither player is allowed to enter the other half. The drill starts when the keeper throws the ball out. If the keeper throws the ball to the attacker, this player then goes into a 1v1 with the keeper. If, however, the defender intercepts the throw-out, they then go into a 1v1 with the keeper. The drill can continue with two players per side and keepers.

PRACTICAL UNITS

2. PHYSICAL PREPARATION

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of physical preparation is a broad and long-standing one. Over a period of many years, sports training experts devoted their energies to analysing and defining the term 'physical condition'.

Legido J. C. et al. (1995) proposed a model for systemising it, determining that a person's physical condition is based on anatomical and physiological criteria, which are the basis for achieving higher levels of conditioning. This model has since been modified, with the original five elements of physical condition being reduced to three:

	COMPONENTS	FACTORS/ATTRIBUTES/CAPABILITIES	
Physical condition	Anatomical capability	Stature Weight Body proportions Body composition Kinanthropometric assessment	
	Physiological capability	Basic health Proper functioning of the cardiovascular system Proper functioning of the respiratory system Myotypological composition Systems producing energy	
	Physical-motor capability	Determining motor capabilities	Strength Speed Flexibility Endurance
		Coordinating motor capabilities	Coordination Balance Space-time structuring
		Resulting capabilities	Ability and skill Agility

Components and factors in physical condition (Torres, J. 1996)

In view of the above, it can be said that physical preparation is a component of the sports training process, which involves developing the athlete's functional potential and their physical attributes to the highest possible levels. These attributes can be developed partially or fully, depending on the sport in question, the athlete and their level of training.

Physical preparation can be understood as the series of physical activities that prepare athletes for competition. These activities represent the physical dimension of training, and are designed to prepare athletes to compete rather than merely maintain their level of fitness, and are specific in nature. The aim is to improve athletes' physical attributes so that they can then perform at a higher level. Physical preparation is also known as 'condition training' because it develops conditioning skills, or 'physical conditioning'.

Before we look at how physical preparation is categorised, we should first clarify the following concepts, which can be a source of confusion:

- **Sports training:** an educational and scientific process, the objective of which is to increase athletes' performance so that they can enhance their physical and psychological skills. Sports training is a process that is repeated on a regular basis, therefore, and which aims to achieve specific objectives, the ultimate goal being to attain success (maximum performance).
- **Physical preparation:** this can be defined as a series of specific activities that prepare athletes for competition. Physical preparation constitutes the physical aspect of training, has a markedly competitive objective and is specific in nature.
- **Workload:** this refers to all of the exercises that act aggressively on the body and initially cause it to become imbalanced. The body ultimately restores its balance, not only regaining the previous level but exceeding it, achieving 'overcompensation' or 'supercompensation', the result being that the body will not be imbalanced if subjected to the same stimulus in the future.
- **Physical condition:** according to Grosser, M. et al. (1986), physical condition in sport is the weighted sum of all physical attributes essential to performance and its attainment through personal attributes.

2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF FUTSAL

2.2.1 Origins of futsal

It goes without saying that *fútbol sala*, the name by which the sport was originally known in Spanish, has its roots in football. It first appeared in the 1930s, when football moved from the street onto basketball courts and enclosed areas, which were eventually covered to protect players from the elements and enable them to play at night.

The sport reached a major turning point in the early 1990s when the name by which it is now known around the world – 'futsal' (a contraction of *fútbol sala*) – first appeared. FIFA took an important step forward by lending its support to the game, and encouraging all of its member associations to promote its development and expansion.

Futsal owes much of its technical development to adaptations from other team sports in which the upper body plays an important part in controlling the ball and developing play. However, the game is based on football, in which the lower body, and the feet in particular, are used to perform the sport's main technical requirement: control of the ball.

Futsal coaches are constantly trying to perfect technique, which is influenced by the qualities of the ball, the small size of the pitch and the limited duration of matches.

The sport has come a long way since its humble beginnings, well over half a century ago, and major barriers have been overcome in developing futsal and transforming it into the spectacle it is today.

Basic differences with football

Though derived from football, futsal differs from it in a number of ways:

- It is played in an area measuring 40x20m, a fifth of the size of a football pitch.
- The ball is smaller and does not bounce as high as a regulation football.
- Only five players are allowed on each side.
- There is no offside rule, for obvious reasons.
- Substitutions may be made while the ball is still in play.
- Accumulated fouls are recorded and result in a more severe sanction than in football (removal of the defensive wall from the sixth accumulated foul onwards).
- The actual playing time is recorded using a chronometer.
- Teams are allowed to call time-outs.

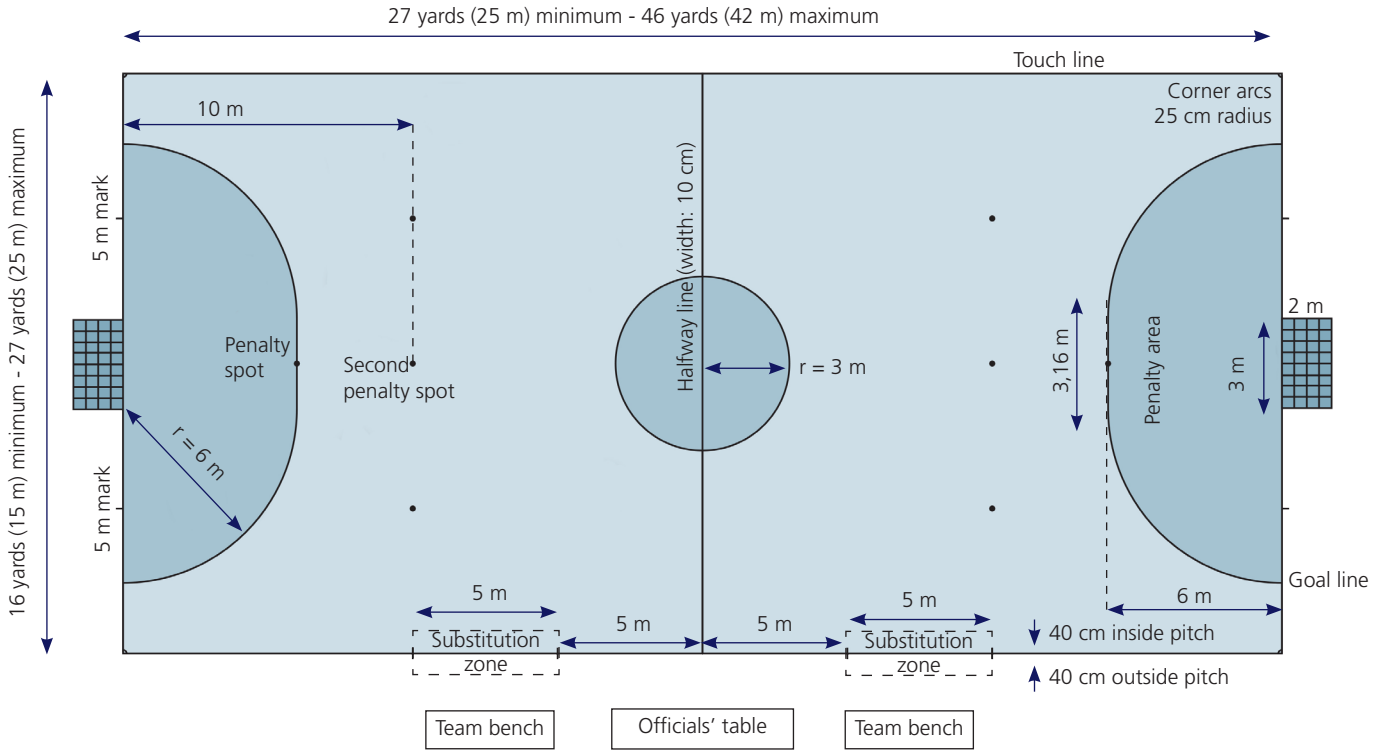
There are other differences that relate to infringements (fouls and misconduct). But all of these notwithstanding, futsal is a natural adaptation of 11-a-side football, played on a much smaller pitch.

2.2.2 Physical attributes and futsal

Futsal is a situational team sport that involves teamwork/opposition, with a mixed, alternating energy requirement (aerobic-anaerobic) and a high, dynamic general muscle requirement. It is a sport that is identified with a type of irregular effort expended at intervals and based on a series of maximum and sub-maximum efforts expended periodically in conjunction with incomplete active and passive recovery periods of variable duration. Generally speaking, these intervals do not allow complete recovery.

Matches comprise two periods of 20 minutes of actual playing time, with the clock being stopped every time the ball goes out of play or when play is interrupted. In total, matches can take 75-85 minutes to complete, and sometimes more than 90 minutes. The overall time varies, depending on the frequency of the various eventualities provided for in the Laws of the Game, such as time-outs, kicks from the second penalty mark, cleaning of the court, medical treatment, etc.

Futsal is characterised by a succession of movements at maximum speed in very small spaces (five to 10 metres), with continuous changes of direction, followed by



more static periods of muscular tension, which are nevertheless maximal in nature, with low-, medium- and high-intensity bursts of running being interspersed with active and incomplete recovery periods. As a result, players are required to perform actions in sudden bursts.

The playing area is relatively small (20x40 metres) for the number of players involved. The players must be alert and focused at all times, as goals may be scored from any part of the pitch and at any time.

Players must be fast and agile and have a very good understanding of time and space in order to accelerate and change direction quickly and continually in a small space shared with opponents and team-mates. They must also be able to control the ball properly and execute the other requisite technical skills in the right place and at the right time. Because of the proximity of the opposition players, they need to perform actions as quickly as possible and catch opponents by surprise. It is for this reason that the automatic movements they make and the internalised strategies they adopt are essential aspects of overall team performance.

In this respect, players must be highly adept at coordinating and controlling their bodies so that they can successfully perform the sport's characteristic synchronised and automatic movements in confined areas and at maximum speed without this affecting performance and efficiency as the game unfolds and their fatigue levels increase.

A futsal match involves a type of physical activity performed at intervals and based on irregular effort with incomplete recovery periods.

As a result of the improved physical conditioning of players and the intensity of modern game play, sequences of consecutive effort of sub-maximum and maximum intensity are increasing in length. The ability to tolerate stress, fatigue and – in physiological terms – lactic acid has thus become increasingly important.

As well as requiring a great deal of power, futsal players need an alactic anaerobic capability and must be able to regenerate phosphagens quickly. They must also be able to cope with medium-high levels of lactic acid and achieve high core aerobic fitness in order to cope with the effort they expend and to recover quickly.

2.2.3 The training of physical attributes in youth categories

It is widely agreed that young children should not play sport in the same way as older children and adults, and that sports in which consideration is not given to the potentially harmful effects of performance should be avoided. There are very significant differences between the physical, mental and emotional development of young children and that of older children. Coaches must, therefore, be aware of the various types of load or burden (physical, mental and emotional) involved in both training and competition.

There is a demand in society for young people to play sport and to train, and it is in society's interest to expose its youngest members to other spheres of experience (training environments) in conjunction with a school education.

Coaching for children at young ages should embrace the following criteria: promoting the integrated development of children; encouraging them to take up various sports; gradually encouraging them to reach ever more demanding levels of performance in accordance with their age and development; laying the basic foundations necessary for future sports performance; fostering the creation of suitable environments in which children can develop at a psychomotor, socio-emotional, cognitive and physical level; creating, in conjunction with parents, coaches, sports doctors and psychologists, a sporting community that provides ongoing support for the sports development of children, etc.

Models for introducing children to sport

There are various models for introducing children to sport and which help us to create a suitable planning structure tailored to their specific phases of development:

The first is an educational model that is essentially oriented towards the education of the child or youngster. The concepts of enculturation, socialisation and personalisation have historically been central aspects of education (Weber, 1976), and the introduction of children to sport for educational purposes largely pursues these very aims. Sporting goals (personal bests, records and titles, etc.) are of secondary importance.

Another model that needs to be considered is the instrumental model, which is based purely on learning; for example, learning to swim, skate and ski, etc. Educational aspects do not count for much in this model. They are secondary in importance due to the fact that short-term 'utilitarian' objectives are set: i.e. it is better if a child acquires a skill or ability in 10 days rather than 15.

A third model is the sporting model, which aims to achieve sporting success and objectives (records and personal bests, titles, promotion, etc.). Competition is the sole purpose of training and all design and intervention-related aspects are of secondary importance.

The biggest practical problem faced by coaches and teachers working with these age groups is how best to combine these three major approaches to introducing children to sport in a dynamic manner. These approaches should be anything but static and must enable development over time.

Children are introduced to sport via a process of supervised practice that is fairly broad in scope and involves youngsters aged between eight and 17.

The age range in which children start to play sport is not determined at random. Children typically take up sport at the age of eight and do so with the expectation of continuing in the medium to long term.

Boys and girls develop quickly in both quantitative (growth) and qualitative (maturity) terms between the ages of eight and 17. In this sense we can talk of biological as well as cognitive and social development. These three types of development tend to occur in conjunction with each other, meaning that children need to be observed and assessed as part of an integrated approach.

Three biological sub-stages that are key to human development occur during this stage: pre-puberty, puberty and post-puberty. These three divisions are biological in nature and are structured around the rate-of-growth curve and the state of development of the reproductive function.

One of the biggest problems involves the existing imbalance between real time (age) and physical/biological time (rate of growth and maturity).

The process of introducing children to sport is very important, as it is a period of transition towards the sporting lives they will enjoy as adults, which can thus vary in both duration and the degree of success, measured from a strictly sporting viewpoint. Furthermore, a significant amount of growth and maturing can take place during the seven to eight years for which this period can last.

When planning coaching for children, we must bear in mind a number of factors that can have a direct impact on it:

- Pressure should not be put on children to achieve success.

- Parents often look for performance from the child in order to derive their own compensatory satisfaction from it.
- If coaching is carried out by unqualified supervisors, it may impact negatively on the development of the child.
- The objectives of training must be pleasure and satisfaction.
- What reasons do children have for giving up sport?
  - Passive and subordinate behaviour of children during training.
  - The monotonous nature of coaching (limiting the desire of children to play).
  - Coaching focused on competition and selection.
- Early development: success at an early stage and unequal competition.
- Multilateral coaching with a purpose.
- Training periods.

Competition should allow children to enjoy sport. We must never look to it for objectives that do not correspond with their stage of development. During competition, it is the coach's job, therefore, to ensure that both they and the children:

- Enjoy playing sport.
- Fit in with the group.
- Become familiar with skills and competition rules.
- Take part in only a small number of competitions (winning is not the objective).
- Avoid rewarding achievement with trophies and medals, etc.
- Use forms of skill work.
- Assess the quality of movement and not the speed at which it is executed.
- Compete within training groups and clubs.
- Focus competition on relays and teams, rather than individuals.
- Treat both sexes equally.
- Take part in competitions that are not structured in the same way as adult competitions.

There are, then, ideal ages for the development of each motor skill:

		START	DEVELOPMENT	PERFORMANCE	CONTINUATION
Maximum strength	Male	14	16-18	18-20	20 +
	Female	12	14-16	16-18	18-20
Explosive strength	Male	12-14	14-16	16-18	18-20
	Female	10-12	12-14	14-16	16-20
Strength endurance	Male	14-16	16-18	18-20	20+
	Female	13-14	14-16	16-18	18-20
Aerobic endurance	Male	8-12	12-16	16-18	18-20
	Female			18-20	
Anaerobic endurance	Male	14-16	16-18	18-20	20+
	Female	12-14	14-18		
Speed of reaction	Male	8-11	12-15	16-18	18-20
	Female				
Maximum non-cyclical speed	Male	12-14	14-16	16-18	18-20
	Female	10-12	12-15	16-18	
Maximum cyclical speed	Male	12-14	14-16	16-18	18-20
	Female	10-12	12-15		
Flexibility	Male	5-11		12-14	14-20

2.3 WARM-UP/STRETCHING

These are the series of drills and exercises carried out before training sessions and matches and which players perform to wake their body up and ensure that it functions properly during the main period of effort. Warming up, which prevents a crisis of adaptation from occurring during the main period of effort and the accumulation of waste products in body tissue, has two main objectives:

- It helps prevent injuries.
- It prepares athletes physically, physiologically and psychologically for the start of an activity that is more intense than usual.

