

The skill channel

Find your team's Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo with this session. It will improve your players' dribbling ability in order to attack and run past defenders in 1v1 situations. "The skill channel" develops changes in speed and direction, plus using an individual skill to beat the defender.



What you tell your players the session is about

1. Learning to change speed and direction when dribbling.
2. Learning a skill to go past your defender.
3. Creating goal scoring opportunities.

Session planner

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

| Activity | Kit | Outcome |
|-------------|-----------------|--|
| Warm up | Ball | Players perform skills and changes of direction. From <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 32 |
| The session | Balls and cones | Players are now adjusting their speed and completing various skills when dribbling |
| Development | Balls and cones | The players now use a change of speed, change of direction or skill to go past defenders |
| Game | Balls and cones | The players are picking and choosing when to dribble to create goal scoring opportunities |
| Warm down | n/a | Gentle jogging and stretching exercises |



Where it fits

Individual skills: Dribbling, changing direction, changing speed, skills to beat a defender, decision making on the ball, movements to receive

Team skills: Communication, movements to receive, movements to create space, combination play

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What to think about

- There are many different ways to beat a defender. This can be achieved by using pace, a change of direction, a skill, or passing and then running to receive a return pass in space.
- Encourage your players to use these different skills. This will make them more elusive.
- However, explain to your players that they cannot always dribble. Once they have beaten the first defender, they should lift their head up and look to make a pass.





Set-up

Create three 10 yards by 10 yards boxes next to each other as in the top picture, followed by a 40 yards by 30 yards small-sided games pitch as in the bottom picture.



What you get your players to do

The skills channel provides your players with a number of tasks.

- 1 The dribbling player must increase their speed in each zone.
- 2 Players alternate their speed in each zone. 3 Players complete a different ball skill in each zone.
- 4 Players dribble to zone 2, turn and dribble back to zone 1, turn again and dribble out of the area.
- 5 Players dribble at top speed through zone 1, complete a skill in zone 2 and a turn in zone 3.



What to call out

- "Attack the defender."
- "Can you show disguise with your dribble."
- "Make the most of beating the defender by lifting your head and passing or shooting."



Development

Add a defender to each zone. They have to stop the attacker getting past them and into the next zone. The attackers are awarded one point for each defender they beat. If the attacker is tackled, they become the defender in zone 3, with this defender moving forward to zone 2 and so on. The defender in zone 1 joins the queue of attackers. It's worth asking the players who is the hardest in the team to tackle and why? (speed, disguise, skills used etc).

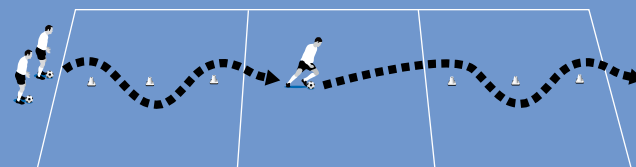


Game situation

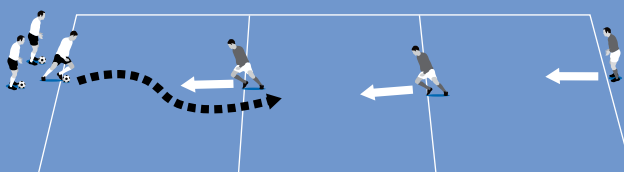
Now play a small-sided game where both teams attack and defend end zones. The players score a goal by dribbling into these zones. Encourage players to go past the defenders at every opportunity, but to then raise their heads in order to make a good decision on whether to continue to dribble or pass.

The skill channel

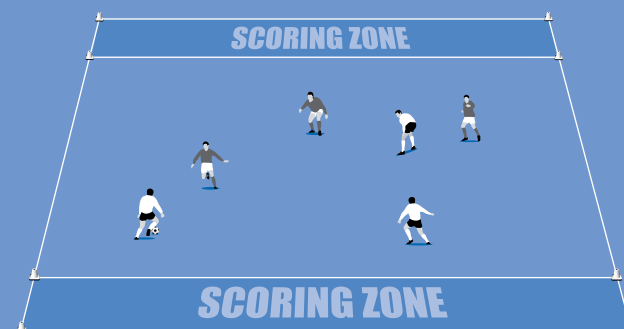
player movement \Rightarrow run with ball \dashrightarrow



Players complete a number of tasks in each zone.



With a defender in each zone, attackers aim to beat their opponent and progress through the channel.



In a small-sided game players have to dribble into the end zones to score goals.