

# Attackers defend first

If your attackers can be the first wall of defence when the opposition has the ball – your team is likely to win the ball and prevent any shots being taken at your goalkeeper. This means possession will be regained closer to your opponent's goal.



### What you tell your players the session is about

1. Reacting to losing possession.
2. Working together to win the ball.
3. Winning possession near to the opponent's goal.

### Session planner

Warm-up 10 mins	Session 10 mins	Development 15 mins	Game situation 20 mins	Warm-down 5 mins
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Activity	Kit	Outcome
Warm-up	Poles/cones	Players are reacting and applying pressure, from <i>The Ultimate Football Warm-Ups Manual</i> , exercise 23
Session	One goal, bibs, balls	Attacking players work together to win the ball from the defenders in the penalty area
Development	One goal, balls, bibs cones, two mini goals	The attackers work hard to win the ball and score a goal
Game situation	Two goals, balls, bibs, cones	The team applies high pressure
Warm-down	n/a	Gentle jogging and stretching exercises



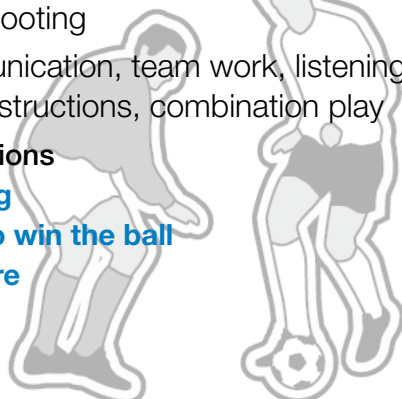
### Where it fits

Individual skills: Defending skills, pressing, covering, communication, movement skills, speed reactions, shooting

Team skills: Communication, team work, listening too and acting to instructions, combination play

#### Related Smart Sessions

- 24 **1v1 attacking**
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### What to think about

If your forwards work hard to press the opposition defenders then the following may happen:

- The opposition defenders will never feel comfortable in possession of the ball so any forward passes will be rushed and lacking in quality.
- If the forwards are able to win the ball, your team will be in a very good attacking position close to the opponent's goal.





## Set-up

Use the penalty area for the session. For the development, create an area 40 yards long by 30 yards wide with one regular-size goal with two mini goals. For the game, use an area 60 yards long by 40 yards wide with a goal at each end.



## Session – 10 mins

Play 4v4 in the penalty area with a goalkeeper on the defence's team. Four attackers pressure the four defenders, who are keeping possession of the ball in the area. Once the attackers win the ball, they try to shoot and score a goal. Change attackers every three minutes.



## Development – 15 mins

Set up the playing area as in the middle picture. Use three teams of four players and one goalkeeper.

A team of defenders protects the big goal and tries to score in either of the mini goals.

The other teams take turns to pass the ball to the defenders and then run to put pressure on them. They try to regain possession and then score a goal past the goalkeeper.

If the defenders are successful at playing out of defence and manage to score in a mini goal, the attacking team becomes the new defending team. However, if the attackers regain possession and score a goal, then the defence stays in position to face the next team of attackers.



## Game situation – 20 mins

Play a small-sided game as in the bottom picture with throw-ins and corners but with conditions. Play starts with team A's goalkeeper.

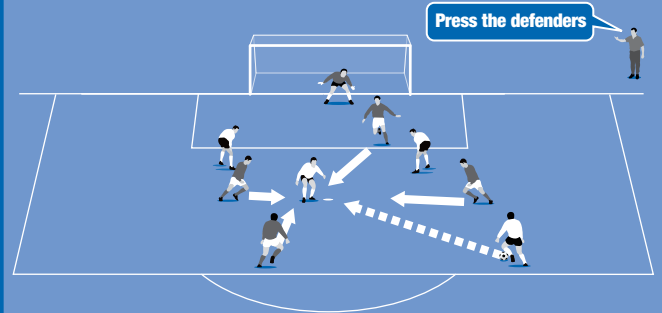
One player from team A goes into the opposite half to create a 1v1 with a defender from team B. The goalkeeper is allowed to make one unopposed pass to a team mate. Team B now pressures team A in order to:

1. Regain the ball near to the goal
2. Stop team A passing to its forward who has a 1v1 situation to score a goal.

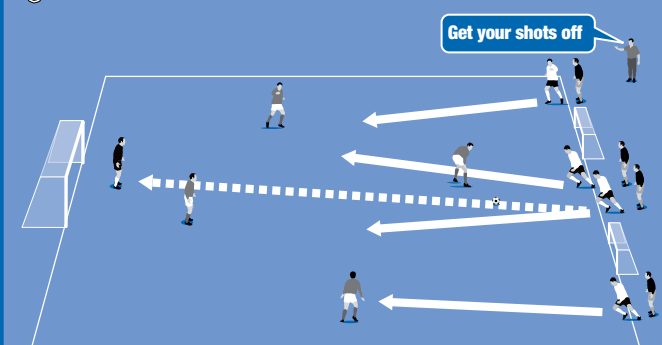
If team A can pass the ball to its forward then two more of its players can run into that half to create a 3v1 situation to score. This rule forces team B to apply high pressure and to work as a team.

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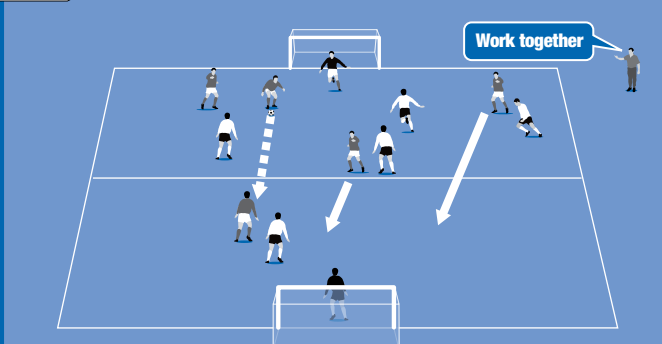
player movement pass



Attackers apply pressure to try and win the ball from the defence and shoot at goal.



Use three teams of four players. One team defends while the other two take turns to attack against and score past the goalkeeper.



Attackers add pressure high in the opposite half but if the opponents pass to their striker, they can build to a 3v1 overload.