DRIBBLING TO BEAT AN OPPONENT

Positive forward runs with the ball

SESSION OVERVIEW

SESSION AIM

Develop confident dribblers who can use disguise, changes of direction and changes of pace to beat an opponent and make positive forward runs.

THEME	WARM-UP	MAIN PRACTICES	END GOAL
Dribbling	Ball mastery + moves	1v1 + 3v3	8v8 game

WARM-UP | BALL MASTERY & DRIBBLING MOVES

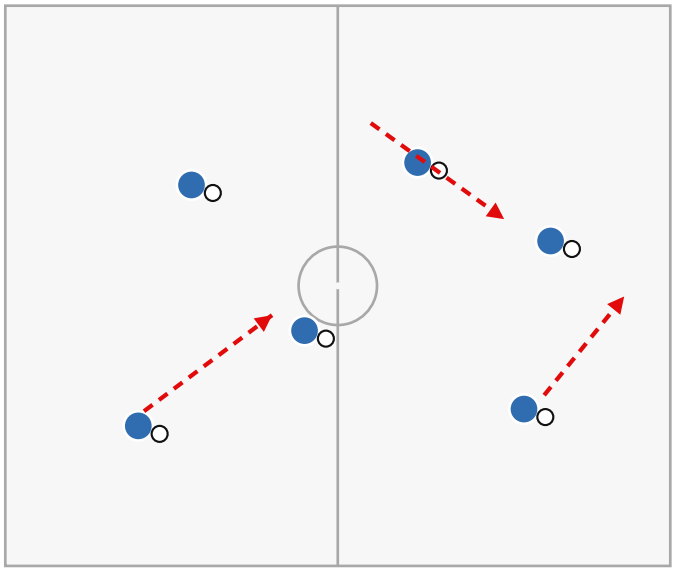
ORGANISATION

10 minutes. One ball per player. Players move freely with unrestricted running, jogging, juggling and dynamic stretching while staying comfortable on the ball.

DRIBBLING MOVES

- Push the ball out of the feet with the outside of the foot.
- Change pace and change direction sharply.
- Use disguise before accelerating away.
- Drop one shoulder, shift body weight, then explode the opposite way.
- Use a scissors move and take the ball away with the outside of the other foot.

DIAGRAM



One ball each - encourage freedom, disguise and acceleration

COACHING FOCUS

1. Sell the move

Use eyes, shoulders and body weight to make the defender believe you are going one way before taking the ball the other.

2. Explode away

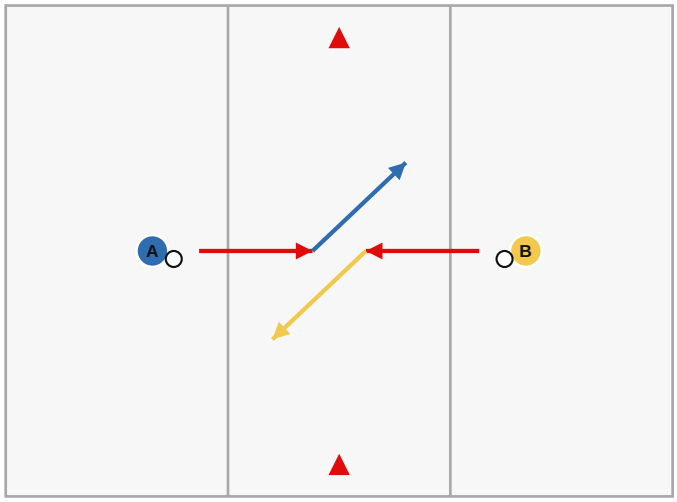
The move only works if it is followed by a positive touch and a genuine change of pace into the space created.

DRIBBLING TO BEAT AN OPPONENT

Practice 1 - build from an unopposed move to a live 1v1

PRACTICE 1 | FEINT, ACCELERATE, BEAT THE DEFENDER

BASE PRACTICE



10 x 30 yard grid split into three 10 x 10 yard sections - three players per grid

ORGANISATION

Players A and B dribble toward the halfway line, perform a feint, then accelerate into the opposite section. Players rotate continuously.

OBJECTIVE

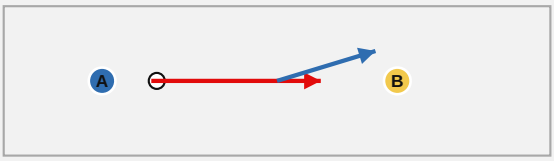
Attack the line positively, commit to the move and accelerate after the change of direction.

