PENETRATION THROUGH POSSESSION

Keep the ball -> unbalance opponents -> recognise the moment -> play forward

SESSION OVERVIEW

SESSION AIM

Develop possession with purpose by recognising when to retain the ball and when to penetrate quickly through forward passes and

THEME	PRACTICE 1	PRACTICE 2	END GOAL
Penetration	**Passing Warm-Up**	**8v4 Possession**	**8v8 to Goal**

ACTIVITY 1 | PASSING & COMBINATION WARM-UP

ORGANISATION

Mark out a 30 x 20-yard area. Organise three teams of four inside the same grid, with one ball per group.

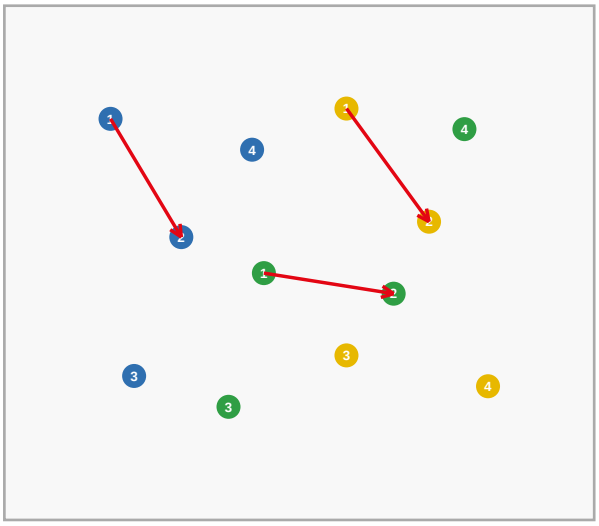
HOW IT WORKS

Players move freely while interpassing only with members of their own group. Encourage combinations as they travel through the area. Include several brief stretching breaks during the 15-20 minute warm-up.

COACHING POINTS

- Pass accurately and sharply.
- Use the correct weight for the receiver and situation.
- Coordinate movement with teammates.
- Use eye contact and visual cues before passing.
- Use the inside of the foot where appropriate.

DIAGRAM



Three groups share the same space while combining and moving continuously.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Add one-touch combinations at selected moments.
2. Challenge each group to change direction after every third or fourth pass.

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ACTIVITY 2 | 8V4 POSSESSION TRANSITION

ORGANISATION

Use the same 30 x 20-yard grid. Play two teams together in possession against one defending team, creating an 8v4. Keep spare balls with the coach.

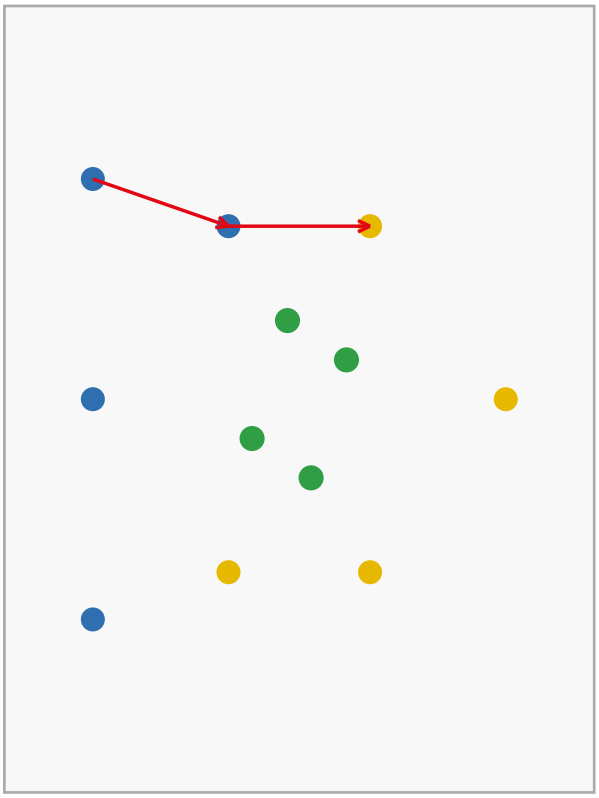
HOW IT WORKS

The two possession teams work together to keep the ball. If the defending team wins it, or one possession team makes the error that loses it, the team responsible immediately becomes the new defending group. Limit players to two touches to keep the game moving.

COACHING POINTS

- Create useful angles and distances of support around the ball.
- Recognise when to play forward and when to retain possession.
- Move the ball quickly enough to unbalance the defending group.
- React immediately when possession changes.

DIAGRAM



Eight keep possession against four, with the team losing the ball becoming defenders.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Reduce the space to increase pressure and quicker decisions.
2. Award a point for a forward-splitting pass through the defending group.