Regardless of whether it is performed for a training session or match, the warm-up should comprise two separate parts:

- **General part** (cardiovascular in nature and suitable for any sport): involves gentle jogging and loosening-up and coordination exercises designed to increase blood flow so that major muscles and joints warm up. This part of the warm-up also includes stretching exercises.
- **Specific part** (neuromuscular in nature, specific to each sport): this part involves movements directly related to the sport of futsal. Technical training drills that seek to prepare the neuromuscular system and the nervous system are used. Specific drills are also used and are developed gradually to provide continuity with the general part of the warm-up. Situations involving opponents are usually introduced in this part.

Characteristics of the warm-up

1. Global: it involves all of the body's joints, musculature and the cardiovascular system (heart and lungs).
2. Dynamic: it must be continuous, with few breaks and involving exercises that combine movement of the legs and arms.
3. Gradual: both the difficulty and intensity of drills should increase as the warm-up continues.
4. Motivating: exercises or drills should impact positively on the mental state of the athlete and their willingness to train and compete.
5. Total: should be comprehensive. As well as involving all the organs, we should tailor it to the specific movements of futsal, and even introduce the ball.
6. Methodical: warming up should be a routine for players and carried out with increasing intensity and difficulty, moving from the general to the specific.
7. Proportionate and specific: the warm-up is performed in accordance with the level and condition of the player and also with the subsequent effort and exercise.
8. Dynamic phases should be alternated with periods of rest (they should not be continuous). Exercises should be varied and contain no more than 10 repetitions.

Volume and intensity

This varies from sport to sport and depends also on weather conditions. Sports requiring a large amount of effort require a longer and more intense warm-up than those in which skills-based situations allow a less vigorous approach. For similar reasons athletes should spend more time warming up on cold days than on hot ones.

The amount of time between the end of the warm-up and the start of the match is a key factor. A fit athlete can recover from a warm-up in a very short space of time – in no more than five minutes. It therefore stands to reason that a longer rest period may nullify the physiological benefits of the warm-up.

Experience shows that the muscular system retains heat for much longer if the athlete wears the right clothing and keeps warm. It is nevertheless recommended that the warm-up should conclude between six and 10 minutes before the match to allow time for tactics to be checked and to enable the athlete's breathing to return more or less to normal.

Benefits of a proper warm-up

- Enhances the ability of the neuromuscular system to contribute to performance.
- Reduces the risk of injury.
- Allows the body to go through a series of changes that ensure it receives the ideal supply of oxygen and nutrients and offers an optimal metabolic response.
- Enhances the athlete's mental preparation for training or a match. Many athletes are able to exert a hold over opponents thanks to the drills they perform during the warm-up.

Effects of the warm-up

- Impacts positively on the muscles, increasing their temperature and their ability to function as a result.
- Aids coordination, as the movements performed in the warm-up are of a similar nature to those made during competition.
- Reduces the chance of accidents and injuries, as all of the body's functions are activated and engaged.

Types of warm-up

- Static: essentially involves stretching exercises.
- Dynamic: exercises that involve movement.
- Mixed: a combination of the aforementioned two types of warm-up. May also include games.
- Play-based: involves the playing of games.

Differences between warming up for training and for competition

- Dependent on the availability of time and space.
- The ball may be used more often from the start of the warm-up.
- Drills may be more complex in nature.
- Warm-up should provide an opportunity to work on shooting and individual technique.
- Fun games and exercises should be included and should occasionally be competitive.

Warm-up methodology

- Progression in the level of difficulty, from easy to hard.
- Progression from general to specific drills.
- Progression from low to high intensity.
- Avoidance of new drills in competition warm-ups.
- Breathing should be normal during warm-ups. Fatigue should be avoided.
- Continual monitoring of the risk of injury.
- Duration:
  - Training: 10-20 minutes.
  - Competition: 25-35 minutes.
- Monitoring of the time between the warm-up and the main period of physical exercise.

What factors can alter the effects of the warm-up on performance?

- Type of warm-up.
- Level of motivation going into the warm-up or transmitted during it.
- Physical/technical condition.
- Level of the athlete.
- Warm-up workload (volume and intensity).
- Age (children need less time to warm up than adults).
- The time of day.
- The environment.
- Temperature and other weather-related factors.

2.4.2 Categories of endurance in accordance with the duration and intensity of the activity

	Aerobic endurance	Anaerobic endurance
Definition	The ability to cope with a low or medium level of effort for a long period of time (quantitative component = repetitiveness).	Ability to cope with intense effort for as long a period as possible.
Objective	To be able to play a 40-minute match at a medium pace while maintaining the ability to perform technical and tactical elements efficiently (qualitative component = freshness/availability/efficiency).	To cope with the effort expended during running of an intense, lengthy and repetitive nature, while performing the actions required during the game.

Physiological aspects	• Balance between supply and consumption (steady work rate/state).
	• Participation of the aerobic system through the oxidation of glucose and fatty acids.
		• Oxygen deficit is created.
		• Participation of the following systems:
		  • Alactic anaerobic:
		  • Does not produce lactic acid.
		  • Uses the energy reserves in the muscle.
		  • Provides energy during high-intensity effort of a short duration (0-15 seconds).
		  • Lactic anaerobic:
		  • Produces lactic acid (a restrictive factor).
		  • Provides energy during high-intensity effort of medium duration (from 15-20 seconds to two minutes).

Methodological aspects	• Quantitative work. • Low or medium intensity (from 110-120 beats/min to 150-160 beats/min). • Long duration (2-3 minutes and upwards). • Whole of the body is working.	• Type of qualitative-quantitative effort. • Significant amount of lactic acid produced. • High-intensity effort (160-170 beats per minute and upwards) and medium duration.

Effects	• On performance:
	  • Increase in the pace of running while maintaining the same heart rate.
	  • Improvement in recovery from effort.
	  • Athletes become more willing and able to push themselves.
	• On the body:
	  • Enlargement of the heart (athlete's heart).
	  • Increase in respiratory capacity.
	  • Decrease in basal cardiac frequency.
	  • Increase in red blood cells and the proportion of oxygen carried in the blood.
	  • Increase in muscular vascularisation.
		• On performance:
		  • Allows the athlete to cope with the oxygen deficit for longer.
		  • Increases tolerance to lactic acid.
		• On the body:
		  • Hypertrophy of the heart's musculature.
		  • Increase in the blood's alkaline reserves.
		  • Onset of fatigue is delayed and coped with better.

2.5 SPEED TRAINING

Speed is a complex physical attribute deriving from neuromuscular aspects, and in order to understand it, we need also to understand two key factors: coordination and strength.

The concept of speed as it is used in team sports can be defined as "the conditioning ability that enables a rapid and suitable (optimal) motor response to the various stimuli and requirements that arise in game play, and the conditioning ability that allows the cognitive and motor actions necessary to develop effective game play to be performed in a quick and optimal manner" (Seirul·lo Vargas, F., 2002).

In the context of futsal, there are two types of speed we need to consider: **speed of movement and execution of the elements involved in game play, and speed of perception and decision-making.**

A player who runs fast does not necessarily play the game fast, as they may not be able to coordinate themselves well when changing direction or to know when to change pace at the right time. Given that the game takes place within a very confined space, they would be unable to take opposing players by surprise.

So it is important to understand that having fast players in futsal counts for little if they do not know what to do with their speed. They must be taught when to change pace and direction, when they need to stop, and when to pass the ball to a team-mate who is moving into space. Doing so will help players to play the game quickly, even if they are not particularly quick themselves.

However, speed in futsal can be developed by introducing very high-intensity drills. Unlike the drills performed in anaerobic endurance training, recovery is total between one drill and the next (approximately 120 beats per minute). Thanks to this total recovery, players will be able to channel all of their energies into each drill or repetition and improve their speed of movement in the process.

Drills should be performed on the pitch if possible and should be based on movements involving changes of direction and all different types of explosive bursts of running, with such movement being varied (forwards, sideways, backwards and diagonal). The ball may also be introduced to enhance technique and motivate the players.

To improve speed during game play and with the ball, specific drills focusing on fast passages of play (counterattacking, dropping back to defend, transitions, numerical superiority or inferiority in limited time periods, etc.) are ideal given how much they demand of players in terms of perception, decision-making and execution.

The key elements of futsal game play (which are short in duration and high in intensity) involve high speed of execution. Elements such as counterattacking, feinting, anticipating, shooting and creating and occupying space do not count for anything if they are performed only at speed and do not guarantee the execution of other technical features (passing and controlling the ball, etc.). It is not enough in itself, therefore, to possess good speed in abstract terms. Speed must be utilised in performing the skills specific to futsal without the risk of rapid execution leading to a higher number of technical errors and a lower level of performance.

Futsal is a complex sport in terms of speed, just as speed is a complex attribute in itself. A general definition of speed is always valid, therefore, as long as we bear in mind that the term 'speed' should not be understood solely as the pace at which players cover ground, as futsal involves acyclical movements whose execution requires another type of speed: the speed at which the fibres used in performing the movement contract. Nor should we forget the speed of reaction to external stimuli or segmentary speed (speed of movements in a segment) and speed of action (speed of execution in performing a technical skill), which are all so important when in possession.

Categories of speed

Speed can be divided into two different categories, on the basis of a number of factors:

Cyclical speed
Observed in motor actions that are repeated constantly, such as running, rowing or swimming. It involves a succession of movements performed at great speed. Defined as the ability to move at the greatest possible speed, it is also known as 'speed of movement'.

Acyclical speed
Appears in movements that are only made once, such as the take-off in a jump, the striking of a volleyball, the taking of a free-kick or the playing of a pass. It is also known as 'speed of action' or 'segmentary speed' in the sense that it sometimes only involves one segment or part of the body, where movement during the element is minimal, such as in receiving the ball, making a save, and playing the ball in any way. It is a single movement performed at great speed.

2.6 FLEXIBILITY

In everyday language, terms such as flexibility, joint mobility, looseness, stretching and range are often used interchangeably.

As a general point, the physical attribute that allows movements to be made with different degrees of range or mobility is known as 'joint mobility'.

We define flexibility as the mechanical/physiological ability related to the anatomical/functional unit of muscles and joints involved in the range of movements. It is dependent on joint mobility – the specific degree of freedom of each joint – and on muscular elasticity, which is the ability of the muscle to extend itself (stretching of the muscle) and return to its initial state without its strength and power being diminished.

In order to achieve flexibility and improve it, athletes must seek, through suitable physical exercise, to extend the muscles, tendons and ligaments. And the best way to enhance flexibility is by means of stretching.

As a general rule, the movements performed in order to extend certain muscles must be the opposite of those they perform in their agonist function. During the sequence of a movement muscles may act, among many other functions, as agonists (being directly responsible for the action, which they cause by means of a contraction) or, in contrast, as antagonists (they control the movement by extending themselves).

Taking the above as a starting point, it can be said that in order to improve the elasticity of a muscle group it is necessary to perform actions that go against their agonism (contraction) and tend rather towards opposite functions (antagonism).

When we seek to move a joint to its maximum point of mobility, there are two restrictive factors that come into play, in the following order:

- The **muscular component** (the tone of the musculature that is involved in the direction of the movement).
- The **joint component** (the shape of the bone surfaces and the limitations of the ligamentous system).

External factors include gender (in terms of body composition, women have less muscle mass and are more prone to ligamentous laxity) and age (it is the only physical attribute that undergoes involution from birth, though preferably from the age of ten to 12, after which it declines significantly every year unless preventive training is performed to slow the process down). The time of the day also affects the ability of body tissue to stretch (muscle deforms less in the morning and is more viscous). External temperature also has an impact and can reduce viscosity, therefore increasing the muscle's ability to extend.

Forms and techniques for training flexibility

There are a number of current training methods, which are applied in accordance with how they impact on the various factors that restrict flexibility, namely muscle component and the joint component. They include:

- Methods of neuromuscular facilitation: these impact on the muscle component.
- Passive and dynamic methods: these impact on the joint component (only when the limit imposed by the muscle component is exceeded).

We should at this point make a simple distinction based on the dynamics of muscle stretching, differentiating between the two following types:

- **Static stretching:** the objective is to enhance muscle extension through specific positions and slow and controlled movements in which the muscles are close to being stretched as far as they can (movement is limited by the tension itself).

- **Dynamic stretching:** the objective is a greater range of movement through repeated actions performed at a certain speed, such as balancing, bouncing, jumping and turns, which push the joints to their limits. This type of stretching occurs in most of the technical skills performed in a number of sports.

These two types of stretching can be performed in two basic ways:

- **Actively:** improved mobility is achieved by the contraction of the agonists and the simultaneous stretching of the antagonists.

- **Passively:** improved mobility is achieved by forces external to the individual, which cause extension without the intervention of the agonist musculature to be stretched or the corresponding antagonist musculature.

In view of the above, the following must always be taken into account:

- Passive flexibility is greater than active flexibility.

- Futsal requires active flexibility.

- Passive flexibility is a pre-condition, as it determines and restricts active flexibility.

In view of the above we can logically conclude that active flexibility is more appropriate for futsal, although valid working methodologies have yet to be put forward.

Given the problems presented, the current trend in training is to carry out mixed flexibility drills, the best known of which are described below:

	Description	General methodology
Active/static stretching	Static stretching that does not involve muscles being extended to the maximum (relatively comfortable positions). Applicable to pre- or post-effort situations of relatively low intensity (highly suitable for maintaining flexibility). Should be used for the main muscle groups.	1. Tension: free active movement of the musculature to be stretched (10-30 seconds). 2. Relaxation: aims to decrease intramuscular tension (six seconds). 3. Stretching: a free active movement that seeks to extend the muscle group as much as possible (10-30 seconds).
Static/dynamic stretching	Applicable to warm-ups performed before training sessions or competitive play.	Combination of static and dynamic stretching in ranges of moderate or sub-maximum intensity (75 to 90 percent): 1. Static stretching. 2. Rhythmical, gentle dynamic stretching.
Stretching by means of contraction/ relaxation	Also known as PNF (proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation).	1. Contraction of the muscle to be stretched (30-50 percent of the maximum force). 2. Static stretching for between five and 15 seconds. 3. Contraction of the muscle by 40-75 percent of the maximum force (normally with the help of a colleague). 4. Short period of relaxation lasting two to five seconds. 5. Gentle stretching of the previously contracted muscle.

2.7 STRENGTH

Strength is the ability to generate intramuscular tension irrespective of the contraction of the muscle or whether or not movement takes place. It is necessary both for injury prevention and specifically for achieving mechanical efficiency or optimal sports performance.

Strength is an attribute that is conditioned by the ability of the musculature involved in a given movement to contract. Strength training does not involve any special procedures and does not impede the development of the athlete, as long as such work is undertaken carefully to ensure there is no negative impact on the skeletal system, particularly the spine. Movements involving too much pressure, traction, torsion and contraction should be avoided.

The developmental aspect of players should determine the extent to which strength can be 'trained', although we have already seen how the problem of weekly training time dictates to a large extent the amount of time that can be devoted to developing this attribute in training. However, it would be beneficial, if possible, to devote a session specifically to developing strength, especially during the close season or at the start of the season.

The objective of such training is to further develop this attribute through intramuscular coordination (of the fibres that make up each muscle) and intermuscular coordination (of the various muscles together) rather than through muscular hypertrophy (an increase in the muscle mass). This allows us to adapt the muscles to the exercise, thereby reducing the risk of muscular injuries and laying the foundations for attaining elite sports performance at a later stage, when this particular attribute is trained in a more specific manner.

The most suitable methods for improving strength are the use of weights, bounding drills, additional loads and resistance-based exercises using elastic bands, team-mates, etc. The type of strength we are looking to develop in our players is speed-strength.

Based on the definition of strength given to us by physics (anything that is capable of modifying the state of rest or movement of a body or causing it to deform), we can state that the following are just some of the many ways in which strength manifests itself in futsal: a sudden burst of running from a standing start (modifying the state of rest of our body), a change of pace (modifying the state of movement of our body) or striking the ball (modifying the state of rest/movement of the ball and also causing it to become deformed).

In applying the term 'strength' to sport, however, we are referring to the physical attribute that allows athletes to overcome or oppose external resistance to internal resistance (i.e. the resistance of the body itself) by using their muscles, as the only type of strength that exists in terms of sport is that generated by muscular contraction.

An increase in both strength and speed leads to an increase in quality and improved performance when it comes to carrying out the skills specific to futsal.