TIMING

5 minutes before progressing.

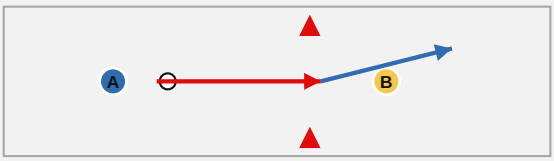
PROGRESSIONS

1. Passive defender



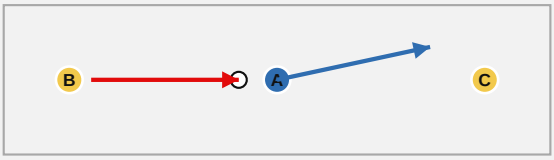
A dribbles to halfway and passes to B, then becomes a passive defender. B uses a move and accelerates past. Repeat in the opposite direction.

2. Live defender



A passes to B, then closes down immediately. A can only defend in front of the marker cones, encouraging B to attack at pace before the defender is set.

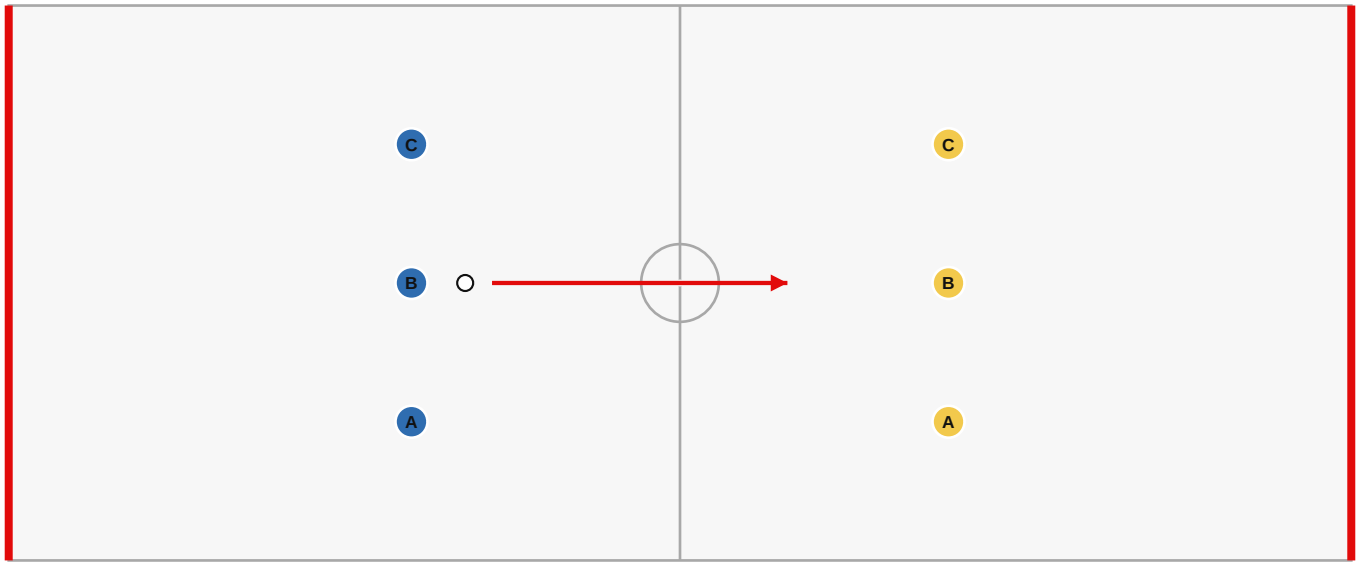
3. Decision 1v1



A starts in the middle. After receiving from B, A chooses whether to attack B or turn and attack C. Rotate the middle player continuously.

PRACTICE 2 | 3v3 DIRECT OPPONENTS

3V3 PRACTICE



20 x 30 yard area - each player initially has a direct opponent - score by dribbling over the end line

ORGANISATION & RULES

Organise 3v3. Pair players directly: A v A, B v B and C v C. If an attacker beats the assigned opponent, the space ahead should open up for a positive run.

Players score by dribbling over the opponents' end line. Encourage players without the ball to move away from the ball carrier and create a clear 1v1.