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ACTIVITY 3 | 6V6 WITH TARGET PLAYERS

ORGANISATION

Mark out a 44 x 25-yard area. Play 6v6 inside with one target player positioned at each end.

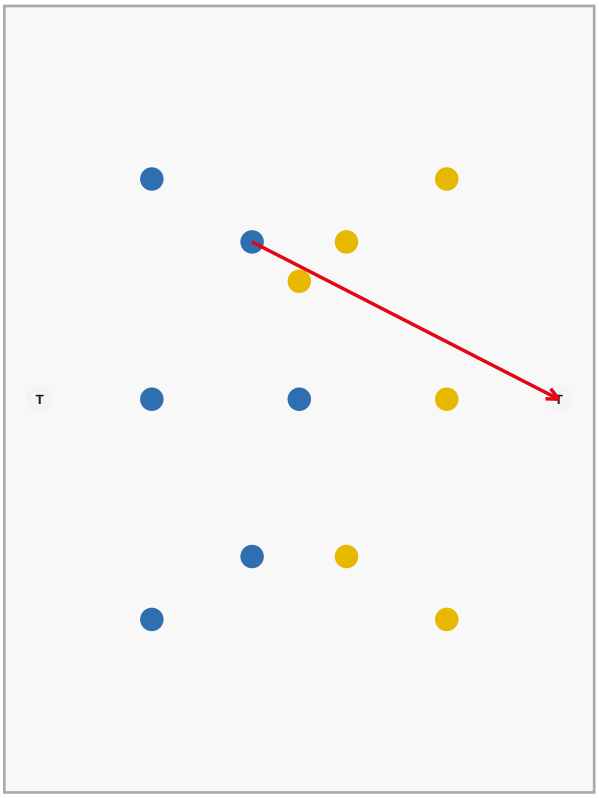
HOW IT WORKS

Teams compete for possession and can score either by completing 10 consecutive passes or by playing successfully into a target player. Encourage players to use quick movement and ball circulation to create the moment to penetrate forward.

COACHING POINTS

- Move the ball to unbalance opponents and create gaps.
- Maintain good angles and distances of support.
- Penetrate at the earliest good opportunity.
- Find the target players early and often.
- Apply realistic defensive pressure.

DIAGRAM



Possession creates the opening to find the target player at either end.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Make target passes worth more than possession points to reward penetration.
2. Limit the target player to one or two touches.

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ACTIVITY 4 | 5V5 + NEUTRALS & TARGETS

ORGANISATION

Use a 50 x 30-yard area with a goal and goalkeeper at each end. Play 5v5 with two neutral players inside. Position two target players near each goalpost.

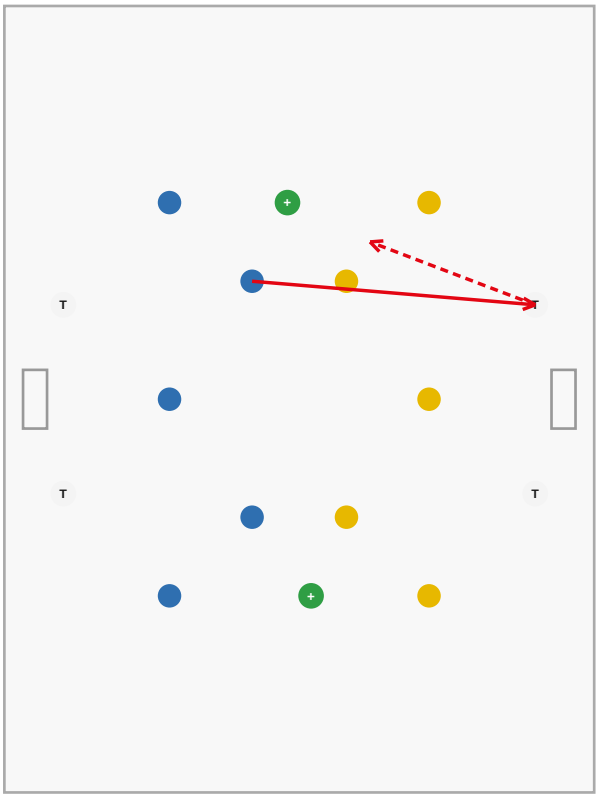
HOW IT WORKS

The team in possession can use the two neutral players and the target players around the goal, creating a strong overload. Look for penetrating passes into targets. Targets play one touch, so supporting players must arrive while the ball is travelling to receive the return and finish the attack.

COACHING POINTS

- Decide when to penetrate and when to retain possession.
- Support with correct angles and distances.
- Move quickly to support the target before the ball arrives.
- Create space through movement, forward runs and sharp circulation.
- Finish with quality when the opening appears.

DIAGRAM



Use neutrals to keep possession, then penetrate into one-touch targets near goal.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Limit the neutral players to two touches.
2. Award bonus goals for attacks that use a target player before the finish.