Scheduled strength training plays an important part in preventing certain injuries and in helping injured players recover.

The ankle joint and the knee joint are both of vital importance to players and are both subject to considerable trauma and stress (rotations) during game play. These joints must be well 'defended' and protected by a strong musculature and by the strengthening and development of the ligaments that form part of them.

It is also important that neuromotor control of joints is developed, hence the growing importance of designing tasks based on proprioception exercises.

Another key aspect is arthro-muscular and postural balance.

Potential injuries to players can be prevented by conducting compensatory strength exercises, particularly in the case of players displaying a weakness in a specific muscle group.

The aim of said drills is to strengthen imbalanced muscle groups that are not directly used in performing actions specific to futsal, such as the trunk (muscular balance between abdominal, oblique and gluteal muscles, etc.) and the upper limbs, which are important in achieving a high level of performance. It is also necessary to work on antagonist muscles in relation to well-developed agonist muscles, such as the hamstrings in relation to the quadriceps or the gluteal muscles, and the tensor fasciae latae in relation to the abductors.

Types of strength

These are identified as follows:

1. **General strength:** this is developed by exercises of a general nature, which are not specific to any particular sport. The aim is to achieve general muscle conditioning (to build the player up in general) and to lay the basis for future strength training exercises.

   These exercises are usually carried out in an initial phase, before the start of the season. They include the following: body weight exercises, the use of standard training equipment (medicine ball, poles, etc.), circuit training, weight drills, resistance-based exercises using a team-mate, etc. Strength drills of this type should have the following characteristics:

   - Development of the strength of each muscle involved in the motor action through isolation work.
   - Varying body postures.
   - Variable excess loads and greater than those of the skill in question, which allows an increase in strength.
   - Varied increases that are different to those involved in game play.
   - High degree of self-control and a negligible tactical component.

2. **Targeted strength:** this is developed in the muscles involved directly in any technical-tactical movement or element pertaining to game play, the aim being to develop one of the displays of strength required in futsal by working the muscle groups used most in the sport.

3. **Special or competition strength:** this is the result of the execution of the same actual technical-tactical movements or elements performed at the same time as strength exercises or alternated with them. The aim is to achieve a direct transfer by subjecting players to excess loads in elements that involve working the muscles at the same time as they perform the movements involved in a technical skill, or by alternating the strength drill with technical skills.

4. **Compensatory strength:** the objective here is to strengthen and develop the muscle groups that do not develop in the same way as other muscles, so that the elements and technical-tactical skills of futsal may be performed. In other words, the objective is to avoid injuries to certain muscles, tendons or ligaments suffering from a certain 'imbalance' (lack of development) due to the fact they are not used much. As a result, our work focuses on:

   - The development of weaker muscle groups: hamstrings, adductor, soleus, abdominal and lumbar muscles.
   - The strengthening of the ligaments of the ankle joint.

2.8 COORDINATION

Motor coordination comprises coordination skills, which can be compared to what some authors choose to call 'perceptual motor skills', a term widely used among Spanish scholars. For the purposes of this manual, we will use the former term, which is widely used in German and Italian literature on the topic. Factors such as balance are classified as coordination skills, although as most authors state, it is far from easy to systematise and describe these factors.

Coordination skills are a very important aspect in the planning of training for individual and team sports. Some of them do not appear to have a decisive role, while others are vitally important.

It is never too early to develop these skills, the ideal period being between the ages of six and 11.

The coaching of coordination skills must always be multilateral and multi-functional in nature. What makes a specific motor action special is the fact that it is the result of extensive experience, which makes it very easy for players to learn sports techniques.

Different types of coordination skill

Coordination skills are developmental attributes acquired as the child learns to regulate and coordinate their movements, and are determined by the child's performance in overcoming the challenges they face in achieving coordination.

Orientation skill: the ability of players to determine their position and movement in space and the position and movement of moving objects. Orientation skills are used to change the position of the body and/or objects in space and time, e.g. a somersault in gymnastics, the direction a ball takes after being struck in volleyball.

Combination skill: the ability to coordinate arm and leg movements, and sequences of movements, with basic motor skills, e.g. freestyle swimming and over-the-shoulder shots in handball.

Differentiation skill: involves very precise coordination, the aim being to differentiate between the forces applied in a specific movement. The technique is the same but the coordinated execution of the movement is different, e.g. short and long passes, and slow and fast movements.

Balance skill: involves maintaining and regaining balance in the changing situations that can arise in sport, e.g. feints.

Rhythm skill: variations of time and space in movement, which can be conducted in time to music or without it, e.g. hurdles, approach runs in jumping events, rhythmic gymnastics.

Reaction skill: the performing of short movements in response to stimuli (signals or sudden changes in a situation), e.g. evading punches in boxing.

Adaptation skill: the ability to adapt to the different situations that arise in sport, such as changing intentions while in full motion, e.g. feinting instead of shooting on goal.

2.9 RECOVERY

Recovery periods are essential and determine the quality and quantity of training that can be undertaken. For example, the volume and intensity of the actions performed in training depend on the players' level of conditioning, which plays an especially important part in their ability to recover during training sessions and matches. In order to train at a high intensity and perform a high volume of work, players must have a very well developed ability to recover phosphagens during training so that they are able to perform at a high level during the interval-based training that is typical of our sport.

There are two types of recovery: active and passive. Both must be approached in the right way. Depending on the point at which recovery takes place (during the session, after the session or after the match), and irrespective of the model used, the decision as to whether to opt for active or passive recovery must be taken very carefully to ensure that it has the desired effect.

The following methods and options are all used in **post-effort active recovery**:

- **Continuous running** at 50-60 percent VO2 max for a period of 10-20 minutes. Another option that may be more suitable is the static bike, as **pedalling**, which involves a mainly concentric movement, helps to restore the musculature following matches, in which a large amount of eccentric movements are performed. Exercises should be tailored to each individual player, however, as this type of work may not be the same for all of them.

- **Stretching:** flexibility work is carried out as part of this active recovery exercise to relax the musculature. Dynamic flexibility methods should not be used as they are more suitable for warming up.

- **Relaxation exercises** in pairs also encourage active recovery and increase blood flow in the body area we are looking to relax, aiding speedier recovery.

The following is an option/method for **passive recovery**, which we understand as post-effort inactivity and the return of the body to normality:

- **Sleeping:** this is the most common form of passive recovery. Seven to nine hours of sleep provides sufficient time to adapt to the physical, neurological and emotional stress that can be caused by high-intensity training or competition. We sometimes come across players who stay awake after a match and do not get enough sleep. One alternative is for them to take an afternoon nap the day after the match, which is acceptable provided that it does not disturb their usual sleeping pattern.

Finally, there are a number of other active and passive recovery options that may also be of use:

- **Ergo-nutritional recovery methods:**

  - **Recovery of muscle glycogen:** through the consumption of carbohydrates. Muscle glycogen levels recover most rapidly in the first 30 minutes after training or a match. The recommended intake is one gram per kilogram of body weight, while the carbohydrate should have a high glycemic index.

  - **Restoration of hydro-electrolyte balance:** players are advised to drink a larger volume of liquid than that lost during training or competition, usually 150 percent of the weight lost, in two to three doses with high levels of sodium.

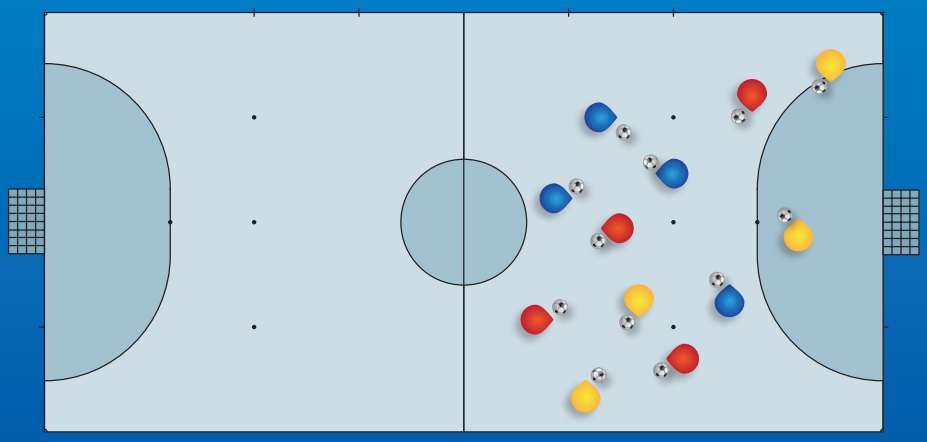
- **Physiotherapeutic recovery methods:**
  - **Massotherapy:** post-training or post-match massages. Ice massage therapy is a valid technique for ensuring recovery between sessions.
  - **Electrotherapy:** active recovery for a 20-minute period by means of electro-stimulation, mainly to encourage the restoration of muscle power.
  - **Hydrotherapy:** the use of water as a recovery option has a number of benefits, such as a reduction in muscle stiffness due to the gentle massaging effect of hydrostatic pressure, and the relieving of muscle pain through an increase in temperature and the muscle blood flow. It does not aggravate post-effort muscle damage.
  - **Cryotherapy:** a therapy based on the use of low temperatures, which are used for therapeutic purposes and to aid post-effort recovery. Cryotherapy is extremely beneficial in treating microtrauma caused by high-intensity training or competition itself. To obtain these benefits, treatment of between five and ten minutes is required, and should cause a temperature reduction of 2-3°C in deep musculature.

2.10 CONDITIONING TRAINING DRILLS

2.10.1 Warm-up drills with the ball

Individual technique in a 20x20m area

1



TIME: 3-5 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To familiarise players with the playing area.
- To provide a low-intensity start to activity.
- To improve individual technique.

PLAYING AREA
20x20m (half court).

EQUIPMENT
One ball per player.

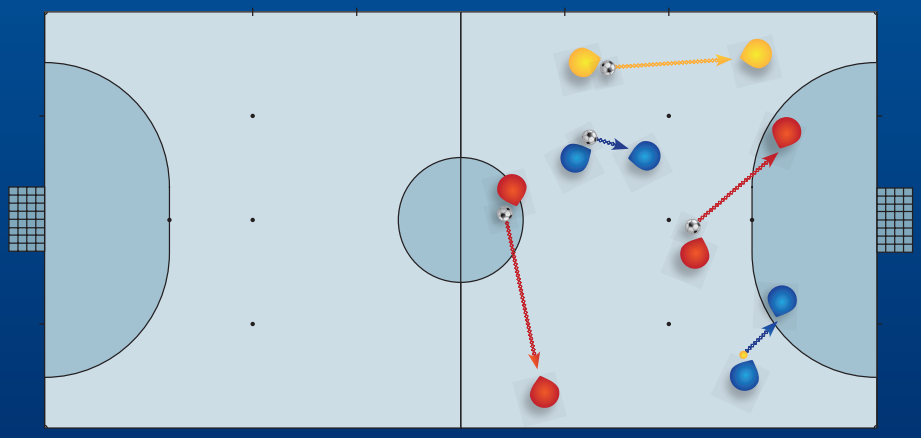
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
All those available.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Each player has a ball and performs exercises focusing on control of the ball and running with it.

VARIATIONS
- Players use their weaker foot to perform the drill.
- Different balls can be used, such as tennis balls, reaction balls and rubber balls.

Technique work in pairs in a 20x20m area

2



TIME: 3-5 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To improve ball control and passing.
- To familiarise players with different types of passes, ways of controlling the ball and skills.
- To increase body temperature.

PLAYING AREA
20x20m (half court).

EQUIPMENT
One ball per pair.

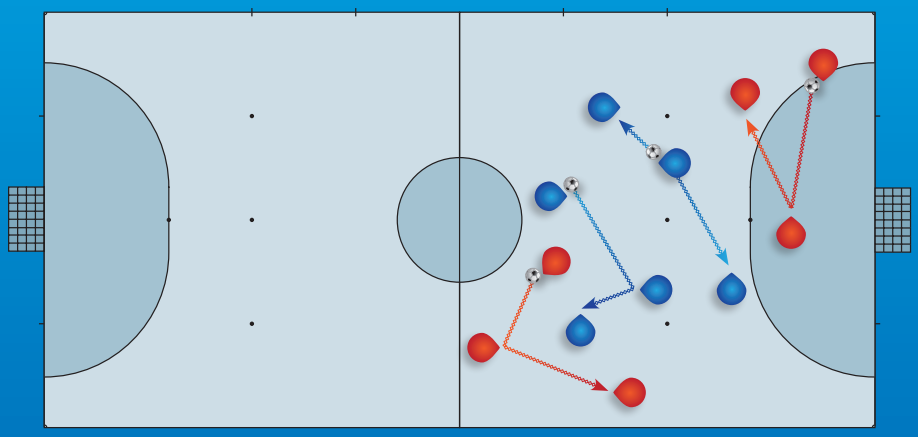
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
All those available.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
All the players move around, performing different technical elements in pairs (passes, skills, 1v1, etc.).

VARIATIONS
Different balls can be used, such as tennis balls, rubber balls and reaction balls.

Technique work in groups of three in a 20x20m area

3



TIME: 3-5 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To improve ball control and passing.
- To familiarise players with different types of passes, skills and ways of controlling the ball.
- To increase body temperature.
- To start work on 2v1 situations.

PLAYING AREA
20x20m (half court).

EQUIPMENT
One ball per three players.

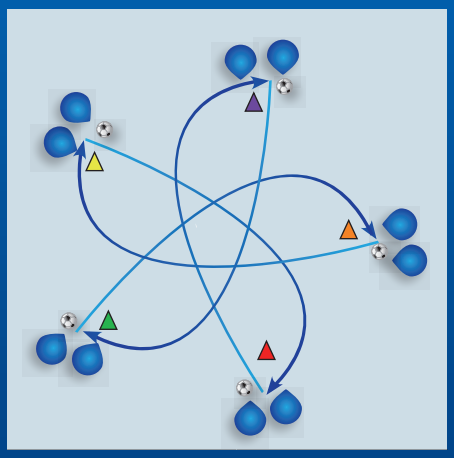
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
All those available.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Players work in groups of three, moving around the drill area. Two of the players in each group of three are attackers and the other a defender. The players perform passes and skills and engage in 2v1 situations, etc.

VARIATIONS
Restrict the number of touches attacking players can take on the ball.

Star drill with running on the ball

4



TIME: 3-5 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To improve running on the ball.
- To allow players to familiarise themselves with different parts of the foot used to control the ball.
- To increase body temperature.
- To improve visual perception when several balls are in use in the drill.

PLAYING AREA
15x15m.

EQUIPMENT
Cones and balls.

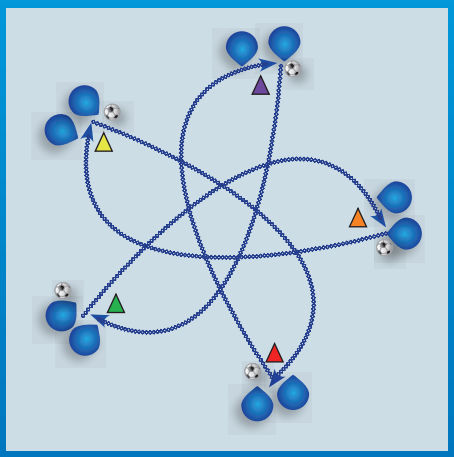
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
Between 10 and 15.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Forming a star shape, with five cones representing the five points of the star, players run with the ball following a sequence (yellow/red/purple/green/orange). Balls are introduced in the same sequence.

VARIATIONS
Players use their weaker foot to perform the drill.

Star passing drill

5



TIME: 3-5 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To improve passing.
- To improve passing with different parts of the foot.
- To increase body temperature.
- To improve visual perception when several balls are in use in the drill.

PLAYING AREA
15x15m.

