



Solving Common Problems

Troubleshooting Guide

My Team are misplacing too many passes

Get back to basics; practice re focusing the players by asking them to pass unopposed to targets. Really focus on the passing technique, head over the ball, toes of the standing leg pointing towards the target, striking the ball using the instep in the middle of the ball and following through with the foot through the line of the ball. Once the players are re focused, start the activity again at a slower pace to encourage success.

My team are making poor decisions when passing

Don't be afraid to stop the play and freeze all the players on the spot. Getting involved in a particular move/play can be a good opportunity to make players realise where the better passing option was, be careful not to answer questions for players. Try asking them who is available? What would be a good pass in this situation? Why was the ball lost in the scenario we chose? Ask the group as a collective and remember this is a chance to learn as a group, not to point fingers of blame at the player who lost the ball or who was out of position. Once the players have answered, allow a free pass from where play was stopped. Defenders cannot move until the receiving player touches the ball.

Some players panic in possession of the ball

This requires an understanding of each individual player's mental attributes. Some players will thrive when asked to test their capabilities where others will shy away from trying things for fear of losing the ball and letting their team down. It is important to create a safe learning environment from the very first practice, reinforce constantly to your players that making mistakes is the best way to learn, and that during practice is the best time to make these mistakes, encourage them to express themselves and follow that up with constructive

feedback over what went right/wrong. Knowing what style of feedback will motivate each of your players individually. Encourage all players to dust themselves down after an error and try again. The more time each individual spends with a ball at their feet the more comfortable they will feel, so bear that in mind when planning your sessions.

My players get caught watching play happen when they don't have the ball

Practice exercises which involve plenty of movement off the ball to get players away from focusing on where the ball is so often. Stress to all players that you can still have an effect on what happens even if they don't have the ball. For example, a run off the ball can drag a defender away and create space for the player with the ball to move in to. Offer examples of this happening in games so players can see it working in action.

My players often stand still during play

It is common to see players jogging around the field just to appease their coach by 'moving' on the field, moving at one speed is as ineffective as standing still as you are easy to track and follow, and if you are moving too fast with no aim you are wasting energy. Standing still can be an effective tactic if it is used correctly; standing still or moving slowly then bursting into space makes it very difficult to track your movements as a defending player. Make sure you make clever runs and keep making short runs to keep defenders on their toes. Drift into spaces between players and try to constantly seek pockets of space to occupy.