

ADVANCED SKILLS

Xavi and Iniesta

The Barcelona midfield pairing of Xavi and Iniesta have taken football to a new high in terms of passing, creation and domination of the ball.

This session will elevate the skills of your players so they can pass and move like these Spanish masters.

Session planner

	Warm up	Session	Developments	Game	Warm down
	10 mins	10 mins	15 mins	20 mins	5 mins

Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm up	Balls and cones	Passing and receiving with a team mate. From <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 40
The session	Balls and cones	Passing and receiving the ball at speed
Development	Balls and cones	The playmakers are constantly receiving the ball and keeping possession
Game	Balls and cones	The team is keeping the ball by using the two neutral players
Warm down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



Where it fits

Individual skills: Passing, receiving, receiving to turn, vision, communication

Team skills: Communication, movements to receive, combination play to keep the ball

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What to think about

- Players should always be on the move and looking to receive a pass.
- Make sure your players are aware they need to find an available team mate for a pass.
- Can players pass quickly by using a maximum of three touches on the ball?
- Can players give the receiving player some information when passing, such as a shout of "time" or "turn"?
- Are players receiving the ball on their "back foot", meaning players receive a pass to the foot furthest away from the passer, allowing them to turn and dribble the ball away in a different direction.





Set-up

Create a 30-yard diameter circle using cones.



What you get your players to do

Split the team into two groups of players (Xavis and Iniestas). Nominate one player from each team to be in the circle. These two will be Xavi and Iniesta who work simultaneously. The players must try to complete as many “give and gos” (return passes) with their team mates on the outside of the area.

The game lasts for 90 seconds with the player completing the most passes declared the winner. Rotate the players so each has a turn in the middle.



What to call out

- “Play quickly.”
- “Call for the ball.”
- “Receive on your back foot and change direction.”



Development

Now Xavi and Iniesta work together in the circle. The remaining players come together in pairs and mark each other on the outside of the circle.

Xavi and Iniesta are limited to three touches and have to play the ball to one team of players outside the circle and receive a return pass. If a pass goes astray or is intercepted then the other team are now in possession of the ball.

Again, rotate the players so everyone takes part in each role.

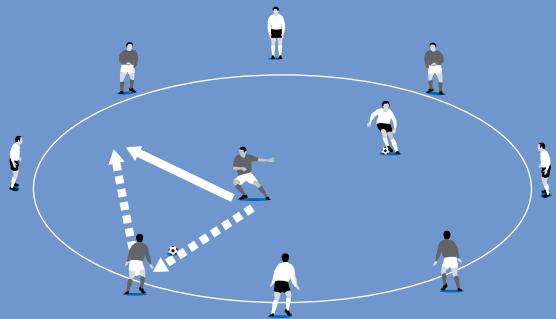


Game situation

Now play a possession game with all players inside the circle. The game will now be 4v4 or 5v5 with Xavi and Iniesta playing for the team in possession of the ball. A goal is awarded each time a team completes five passes. Once you are happy with the standard of the possession game you can progress by playing a normal game with goalkeepers and give double goals for each one set up by Xavi or Iniesta.

Xavi and Iniesta

player movement → pass □□□



“Xavi” and “Iniesta” are inside the circle and make quick “give and go” passes with team mates on the outside.



Xavi and Iniesta combine with one team of players outside the circle to keep the ball until it is intercepted, then they help the other team.



A 4v4 game in which Xavi and Iniesta help the team with the ball keep possession.