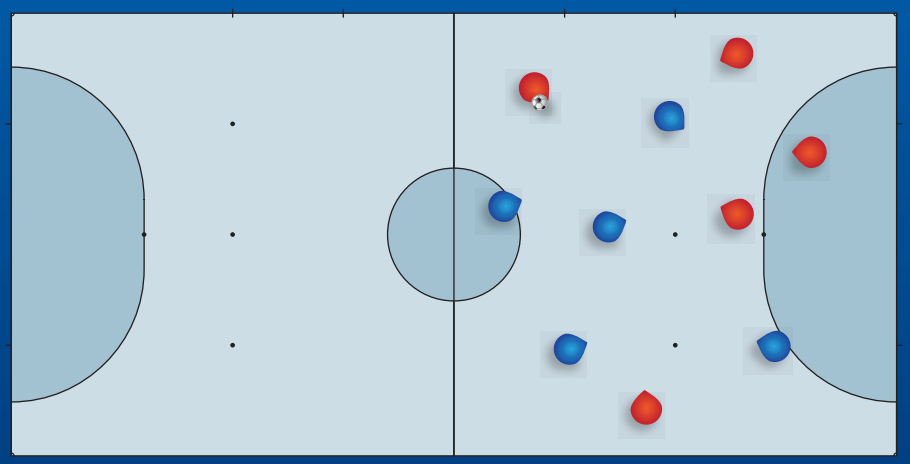
EQUIPMENT
Cones and balls.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
Between 10 and 15.**DRILL DESCRIPTION**
Forming a star shape, with five cones representing the five points of the star, players form twos and threes at each point and pass the ball in sequence (yellow/red/purple/green/orange). Balls are introduced in the same sequence.

VARIATIONS
- Players use their weaker foot to perform the drill.
- Different balls can be used, such as tennis balls, reaction balls and rubber balls.

Dodgeball

6



TIME: 3-5 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To work on movements used in futsal.
- To increase intensity of movement and changes in direction.
- To increase player heart rates.
- To warm players up for subsequent drills.

PLAYING AREA
20x20m (half court).

EQUIPMENT
Balls.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
Even numbers on each side.

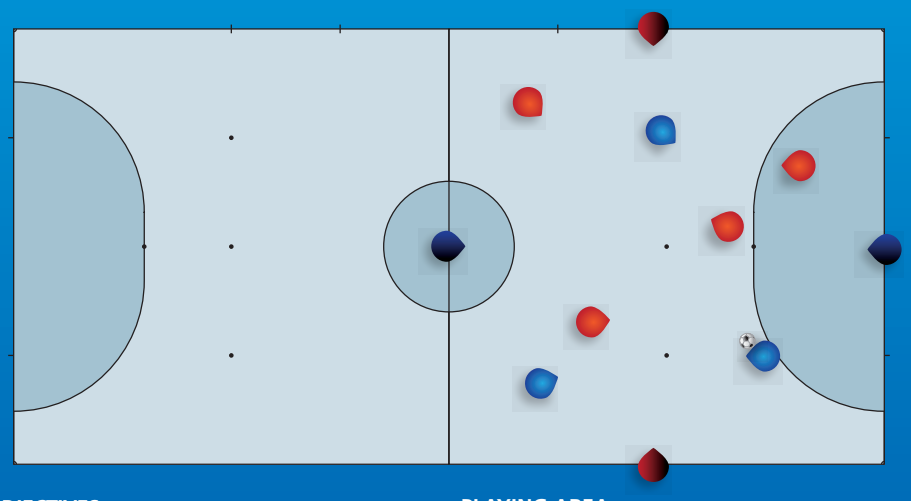
DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two equal-sided teams are formed. One team is handed a ball and given the task of 'eliminating' all the players in the opposing team by touching them with the ball, but without throwing it. Players cannot walk or run with the ball. They can only throw it to each other. The time it takes both teams to 'eliminate' all opposing players is recorded, with the faster team being declared the winner.

VARIATIONS
The same drill but with the ball on the ground. Players in possession can eliminate opposing players by kicking the ball against their legs.

2.10.2 Drills for training aerobic or general endurance

4v4 + two off-court jokers per team

7



TIME: 8-12 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To improve aerobic capacity through game play.
- To improve movements used in futsal.

PLAYING AREA
20x20m (half court).

EQUIPMENT
Balls.

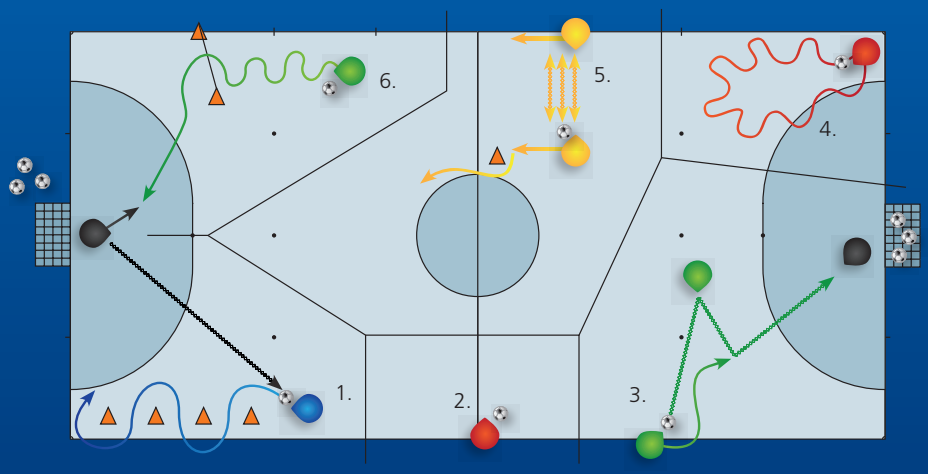
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Players play a 4v4 game in half the court, with two off-court jokers per team. Both the players on the court and the jokers are allowed to take as many touches as they wish. Every time a pass is played to a joker, the latter comes onto the court in place of the player playing the pass.

VARIATIONS
Restrict the number of touches on-court and off-court players can take on the ball to two.

Technical circuit

8



TIME: 8-12 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To improve aerobic capacity through specific technique.
- To improve movements used in futsal.

PLAYING AREA
40x20m.

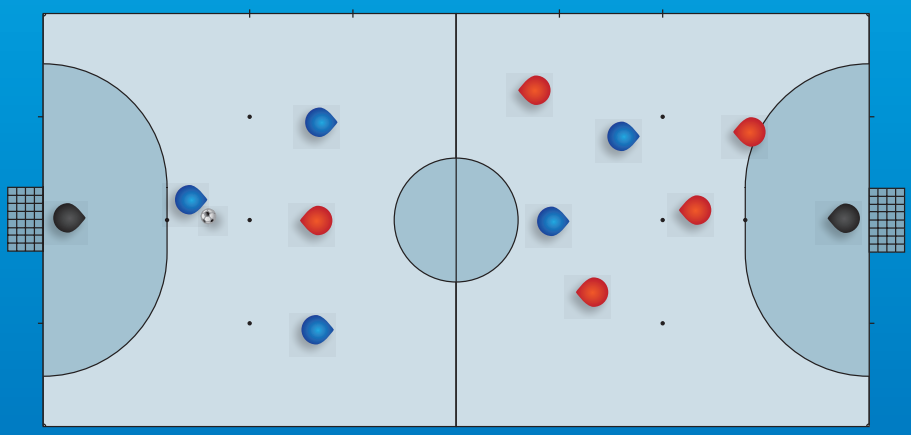
EQUIPMENT
Cones, balls, poles and hurdles.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus two goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Players perform a circuit of technical drills, spending 90 seconds at each station on the circuit and working in pairs at each station. Two additional people are needed at stations 3 and 5.
Stations:
1. Control of the ball received from the keeper and dribbling between cones.
2. Keeping the ball up.
3. One-two with pivot and shot.
4. Controlling the ball with the sole of the foot while running backwards.
5. One-touch passing with the instep and dribble on reaching the cone.
6. Controlling the ball with the sole of the foot while running forwards, flicking up the ball and 1v1 with goalkeeper.

One touch/unlimited touches

9



TIME: 10-15 mins

OBJECTIVES
- To keep possession of the ball and advance to score a goal.
- To improve aerobic endurance through game-play situations.

PLAYING AREA
40x20m.

EQUIPMENT
Balls and goals.

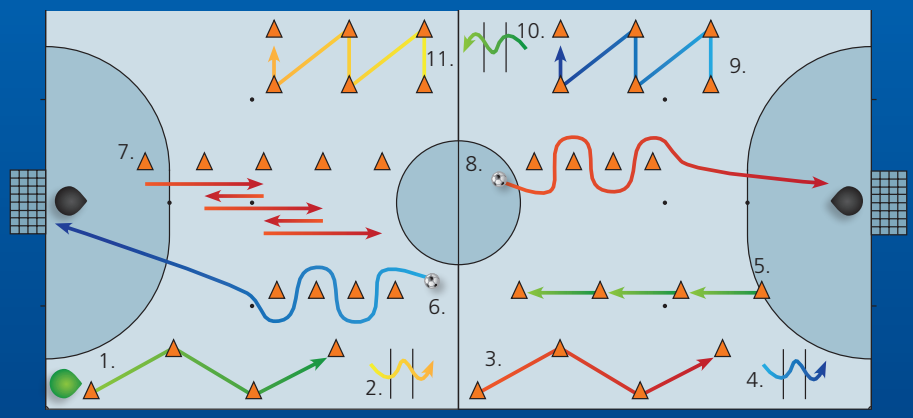
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus two goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
A game is played using the entire court and involving every player. The rule is that if a player takes more than one touch on the ball, the team-mate receiving the ball from them can only take one touch. If, however, a player takes only one touch, the team-mate receiving the ball can take one touch or as many as they like. Failure to observe these rules means possession switches to the other team.

VARIATIONS
Restrict players receiving the ball after a one-touch pass to a maximum of two touches only.

Physical/technical circuit

10



TIME: Two x 6-8 mins (with 3 mins rest).

OBJECTIVES
- To improve aerobic endurance through physical elements.
- To improve aerobic endurance through individual skill elements.

PLAYING AREA
40x20m.

EQUIPMENT
Cones, balls, poles and hurdles.

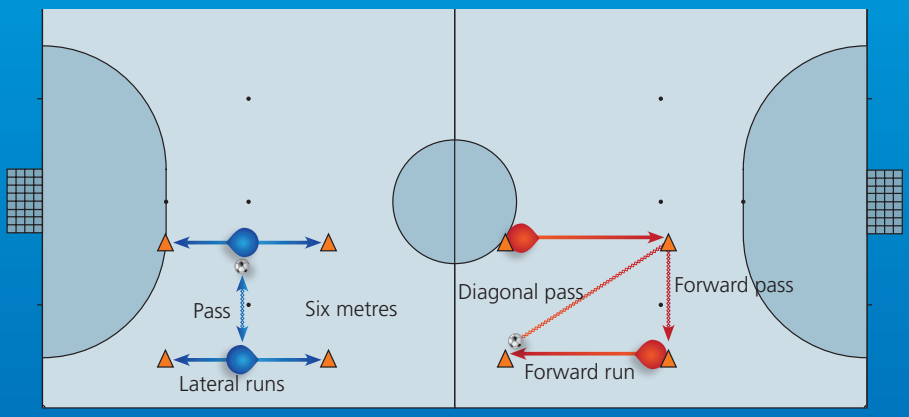
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10 plus two goalkeepers.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
The circuit is continuous, with team members joining it at five-second intervals. The circuit comprises 11 stations:
1. Forward zigzag run.
2. Two jumps with feet together.
3. Backward zigzag run.
4. Two jumps with feet together.
5. Running with the ball at speed and stopping at each cone.
6. Slalom running with the ball followed by a shot.
7. Acceleration with the ball from cone to cone and running backwards with the ball to the previous cone (order is from Cone 1 to Cone 3, from Cone 3 to Cone 2, from Cone 2 to Cone 4, from Cone 4 to Cone 3 and from Cone 3 to Cone 5) .
8. Slalom running with the ball followed by a shot.
9. Lateral run and diagonal sprint.
10. Two jumps with feet together.
11. Lateral runs and diagonal sprint.

2.10.3 Drills for training anaerobic or specific endurance

Pass and move

11



TIME: Two x 6-8 mins (with 2 mins rest)

OBJECTIVES
- To improve specific endurance with the ball, alternating between high- and low-intensity endurance work.
- To improve passing technique.

PLAYING AREA
6x6m square.

EQUIPMENT
Cones and balls.

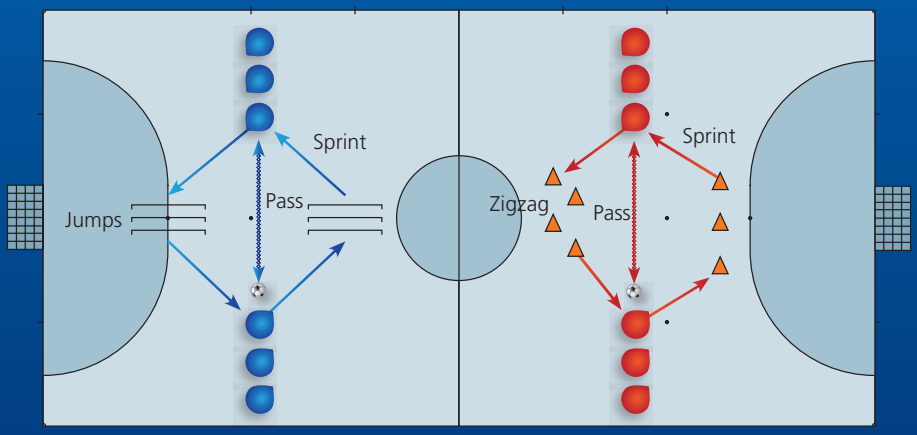
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10-12.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Players work in pairs, attempting to play the fastest possible passes. A forward pass is played followed by a maximum-intensity movement, which can alternate between a forward, backward or lateral movement, etc. Players work for 30 seconds at a time, alternating with 30 seconds of active recovery with a gentle jog.

VARIATIONS
Restrict players to one-touch passes to increase speed of execution and the number of movements.

Pass + sprint + element + sprint

12



TIME: 6x6 elements per player (three on each side) (1 min 30 secs rest)

OBJECTIVES
- To improve endurance at specific speed.
- To improve explosive strength (elements).
- To improve passing technique.

PLAYING AREA
12x12m square.

EQUIPMENT
Cones, balls, hurdles and poles.

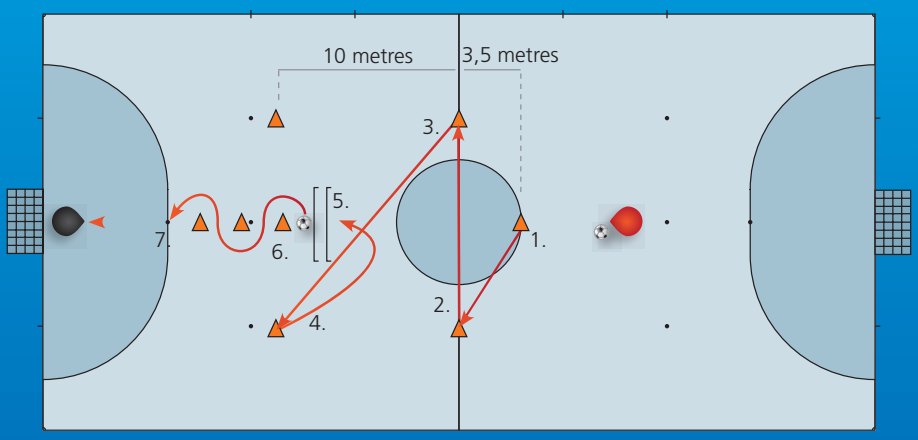
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
12.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two circuits are performed, one in each half of the court. The passing distance is 12-15 metres. The circuits are as follows:
1. Forward pass of 12-15 metres + five-metre sprint + three jumps with feet together + five-metre sprint.
2. Forward pass of 12-15 metres + five-metre sprint + slalom without the ball + five-metre sprint. (The sequence for the second element is as follows: forward pass of 12-15 metres + five-metre sprint + four-metre zigzag run + five-metre sprint).

Each player works continuously through six elements (three on each side), after which they rest for 1 min 30 secs.

Speed of movement

13



TIME: two sets of six repetitions (three on each side); 1-min rest after repetitions and 2 between sets.

OBJECTIVES
- To improve speed of movement without the ball.
- To improve all types of movements (forwards, lateral and backwards).
- To improve explosive strength (jumps and shooting).

PLAYING AREA
15x15m square.

EQUIPMENT
Cones, balls and hurdles.