PROGRESSION 1

The team that scores keeps possession and immediately attacks in the opposite direction.

PROGRESSION 2

Remove the direct opponent restriction. Players can now defend any opponent.

COACH THE DETAILS

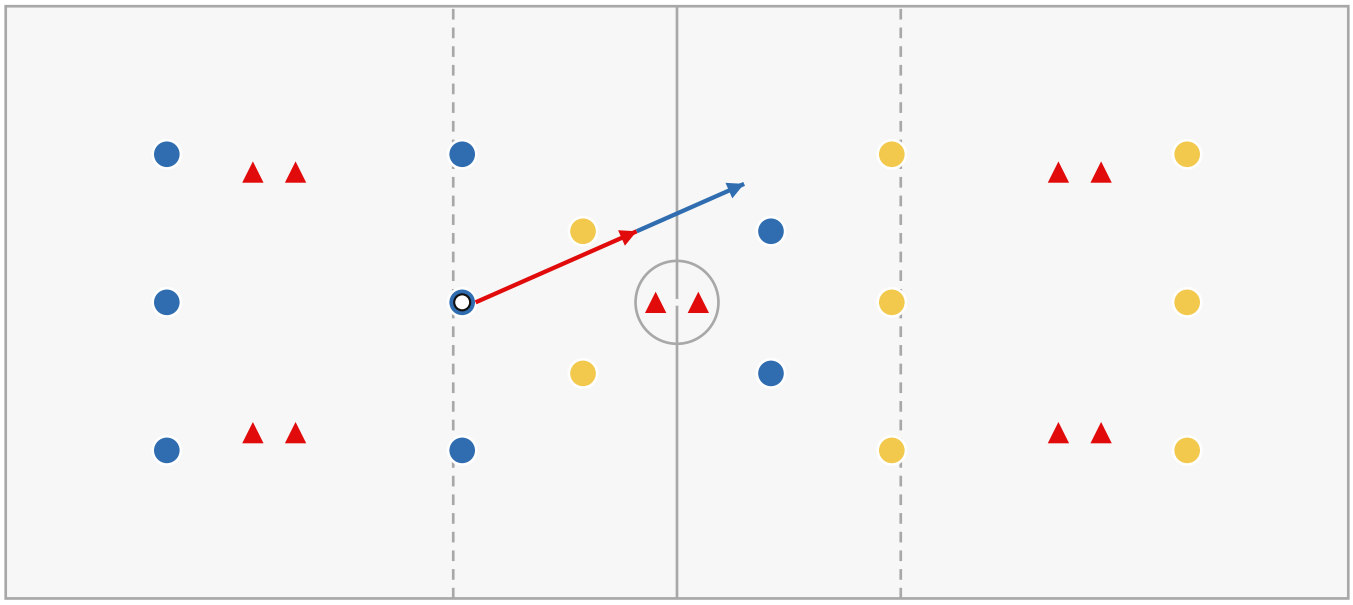
- Spread end-to-end to create room to attack.
- Move away from the player in possession to isolate a defender.
- Think dribble first and be positive when space appears.
- Attack the defender at pace rather than slowing down too early.
- Use disguise, then change direction and accelerate.
- Take the first touch into the space you want to attack.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Players repeatedly recognise and exploit genuine 1v1 opportunities.

FINAL GAME | 8v8 DRIBBLING THROUGH THIRDS

55 X 44 YARD GAME



Three thirds + five cone gates - players may leave their third only by dribbling forward

ORGANISATION & SCORING

Play 8v8 with both teams arranged in a 3:3:2 shape. Players begin in designated thirds and compete normally for possession.

A team scores by dribbling over the opponents' end line or by dribbling through any of the five gates. A player can move into the next third only by carrying the ball forward.

DURATION

15 minutes. Adjust the time to suit the players' ability and physical load.

COOL DOWN

5-10 minutes of light jogging and stretching.

KEY SESSION MESSAGES

- Encourage dribbling in every area of the pitch.
- Spread side-to-side and end-to-end to create space.
- Spread immediately when the goalkeeper receives the ball.
- Attack space and defenders at pace.
- Move away from the ball carrier to create 1v1 situations.
- Use disguise, positive touches and acceleration to break a line.

COACH REVIEW

Did players recognise when to dribble forward rather than pass?