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ACTIVITY 5 | 8V8 PENETRATION GAME

ORGANISATION

Play 8v8 plus goalkeepers in the area from one penalty box to the other.

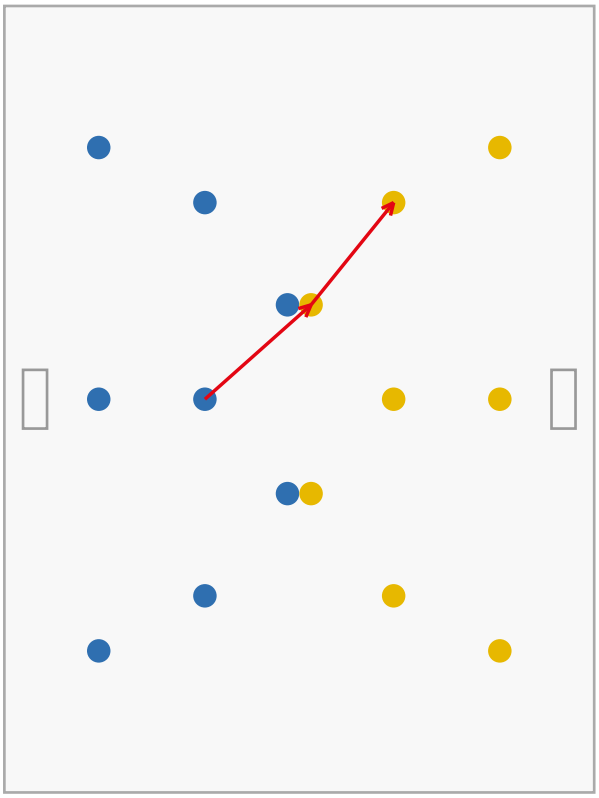
HOW IT WORKS

Teams play freely and try to maintain possession until a genuine opportunity to penetrate appears. Encourage quick forward play when the opening is available, but avoid forcing passes when the opponent is organised.

COACHING POINTS

- Attack at speed when the opportunity to penetrate appears.
- Transition quickly when possession changes.
- Keep the ball moving to unbalance opponents.
- Recognise the difference between possession for control and possession to penetrate.

DIAGRAM



Full game picture: circulate to create the opening, then penetrate quickly.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Reward goals scored shortly after a successful forward penetration.
2. Finish with unrestricted play to see whether the session principles remain.

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COOL DOWN | LIGHT JOG & STRETCH

ORGANISATION

Use an open area after the final game. Players work through five minutes of light jogging and static stretching.

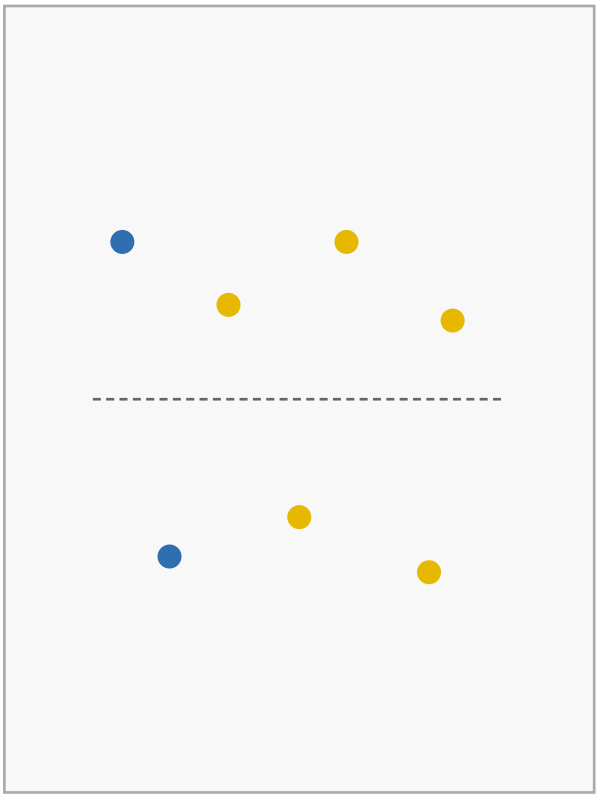
HOW IT WORKS

Gradually lower the intensity, then use the final minutes to recap the key session ideas: support, circulation, recognising when to retain possession and identifying the right moment to penetrate.

COACHING POINTS

- Bring the heart rate down gradually.
- Use controlled static stretches.
- Recap the key decision: keep the ball or go forward.
- Reinforce the importance of support and quick reactions.

DIAGRAM



Light movement and stretching to finish, followed by a quick recap.

PROGRESSIONS

1. Allow players to identify examples of good penetration from the session.
2. Finish with a short group recap before leaving the field.