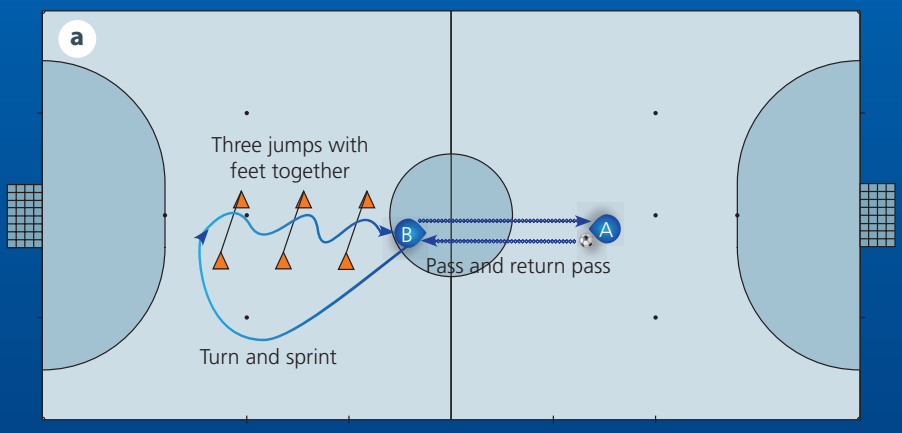
NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10-12.

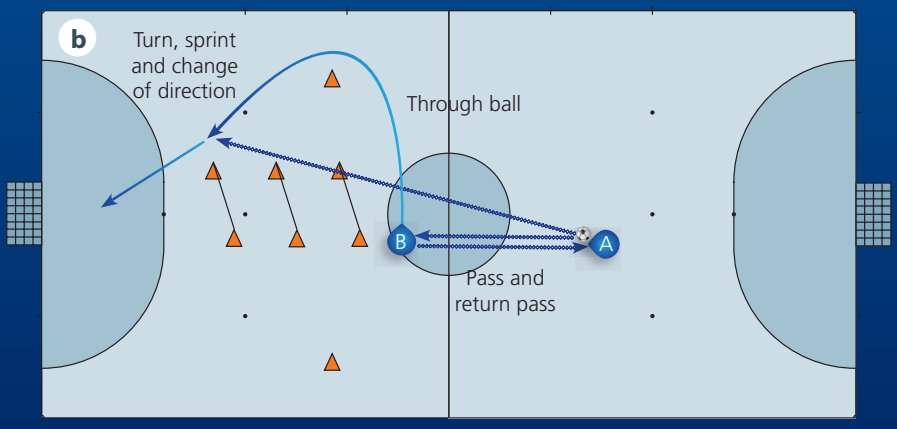
DRILL DESCRIPTION
A circuit is performed at maximum possible speed, where the sequence to be performed by each player in each repetition is as follows:
1. Feint + five-metre sprint.
2. 10-metre lateral run.
3. 12-metre diagonal sprint.
4. Four-metre backwards run.
5. Two jumps with feet together.
6. Slalom running with the ball.
7. Shot on goal.

The side on which each repetition is started is alternated (laterality).

Speed of action/reaction after a pass

14





TIME: two sets of six repetitions (three on each side); 1-min rest after repetitions and 2 between sets.

OBJECTIVES
- To improve speed of action/reaction.
- To improve explosive strength by changing direction, turning and jumping.
- To improve finishing by striving for accuracy.

PLAYING AREA
12x12m square.

EQUIPMENT
Cones, balls, hurdles.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10-12, working in pairs.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
Two players perform a double element.
In the first element, Player A passes to Player B, who returns the ball to Player A. Following this pass, Player B turns as fast as they can, positions themselves in front of the hurdles and performs three jumps with feet together. Player A does not move from their original position.
In the second element, Player A passes to Player B, who returns the ball to Player A. Following this pass, Player B turns as fast as they can, runs around the cone and receives a through ball from Player A. After controlling the ball, Player B shoots on goal.

2.10.5 Strength training drills

15 General strength training in the gym

EQUIPMENT
Gym equipment.

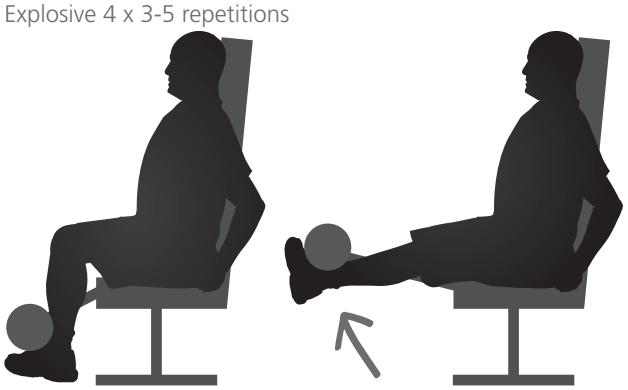
TIME
35 minutes.

OBJECTIVES
- To improve neuromuscular activation and synchronisation.
- To build muscle volume in the upper body.

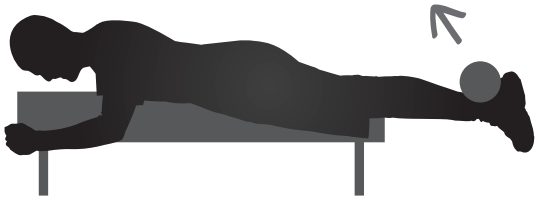
DRILL DESCRIPTION
The group is divided into two and works in circuits:

- A max. force circuit.
- A hypertrophic force circuit. Complementary drill involving controlled force. Explosive in the concentric phase and controlled in the eccentric phase.
- Alternate between upper body and lower body exercises.

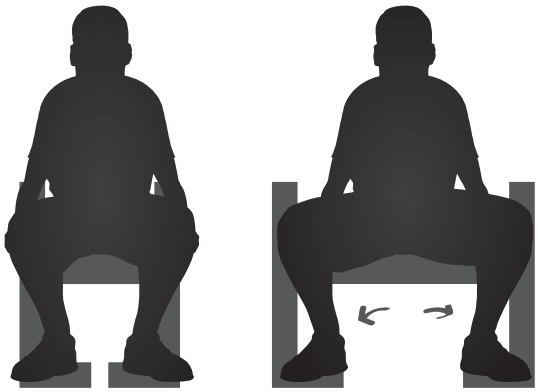
Explosive 4 x 3-5 repetitions



Eccentric 3 x 8-10 reps

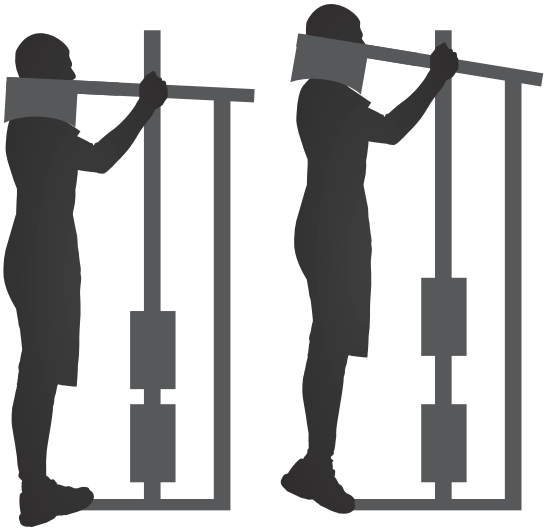


Controlled 3 x 10 reps

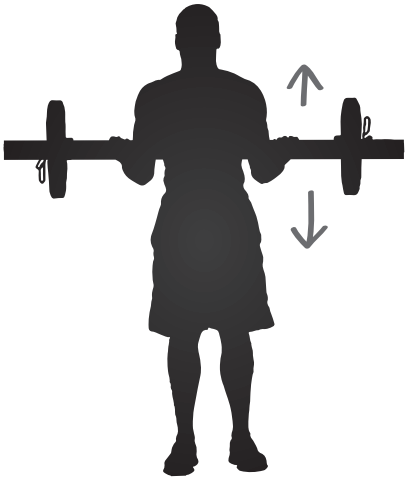


Explosive 4 x 3-5 reps

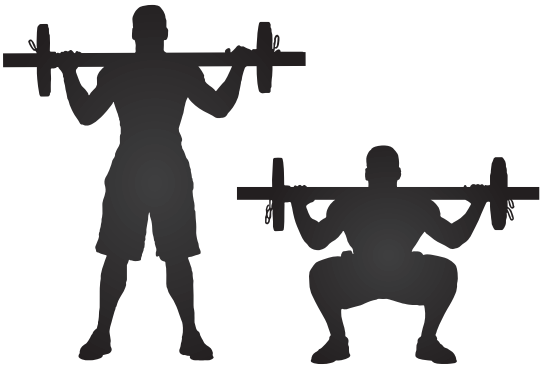
Explosive 4 x 3-5 reps



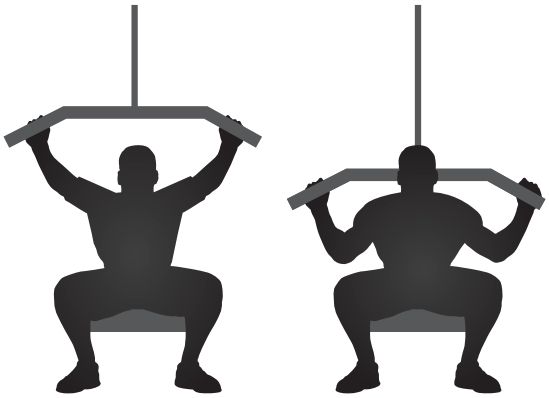
3 x 10 + 40-60 seconds recovery



Explosive 2 x 8 reps

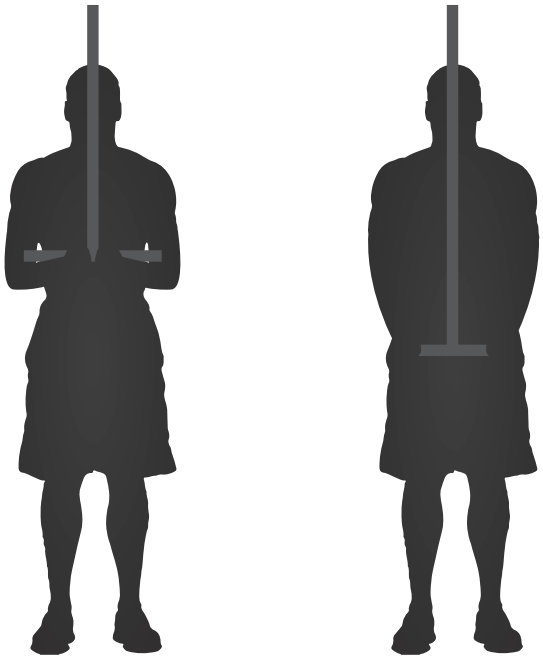


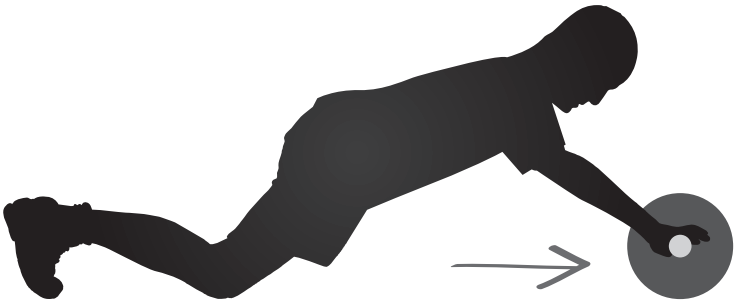
3 x 10 + 40-60 seconds recovery



3 x 10 + 40-60 seconds recovery

3 x 10 + 40-60 seconds recovery





3 x 10 + 40-60 seconds recovery

3 x 10 + 40-60 seconds recovery

16 Bodyweight training

EQUIPMENT
Mats and fitballs.

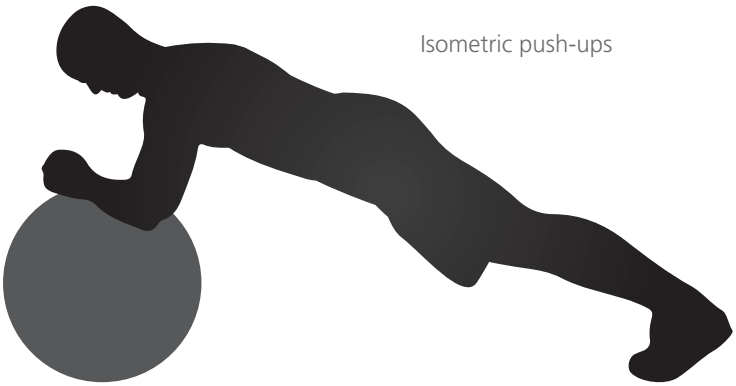
TIME
25 minutes.

OBJECTIVES
To improve the ability of players to maintain stability and not lose balance.

DRILL DESCRIPTION
The group is split up and works on neuromuscular control in the lumbar/pelvis region by performing exercises slowly, accurately and in a controlled manner, while maintaining the correct rate of breathing. Exercises involve 12 to 15 repetitions or are timed (isometric exercises), including two seconds of contraction.

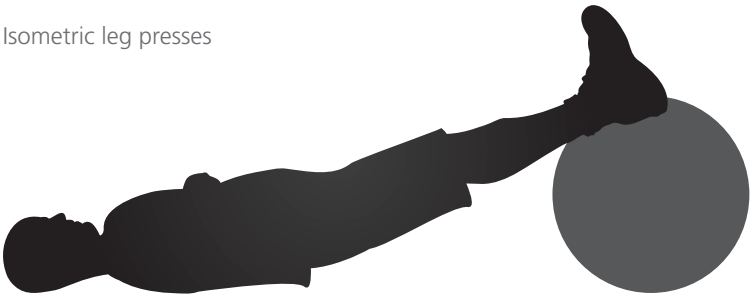
Straight-leg lift with chest press

Isometric push-ups

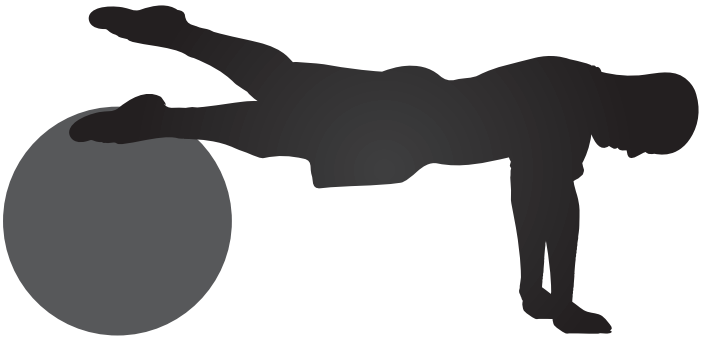


Hip flexors

Isometric leg presses

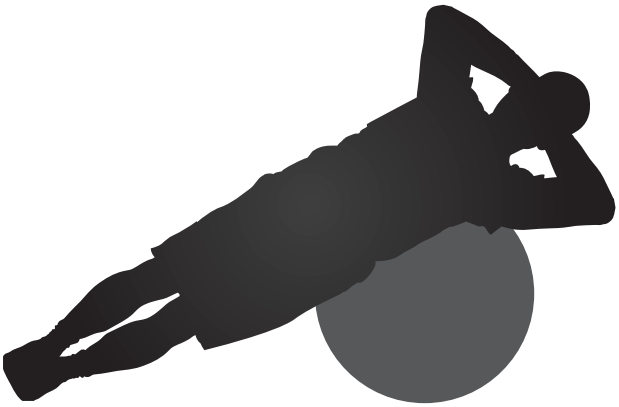


Alternate leg lifts

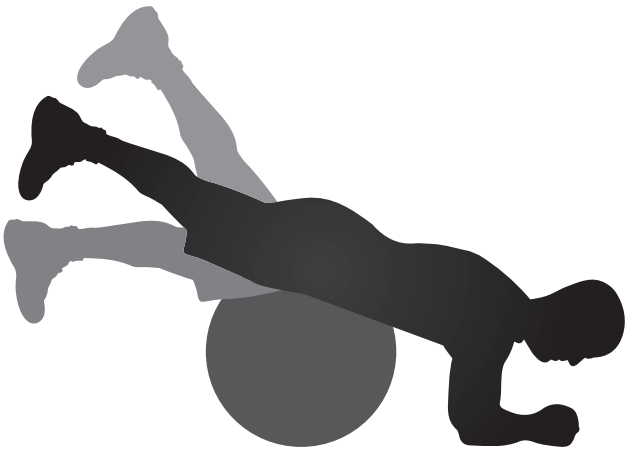


Ab crunches

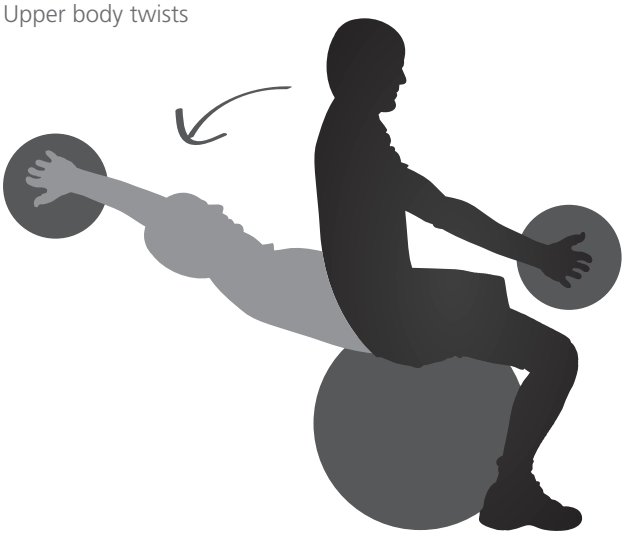
Side crunches



Leg lifts



Upper body twists

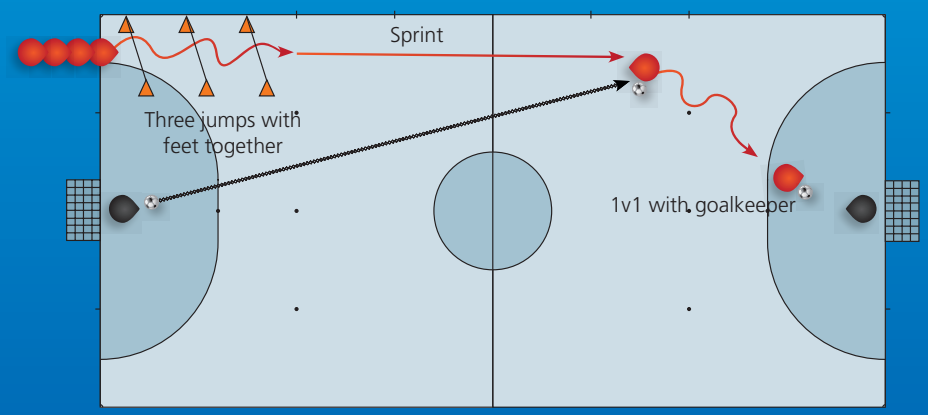


Lower body twists

Specific strength training

17

Six half-squat repetitions



SETS/REPETITIONS: four repetitions per set. Five sets in total (one per muscle group). 20 exercises in total.

OBJECTIVES
- To improve specific strength through a sequence: general strength, targeted strength and specific strength.
- To improve speed of movement without the ball.

PLAYING AREA
40x20m.

EQUIPMENT
Cones, balls, hurdles, speed ladders and poles.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS
10-12 plus goalkeepers.

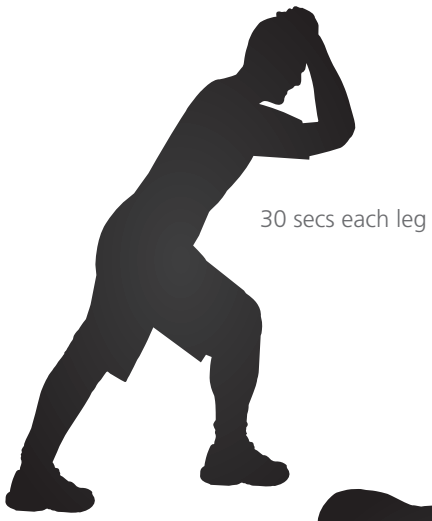
DRILL DESCRIPTION
Each player must perform the following sequence:
1. Quadriceps exercise (six semi-squat repetitions).
2. Players then perform three vertical jumps before each transition.
3. Sprint at maximum speed of 20-25 metres.
4. After the keeper plays the ball out, the player performing the sprint controls the ball and completes the sequence with a 1v1 against the keeper in the opposing goal.

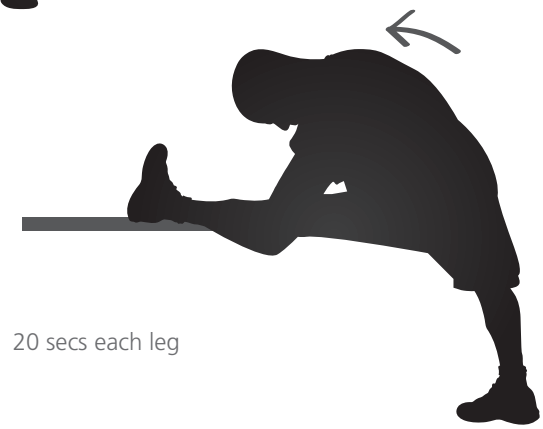
VARIATIONS
This drill can also be used to work on other muscle groups (psoas, calf, hamstring and abductors).
Different types of transitions can be used: sequences of quick steps, jumping over low hurdles, speed ladders, etc.
The drill can be carried out simultaneously on both sides of the court.

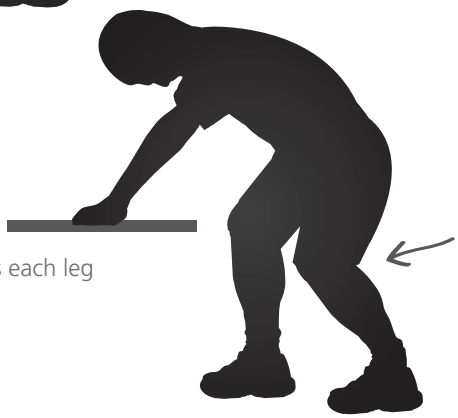
2.10.6 Flexibility training drills

18 Static stretching

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE
Conducted at rest. Muscles are stretched to a certain position and held there for 10-30 seconds. Mainly performed at the end of a training session or match.



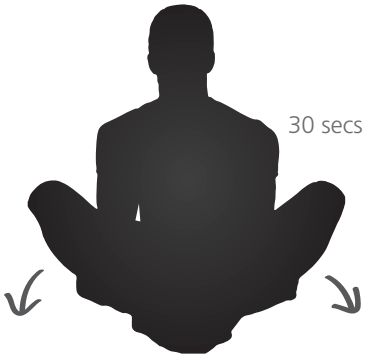




30 secs

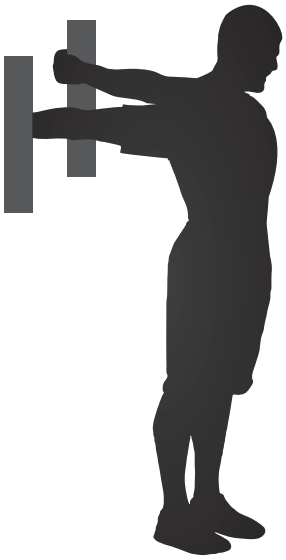
20 secs each leg

15 secs each arm



30 secs

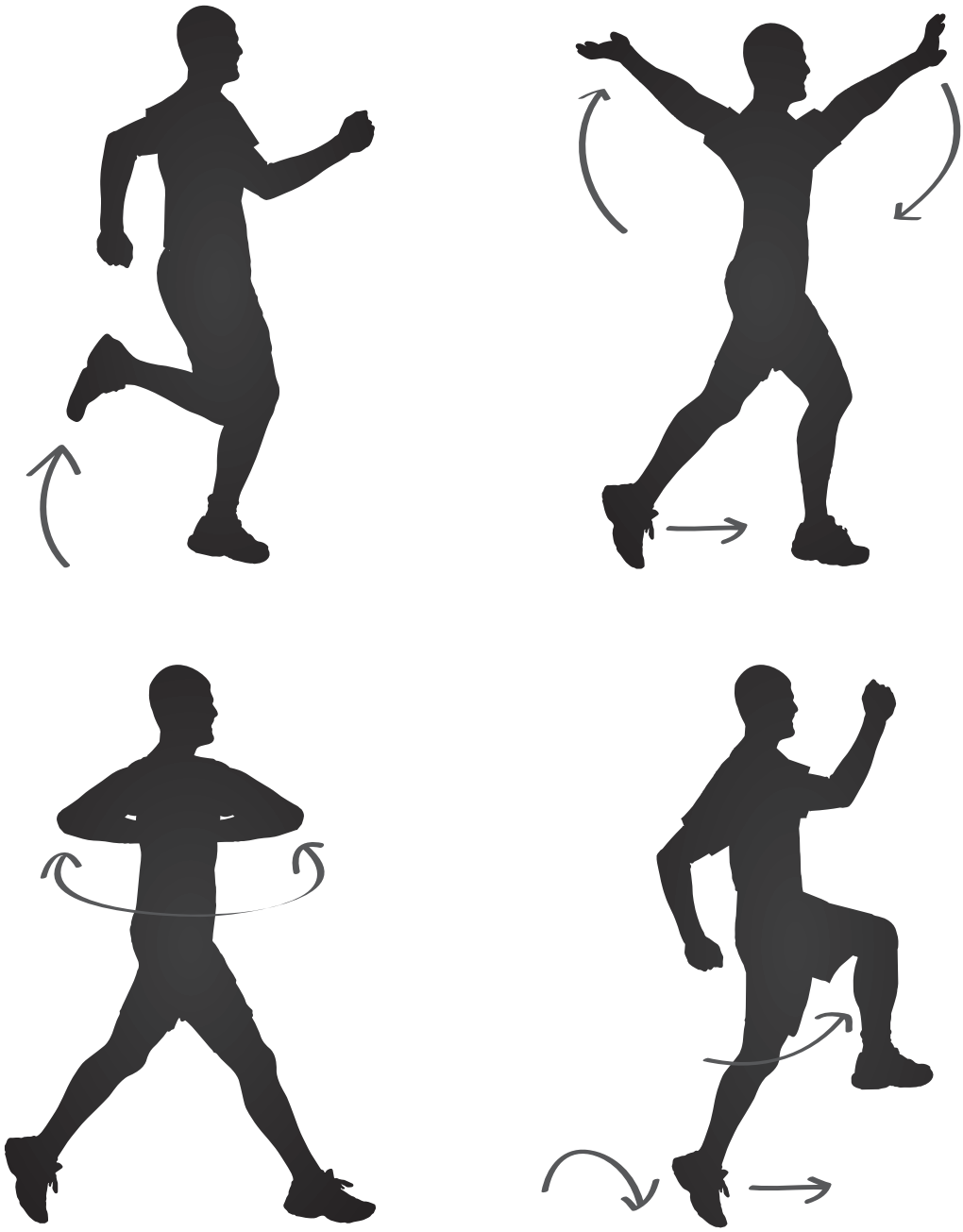
15 secs each side

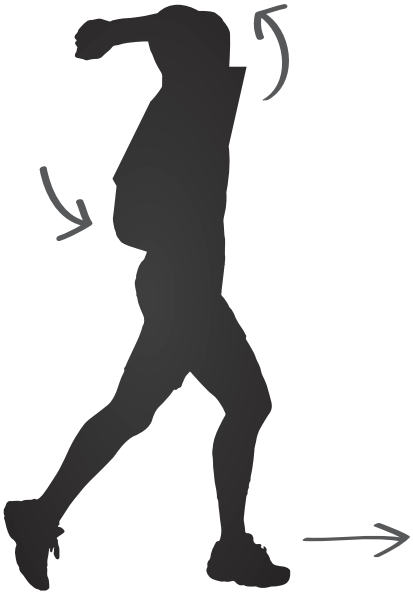


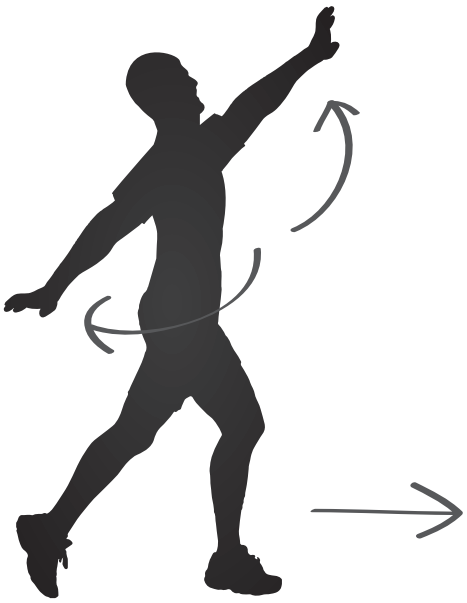
20 secs

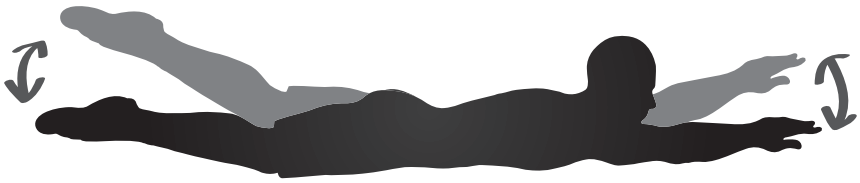
19 Dynamic stretching

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE
Stretching exercises performed while swaying to and fro or jumping up and down. These drills activate the muscles and are best suited for warm-ups prior to training sessions and matches. They should be performed in a gentle, controlled way and should increase in range.









PRACTICAL UNITS

3. THE COACH'S RESPONSIBILITIES

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

3.1 ORGANISING AND LEADING COACHING SESSIONS

3.1.1 Planning of training sessions

Planning is an essential ingredient of effective coaching. All the yearly planning and scheduling that coaches engage in is structured around the core component, namely the training session. The planning of training sessions is the foundation of a coach's job, and involves the practical application of the work they carry out as educators in giving players activities to perform.

The training session should be planned in accordance with the various factors presented in the methodological components of this manual. However, in focusing on practical sports-related aspects, effective planning of training sessions must be based on the **objectives** they seek to achieve and on the **designing of tasks** in order to reach those objectives.

Objectives

When planning a session the first thing coaches must have clear in their minds are the objectives they aim to achieve as a result of it (What is the purpose of the session? What does it seek to achieve?). In fulfilling these objectives we provide the basis for the team's improvement, though we should be aware that it takes time for players to assimilate their goals.

As we have seen in other sections, the training session is divided into three main parts: the first part or warm-up; the second part or development; and the final part or warm-down. These three parts of the session are structured in accordance with the need to gradually increase the intensity of training and the physical and mental requirements it demands. They also provide a means for preparing players by introducing the session objectives, and then developing and assessing them.

Designing drills

In order to achieve the objectives of a particular session the coach must make use of the practical resources at their disposal, namely drills and exercises. These drills must be designed in line with their methodology and with the central idea that they are the essential means for working towards the objectives they aim to achieve. Drills are not inflexible models that cannot be changed under any circumstances. The coach must draw on all the structural and conditioning tools available to them to create drills that ensure the work carried out achieves the intended objectives.

3.1.2 Leading training sessions

It is one thing to plan a training session and quite another to implement it in line with what has been planned and the objectives set for the session. Effective control of the training session is the next step in putting into practice the planned content and ensuring that the work carried out by the team is maximally beneficial.

Effective control of the training session involves the following aspects:

Explaining the objectives to the players

Players must be informed beforehand of the session objectives so that they can then focus their attention on them. Explanations must be clear and must set out what each drill involves so that players can execute them properly and our objective can be achieved. Players should also be informed of the specific objective of each drill. Depending on the coaching method used, we can give varying amounts of information on what players need to do in order to solve the problems posed by the drill.

Making assessments

We should assess the extent to which specific drill objectives are being achieved during the session and not after it. This gives us the opportunity to change certain aspects of the drills should they fail to ensure objectives are achieved or should we come up with alternative ways of helping players assimilate the task and of meeting objectives. After the session we should also assess the relationship between the designing of drills and the extent to which objectives are achieved to ascertain if they are effective in developing the aspects focused on.

Leading the session

This involves making sure that all the factors that go into planning drills are developed effectively (material and human resources, time management, coaching techniques, methodological resources, etc.). It also involves the following: ensuring that a suitable standard is reached and maintained at all times; giving effective instructions to ensure maximum performance in each drill; and observing the drill at all times so that corrections can be made when necessary and that the players can take as much away from the session as possible, etc.

Correcting errors

Drills should not be designed with the idea that players will execute them perfectly at the first time of asking. The possibility of errors being made by the players should always be taken into consideration in designing drills, and the coach should always be ready to detect any that may arise. Our duty as coaches is to rectify these errors whenever they occur, as this is when players are fully focused on the element in question and are best able to gain a full understanding of it. Addressing errors is important, as it helps the players executing the element to improve and also serves as an example for the rest of the team to follow. It is essential that effective management is provided at this stage, so that players can follow the examples of others and improve as a group, while taking the requisite game model on board. Corrections can also be made in team talks after training and in video sessions, which give us the chance to look at training-session elements over and over again. Such post-session options should always complement any corrections made during training and should not be carried out in place of them.

3.2 GAME MANAGEMENT

3.2.1 Conditioning factors

Managing a team is not an exact science. It would be presumptuous to think that there is a single winning formula and that plans can be made for every possible game scenario beforehand. Throughout this manual we have defined futsal as a game played in a limited space and in which constant movement with and without the ball is essential to creating, occupying and making use of space. As a result, we have described it as a game that involves interference, stimuli and changing situations, a game that is very unpredictable.

In light of this, it is virtually impossible for coaches to plan for everything that can happen in a game. What they must do, however, is to have control of everything within their power and to make suppositions about all the things beyond their control.

With that in mind, we can divide match-related factors into two main sections:

Controllable factors

These include all the factors and aspects that we can manage, control and assess, such as: training; the average performance of our players; scouting; the automatic technical/tactical skills players have learned; set-piece strategies; the team's mindset and attitude; the impact of opinions from the outside on the group (skills and psychological training); planning, etc.

By working continuously on game, training and behavioural patterns, the responses we expect to see in certain game situations will become more stable and predictable.

One factor that helps us anticipate the situations that arise during matches is experience. This term must be viewed with caution, however, as it can be misleading. Experience does not come simply with time but by repeating situations, as the following example shows: a person walks along the pavement reading the newspaper and falls into a big hole. If they continue to walk and read the newspaper at the same time for the rest of their life, we can safely say that they will have learned nothing from the experience. If, however, they decide to look where they are going, then we can say that they have learned something and have gained in experience.

It is said that an athlete achieves proficiency when they have been performing an activity continuously for 10 years. This is only true if they learn from the errors they make along the way and remember those mistakes and the process that caused them to make them in the first place. When faced with a similar situation at a later stage they will at least know which path not to take.

In terms of training, the systematic repetition of situations represented by real game play provides us with the necessary experience to identify all the possibilities involved in each situation and the effective decisions that need to be taken in response to the variables involved.

This can be illustrated with a real-life example from futsal. The 3v2 situation occurs many times in a game, and it is important that we know exactly what to do when it arises. When coaching it, try to create a situation that is as close as possible to real game play: an active defence, a defender who is dropping back, maximum intensity, etc. As regards the attacking team's approach, the player receiving the ball should run down the middle of the court to create two other goalscoring options: one on the left flank and the other on the right. This creates doubt and uncertainty among the two defenders. The player on the ball must look to see how the defenders are reacting. When the defence is in a position of maximum risk, one would expect to see one of the defenders come out and attempt to block a possible shot down the middle, leaving one of the attacking players unmarked. That is the normal pattern of events. However, one of the defenders may position themselves in such

a way as to block off one of the passing angles, leaving the forward on the ball with two options: to shoot from the centre or pass to the flank not being covered by a defender. This is now a 2v2 situation, as the goalkeeper also comes into play. While such a situation might seem unusual at first, continued drilling will allow forwards to find ways to overcome it and give the coach the necessary experience to ensure that an effective response is found whenever such a scenario arises in a match.

In team sports, every goal or point scored involves a mistake on the part of the opposition.

If we see our team lose match after match in the closing stages and we keep looking to blame the pitch or the referee or claim the opposition were just too good, then we will never learn and we will never gain experience. We must look closely at the team's performance and see if the players have a habit of sitting too deep in the closing minutes or if they become anxious and rush what they are doing, or take unnecessary risks in areas where they should not, etc.

If we learn from our mistakes, we will acquire more experience, offer up more solutions and be able to anticipate situations.

Uncontrollable factors

As the previous section shows, we can gain control of virtually every game factor, including variables, through training and repetition.

There is, however, another series of factors whose impact on team performance is not easy to predict. Though virtually none of them stem from game play itself, they all have a major impact on it.

In being aware of and anticipating these factors, we can limit their impact on team performance. We can, on occasion, even turn them to our advantage by using them to bring the team together and motivate the players.

Here are a few examples:

Injuries: injuries caused by muscle fatigue can be avoided by proper monitoring of the stress placed on muscles and of recovery periods. Others types of injuries cannot be predicted, however. When unavoidable injuries occur, we should try not to feel sorry for ourselves, and look at the setback from a different perspective. We should talk to the players who come into the side as a result of injuries and build their confidence, telling them that this is an opportunity for them to show what they can do, etc. Serious injuries can sometimes even lead to coaches having greater appreciation for the work carried out by fitness trainers, physios and doctors, and it is also true that such adversity can also bring a group of players closer together.

The only thing we can be sure of is that while we cannot predict these situations, we can turn the problem into an opportunity. It is all a question of attitude and vision on our part.

Refereeing: let us make one thing absolutely clear with regard to referees: they never influence the result of a game. They are human and make mistakes, but their actions affect both teams, and while they might make some decisions that go against us, over the course of a season there will be others that go our way. To even bring up the topic of refereeing is something only losers do to deflect attention away from the reality of the situation: mistakes and team performance.

The court: it is sometimes the case, especially at lower levels, that courts can be slippery or cause the ball to run slowly. If we are unaware of this before the start of the game, it can be deemed an uncontrollable factor. As soon as we are aware of the state of the court, however, it becomes a factor we can control. The next time we encounter a similar court, we can prepare the game accordingly.

The crowd: as is the case with the playing surface, we can be caught off guard by crowds that are especially noisy or hostile. The next time, however, we can prepare the team for what to expect.

The family: this is a hugely influential factor and can greatly affect a player's state of mind. If a fringe player has their parents telling them that the coach does not like them, or that they are better than a certain team-mate or that work rate all comes down to who gets paid the most, they will have an altogether different mindset to a player whose parents encourage them to try harder, trust in the judgment of the coach, not act against their own interests, be patient, and respect their team-mates, just as they would like their team-mates to respect them.

If we are to exert any kind of control over this uncontrollable factor, then we should think about arranging meetings with families every so often. We can also provide parents with performance reports focusing on different areas, including the behaviour of their child; assess the progress players are making or the lack of it and the reasons why; and most importantly of all, give parents a global vision of what the team and the club as a whole aim to achieve. Such an approach ensures that the player receives the same message from everyone. It also encourages them not to look for excuses that have nothing to do with their everyday working environment.

Players' agents and representatives: in some cases, agents exert more influence (both positive and negative) on players than families, and they can be very manipulative.

Bearing in mind that some agents are motivated only by money and do not have the best interests of players at heart, they can cause problems for the group and the coach, especially if the player thinks they are not playing as much as they should or feels they are playing out of position.

One way of tackling the problem or reducing the impact it can have is to arrange a meeting with the agent and present them with relevant data and information. In doing so, we can persuade them to help us encourage and motivate the player and thereby improve their performance.

The media: criticism can be helpful and praise can be harmful. It all depends on how we deal with them both. When we come in for criticism, we should always look to be objective about it and draw motivation from it, provided that it is not personal in nature. There may, after all, be some truth in what the critics say. If there is not, we should just ignore it. Time will put everything in its place.

As for players, who are inevitably more vulnerable in such situations because of their age and lack of experience, we can also turn to positive reinforcement here, reminding them of the good things they have done and encouraging them to raise their game and silence their critics.

If the criticism is aimed at the team, we can use it to bring the players together and to challenge them to address the cause of the criticism and overcome it. After all, a detractor on the outside usually helps those on the inside to pull together as one.

When coaches come in for praise, they should treat it with great caution. Praise can cause coaches to become weak, big-headed and complacent, leading to a loss of objectivity and competitive tension, and the shifting of blame for their own mistakes on to others.

Praise should only be seen as an endorsement of the policies pursued by the club, of whom the coach is but one employee.

We also need to be alert when the players come in for praise as it can cause jealousy and divisions in the group and undermine togetherness and cohesion. When a player receives praise we should congratulate them before reminding them, in front of the rest of the team, that they are nothing without their team-mates and that they would not be scoring goals without someone to rob the ball and pass it to them. They should be reminded that the right thing to do is share the glory of an award or public recognition with the rest of the squad, with the other players who help them excel.

Praise aimed at the team as a whole poses less of a problem. It can be used to remind players that the recognition they have earned is down to the effort and hard work they have put in collectively and that they have to keep on working if they want to achieve more praise. Such an approach enhances the group's self-esteem and helps guard against complacency and arrogance.

There are other one-off, non-cyclical factors that cannot be controlled and can arise at any time, leaving little scope for coaches to react. Examples of these are traffic delays en route to a match, which can cause anxiety; travel problems caused by bad weather; defective lighting at the match venue, etc. In response to such circumstances we should always be positive and try to find solutions, even if they are not ideal. If our only reaction is to become frustrated and angry, then we will cause disquiet and uncertainty in the group.

3.2.2 Phases involved in game management

Game management is not restricted to the 40 minutes of game time. A match begins as soon as the previous one ends and involves the following phases:

The pre-match phase

The week leading up to the match: the coach's job here is to make a detailed assessment of the team's next opponents and to focus training partly on combatting their strengths and exploiting their weaknesses. However, in making this analysis, one must take the resources at our disposal into account: the number of players, level of fitness, injuries, etc. For instance, it may be the case that the opposition struggles against teams who press them high up the pitch. Yet if there are players ruled out through injury or suspension, one should avoid trying to play that kind of game because it exerts a heavy physical toll on the players who are available. The coach needs to identify when the team can play that kind of game or in what kind of match situation, and when they should drop back a little and deny the opposition space. For example, one can decide not to press at goal-kicks or when the goalkeeper saves a shot, but choose to do so when the opposition begins to develop an attack, or at kick-ins or when the least technically adept player on the opposing side is in possession, etc.

Visualising the various situations that can arise in a game and coming up with a response to them can be a very useful psychological tool when it comes to preparing matches. These situations include the following: going a goal down; taking the lead; having a man sent off; the opposition having a man sent off; the opposition pressing high up the pitch; the opposition defending deep, leaving very little space; our team trailing with two minutes left; our team winning with only a few minutes left, etc.

Visualisation is very helpful. As neuro-scientific studies and tests have shown, when we picture a certain situation or movement and a response to it, the neuronal circuits charged with making the requisite decisions are created and these decisions are subconsciously recorded in the brain. When one such situation arises during a match, we automatically make the decision visualised beforehand, without knowing why we have taken it and regardless of the pressure of the situation and the ever-changing circumstances that a match involves, with all the observations and analysis we have to make.

Before the match: when matches take place in the afternoon or evening, the team talk should be held in the morning to give the players time to think about and digest the information they are given on the opposition and the specific objectives set.

Though not a hard and fast rule, team talks should generally last no more than 20-25 minutes. Some studies have shown that players start to lose concentration at this point and their attention span begins to waver.

There are other ways of giving team talks, such as getting the players to participate, or adopting a player-centred approach and challenging them to think for themselves and engage in analytical discussion.

Once in the dressing room, the coach should make a final assessment of the level of engagement of the group as a whole and of each individual player, and respond accordingly by motivating them if they are too relaxed or calming them down if they are overly excited. Ideally, the players should reach a level of competitive tension that does not prevent them from analysing situations and making the correct decisions or from exerting self-control.

During the match

First and foremost, the coach should be in control of their emotions (fear, anxiety, complacency, arrogance, concern, etc.) and should block out the crowd, the media and the possible consequences of the result. They should enter a mental zone that allows them to concentrate on the job in hand to such an extent that neither time nor external factors exist. The coach will thus be in a position to manage the game correctly.

As soon as the match gets under way, the coach must make a rapid assessment of the opposition to check that the preparatory work carried out during the week is reflected in what is happening on the court: type of defence, transitions, positional attack, the position occupied by an influential player, etc. The coach should then direct their players accordingly, as if playing a chess match, in a bid to counteract the opposition and make the most of our strengths and exploit their weaknesses. In doing so, the coach should not lose sight of the fact that the match lasts for 40 minutes. They must look to reach the closing stages of the match, when there is only a limited time in which to react, without having already lost the game or, preferably, having already won it.

It is also vital to think about the team itself and decide which rotations to make (without them being rigid or mechanical), which players should come on to change things that are not working and which players are best suited to certain systems or formations. In short, the coach needs to consider every aspect that can lend variety to the team's game and allow them to overcome the opposition and maintain control of the match.

The coach should look to maintain self-control in unusual or highly charged situations, such as harsh penalty awards that go against us, an act of aggression by a player, provocation on the part of the opposition coach, insults from the crowd, etc. In such circumstances, it is important to turn one's attention away from the cause of our anger or concern. If the cause is a refereeing decision, the coach should put it out of their mind straightaway and start thinking about the next passage of play. If the cause is the rival coach, the coach should avoid looking at them and focus solely on the game. And if the cause is the crowd, the coach should devote all of their energy to what is happening on the court, completely ignoring any booing or insults.

Post-match evaluation

After the game, once the excitement of the match has died down (which may be the day after), the coach needs to sit down and reflect on both the good and bad points. It is important to make notes, because one's memory of events can be misleading. Errors should be looked at as a learning opportunity, and successes as a means of boosting self-esteem and positively reinforcing the work undertaken to this point. This will encourage the coach to continue on the same path.

Finally, the coach needs to be realistic and fully aware of what happened on the court, even if it might be hard for them to take. This is the only way to correct mistakes and set the team on the path to excellence. If the coach deceives themselves and falls back on excuses such as bad luck, the referee and the state of the court, the only thing we can be sure of is that these mistakes will be repeated, and with even graver consequences.

3.2.3 Specific aspects to consider in analysing a match

Game management has two basic components:

- Analysis of what happens on the court.
- Decision-making.

Below are listed some of the basic aspects involved in **match analysis**:

- How the opposition sets up their attack and defence on the court (formations).
- How opposition players move and interact in attack and defence (tactics).
- How they position themselves at set-pieces (free-kicks, kick-ins, corners).
- How they occupy the court (high up, middle of the court, sitting deep, open or closed).
- Distance between the front and back lines.
- Balance in their play.
- Speed of passing.
- Speed of movements on and off the ball.
- Frequency with which changes and rotations are made.
- The opposition's attitude (aggressive, passive, normal).
- Style of play (fast, measured, direct, use of trickery, etc.).
- Fair play/gamesmanship (feigning of injury to waste time, dirty play, provocation, etc.).
- Specific observation of rival players or of the most important ones at least:
    - **Goalkeeper:** good/bad at stopping low shots; ability to play the ball out with their feet; problems with cross-shots; tendency to go to ground in trying to save shots; how they play the ball out, etc.
    - **Outfield players:** left- or right-footed; able to play the ball on their stronger side only or on both sides; comes to meet the ball or waits to receive it; able to get back and defend quickly or not; good at shooting from distance or prefers to feint and play the ball to the far post, etc.

As regards the **decisions** that need to be taken, these depend on the quality of the analysis and the options available to us.

Two examples

1. The opposition's central defender is intercepting passes. In response, we should look to position in that specific area players who go to meet the ball rather than wait for it, and who can protect it with their bodies.
2. A striker who can play the ball with either foot: assign a defender capable of slowing play down to mark him, rather than a ball-winner. The defender should crouch slightly when facing the opposing striker, with their body weight on their toes so that they can react quickly, while also using their arms to prevent the striker from coming away with the ball (without giving away a foul). We can also give them protection by having a team-mate come across to cover.

As we can see, game management involves many aspects that the coach must be able to control and work on. The coach should strive to make all uncontrollable factors controllable so that we can work on and prepare for them. To achieve this, they should draw on the preparatory work carried out in the week before games, while bearing in mind that unforeseen situations can always arise in a match.

During games, the coach should also control their emotions so that they can analyse situations and make the right decisions.

An inability to act is the worst thing that can happen to a coach. Fear and the sense that the situation is beyond their control can lead to panic, which can soon spread to the players. If this occurs, then we need to take a deep breath, relax, stop thinking negative thoughts and picturing imaginary threats, forget about future consequences, and start focusing on very simple aspects of the match before gradually moving on to more complex ones. When the match is over, the coach should reflect on the reasons why they froze and work on them to ensure it does not happen again.

9
9
11
11

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The *UEFA Futsal Coaching Manual* was originally produced in Spanish and this bibliography is the one that was used by the authors.

- Antón, J. L.: *Balonmano. Táctica grupal defensiva. Concepto, estructura y metodología.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 2002.
- Antón, J. L.: *Balonmano. Táctica grupal ofensiva. Concepto, estructura y metodología.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 1998.
- Añó, V.: *Planificación y organización del entrenamiento juvenil.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 1997.
- Balyi, I., Way, R., Norris, S., Cardinal, C. y Higgs, C.: "Canadian sport for life: Long-term athlete development" [resource paper]. Vancouver (Canadá), Canadian Sport Centres, 2005. Extraído el 04-09-2009 http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/default.aspx?PageID=1120&LangID=en
- Barbero Álvarez, J. C.: *Desarrollo de un sistema fotogramétrico y su sincronización de los registros de frecuencia cardiaca para el análisis de la competición en los deportes de equipo. Una aplicación práctica en fútbol sala* [tesis doctoral]. Universidad de Granada, 2002.
- Bayer, C.: *La enseñanza en los juegos deportivos.* Barcelona, ed. Hispano Europea, 1986.
- Binkley, H.: "Strength, Size or Power?". En: *NCSA Performance Training Journal*, vol. 1, nº 4, 2004, págs. 14-18.
- Bompa, T. O.: *Periodización. Teoría y metodología del entrenamiento.* 2ª edición, Barcelona, editorial Hispano Europea, 2007.
- Bompa, T. O.: *Periodización del entrenamiento deportivo.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2000.
- Bores Cerezal, A.: Manual práctico para el diseño de tareas en fútbol sala. Conferencia en: *Jornadas para entrenadores de fútbol sala* (Oviedo, 8-9 de junio de 2012). Oviedo, Comité Asturiano de Entrenadores de Fútbol.
- Bores Cerezal, A.: Planificación y variables para el diseño de tareas en fútbol sala. Conferencia en: *Real Federación Española de Fútbol* (Madrid, 27 de abril de 2014).
- Campos, J. y Ramón, V.: *Teoría y planificación del entrenamiento deportivo.* 3ª edición, Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2006.
- Cometti, G.: *Los métodos modernos de musculación.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 1998.
- Cook, G.: "Valoración deportiva de Base". En: Foran, B: *Acondicionamiento físico para deportes de alto rendimiento.* Barcelona, editorial Hispano Europea, 2007.
- De Dios López, T.: Progresión en el entrenamiento táctico, desde la iniciación a la edad adulta. Conferencia en: *Simposium para entrenadores de futsal* (Torrejón de Ardoz, Madrid, 24-26 de junio de 2011).
- Delgado, M., Gutiérrez, A., y Castillo, M. J.: *Entrenamiento físico-deportivo y alimentación.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 1997.

- Duncan MacDougall, J.: *Evaluación fisiológica del deportista.* 2ª edición, Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2000.

- Eskurza, I.: "Área teoría y práctica del entrenamiento". En: *Apuntes del bloque común de los cursos de entrenadores y entrenadoras. NIVEL I.* Edición c-3, Escuela Vasca del Deporte, 2007.

- Fetiche, B y Delgado, M.: *La Preparación biológica en la formación integral del deportista.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2003.

- Foran, B.: *Acondicionamiento físico para deportes de alto rendimiento.* Barcelona, editorial Hispano Europea, 2007.

- García Manso, J. M.: "Aspectos teóricos básicos a considerar en la planificación del entrenamiento deportivo". En: *Avances en ciencias del deporte.* Bilbao, servicio editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco, 2006.

- García Manso, J. M., Navarro, M. y Ruiz, J. A.: *Bases teóricas del entrenamiento deportivo. Principios y aplicaciones.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 1996.

- García Manso, J. M., Navarro, M. y Ruiz, J. A: "Modelos de Planificación Deportiva". En: *Planificación del entrenamiento deportivo.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 1996, págs. 103-158.

- García Manso, J. M., Navarro, M. y Ruiz, J. A.: *Planificación del entrenamiento deportivo.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 1996.

- González Badillo, J. J.: *Bases de la programación del entrenamiento de fuerza.* Barcelona, editorial Inde, 2002.

- González Badillo, J. J. y Gorostiaga, E.: *Fundamentos del entrenamiento de la fuerza. Aplicación al alto rendimiento deportivo.* Barcelona, editorial Inde, 1995.

- González, S., García, L. M., Contreras, O. R. y Sánchez-Mor, D.: *El concepto de iniciación deportiva en la actualidad. Retos. Nuevas tendencias en Educación Física, Deporte y Recreación*, nº 15, 2009, págs. 14-20.

- González, J. J. y Gorostiaga, E.: *Fundamentos del entrenamiento de la fuerza. Aplicación al alto rendimiento deportivo.* Barcelona, editorial Inde, 1997.

- Grosser, M.: *Entrenamiento de la velocidad.* Barcelona, editorial Martínez Roca, 1992.

- Grosser, M. y Neumaier, A.: *Técnicas de entrenamiento.* Barcelona, editorial Martínez Roca, 1986.

- Grosser, M., Brüggemann P. y Zintl, F.: *Alto rendimiento deportivo.* Barcelona, editorial Martínez Roca, 1989.

- Grosser, M., Hermann H., Tusker, F. y Zintl, F.: *El movimiento deportivo.* Barcelona, editorial Martínez Roca, 1991.

- Harichaux, P. y Madelli, J.: *Test de aptitud física y test de esfuerzo.* Barcelona, editorial Inde, 2006.

- Hegedus, J.: *La ciencia del entrenamiento deportivo.* Buenos Aires, editorial Stadium, 1988.

- Legido, J. C.; Segovia, J. C. y Ballestero, J. M.: *Valoración de la condición física por medio de tests.* Madrid, ed. Ediciones Pedagógicas, 1995.

- López, M.: *El entrenamiento personal en el ámbito de la salud.* Málaga, ed. Junta de Andalucía, 2008.

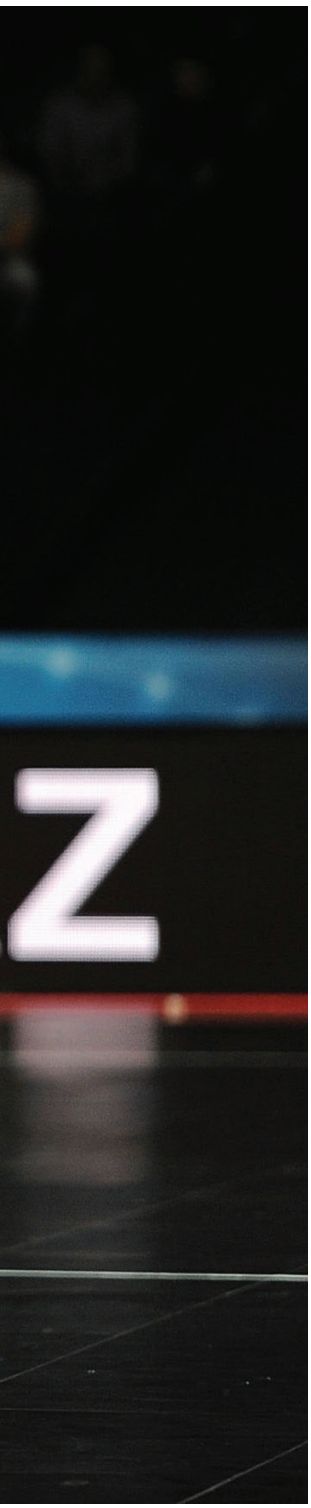
- López Hierro, J. V.: Conceptos tácticos y técnicos en categorías de perfeccionamiento: juvenil y sub-20. En: *Jornadas de Entrenadores de Fútbol Sala* (Barcelona 21 de febrero de 2010). Barcelona, Comité de Fútbol Sala de la Federación Catalana Fútbol.

- López Hierro, J. V.: El entrenamiento del fútbol sala en la edad escolar. Conferencia en Villa del Rio (Córdoba), 9 de julio de 2009.

- López Hierro, J. V.: Metodología III. Conferencia en: *Curso de nivel 3 para entrenadores de fútbol sala* (Barcelona, 20 de junio de 2014). Barcelona, Escuela de Entrenadores de la Federación Catalana de Fútbol.

- López Hierro, J. V.: Metodología III. Conferencia en: *Curso de nivel 3 para entrenadores de fútbol sala* (Las Rozas, Madrid, 8-10 de junio de 2015). Madrid, Escuela de Entrenadores de la Real Federación Española de Fútbol.
- López Hierro, J. V.: Metodología de entrenamiento en las diferentes categorías de formación. Conferencia en: *Escuela de Entrenadores de la Federación de Fútbol de les Illes Balears* (Palma Mallorca, 5 de mayo de 2010).
- López Hierro, J. V.: Metodología y métodos de enseñanza. Conferencia en: *Cursos para entrenadores de la UEFA* (Las Rozas, Madrid, 25-28 de febrero de 2013).
- López Hierro, J. V.: Programación y diseño de tareas de fútbol sala en función de los objetivos del juego. Conferencia en: *Real Federación Española de Fútbol* (Madrid, 27 de abril de 2014).
- López Hierro, J. V.: Tareas de entrenamiento táctico y su aplicación. Metodología de toma de decisiones. Conferencia en Castro Urdiales (Cantabria), 2 de julio de 2010.
- Martínez López, E. J.: *Pruebas de aptitud física.* 2ª edición, Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2006.
- Mestre Sancho, J. A.: *Planificación deportiva: teoría y práctica: bases metodológicas para una planificación de la educación física y el deporte.* Barcelona, editorial Inde, 1995.
- Mora, J.: "El entrenamiento deportivo y las leyes de adaptación biológica". En: Mora, J. (coordinador): *Teoría del entrenamiento y el acondicionamiento físico.* Sevilla, editorial COLEF de Andalucía, 1995.
- Morante, J. C. y Villa, J. G.: "Valoración técnico-táctica y control del entrenamiento a través de programas informáticos". En: *RendimientoDeportivo.com*, nº 1, 2002.
- Navarro Valdivielso, F.: "La estructura convencional de planificación del entrenamiento versus la estructura contemporánea". En: *Revista de Actualización en Ciencias del Deporte*, n °17, 1998.
- Pastor Pradillo, J. L.: *Salud, estado de bienestar y actividad física. Aproximación multidimensional. Sevilla,* ed. Wanceulen Editorial Deportiva, S. L., 2007.
- Pérez, J. L. y Pérez, D.: "El entrenamiento deportivo: conceptos, modelos y aportes científicos relacionados con la actividad deportiva". En: *Revista Digital.* Buenos Aires, año 13, nº 129, febrero, 2009.
- Platonov, V. N.: *El entrenamiento deportivo.* Teoría y metodología. Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 1995.
- Platonov, V. N.: *Teoría general del entrenamiento deportivo olímpico.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2001.
- Sampedro Molinuevo, J.: *Fundamentos de la táctica deportiva.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 1999.
- Sánchez Bañuelos, F.: "Desarrollo de las habilidades personales de organización y gestión del entrenador". En: Máster COE, módulo 3.4, 2004.
- Santos, J. A.; Viciana, J. y Delgado, M.: *Voleibol. La actividad física y deportiva extraescolar en los centros educativos.* Madrid, MEC, ed. Consejo Superior de Deportes, 1996.
- Seirul·lo Vargas, F.: "La preparación física en deportes de equipo". En: Conde, M. (editor): *Ponencias diversas.* Editorial McSports, págs. 177-208, 2002.
- Seirul·lo Vargas, F.: "Opción de planificación en los deportes de largo periodo de competiciones". Traducción de Leitungsport 2/1999. En: *RED-Revista de Entrenamiento Deportivo*, vol. IV, nº 1, págs. 89-91, 1987.
- Seirul·lo Vargas, F.: "Planificación a largo plazo de los deportes colectivos. Curso sobre Entrenamiento Deportivo en la Infancia y la Adolescencia". Escuela Canaria del Deporte. Dirección General de Deportes del Gobierno de Canarias, 1998

merlim
10
10



- Seirul·lo Vargas, F.: "Planificación del entrenamiento en los deportes de equipo. Área de control, planificación y evaluación". En: Máster de profesional de alto rendimiento de deportes de equipo. Fundació F.C. Barcelona, Byomedic System, 2005.
- Siff, M. y Verjoshanski, I. V.: *Super entrenamiento.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2000.
- Simon, H. A. y Chase, W. G.: "Skill in chess". En: *American Scientist*, vol. 61, 1973, págs. 394-403.
- Terreros, J., Navas, F., Gómez-Carramiñana, M. A. y Aragonés, M. T.: *Valoración funcional. Aplicaciones al entrenamiento deportivo.* Madrid, editorial Gymnos, 2003.
- Torres, J.: *Teoría y práctica del entrenamiento deportivo. Consideraciones Didácticas.* Granada, Imprenta Rosillos, 1996.
- Tous, J.: *Nuevas tendencias en fuerza y musculación.* Barcelona, editorial Julio Tous Fajardo, 1999.
- Vasconcelos Raposo, A.: *Planificación y organización del entrenamiento deportivo.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2000.
- Verjoshanski, I. V.: *Entrenamiento deportivo. Planificación y programación.* Barcelona, editorial Martínez Roca, 1990.
- Vidal Montaldo, F.: El fútbol sala: El juego y el entrenamiento. Conferencia en: *Curso para entrenadores de nivel 2 de Andalucía* (CEDIFA) (Sevilla, mayo-junio de 2013.
- Vidal Montaldo, F.: Herramientas estructurales para el diseño de tareas: variables y condicionantes. Conferencia en: *Curso de nivel 3 para entrenadores de fútbol sala* (Las Rozas, Madrid, junio de 2015). Madrid, Escuela de entrenadores de la Real Federación Española de Fútbol.
- Vidal Montaldo, F.: Metodología (diseño de tareas). Conferencia en: *Curso para entrenadores de nivel 3 de la Federación Catalana de Fútbol* (Cornellá, Barcelona, 30 de junio-1 de julio de 2016.
- Viru, A.: "Mecanismos de adaptación biológica y entrenamiento". En: *Revista de Entrenamiento Deportivo*, nº 9, 1995, págs. 5-11.
- Weber, E.: *El problema del tiempo libre. Estudio antropológico y pedagógico.* Madrid, ed. Editora Nacional, 1976.
- Weineck, J.: *Entrenamiento total.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 2005.
- Zabala, M., Chirosa, I. J., Chirosa, L. y Viciana, J.: *Tecnología y metodología científica aplicada al control y evaluación del rendimiento deportivo.* Granada, Reprografía Digital, 2002.
- Zeeb, G.: *Manual de entrenamiento de fútbol.* Barcelona, editorial Paidotribo, 1994.
- Zintl, F.: *Entrenamiento de la resistencia.* Barcelona, editorial Martínez Roca, 1991.

© UEFA, Nyon, April 2017

Published by Union des Associations Européennes de Football (UEFA), route de Genève 46, 1260 Nyon, Switzerland

Printing: Artgraphic Cavin SA, cavin.com

Photo credits: UEFA, Sportsfile, John Sibley, Tom Dulat, Vid Ponikvar

Project management and design: David Gough, Frank K. Ludolph, Ioan Lupescu, Lisa-Marie Chandler

Layout: Cathia Roth, Céline Liberale of Co Créations

Author and editorial consultant: José Venancio López Hierro, coach of the Spanish national futsal team

Contributors: Javier Lozano Cid, president of the Spanish Futsal League, Roberto Menichelli, coach of the Italian national futsal team

Coordination: Cécile Pierreclos, Sandra Wisniewski, Elena Ureña, Libero Language Lab

Translation and proofreading of the English version: James Calder, Martyn Greenan, Dan Brennan, Libero Language Lab

UEFA
Route De Genève 46
CH-1260 Nyon 2
Switzerland
Telephone: +41 848 00 27 27
Telefax: +41 848 00 27 27
UEFA.org
UEFA.com

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL