



Senior Licence Coaching Course



Principles of Play

Tactics & Player Actions

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Principles of Football Play

Three Main Moments in Football

1. **Ball Possession**
2. **Ball Possession by the Opponents**
3. **Transition / Possession Change**

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- We need to use the Principles of the game as a framework upon which coaching is developed in relation to the - Three Main Moments in Football
- Understanding & reading the game is one of the most important aspects of a player's development.
- Understanding should always be drawn out from the player's practical experience.
- If players understand why the football principles are important they will be able to adapt freely throughout the game.
- As coaches we tend to seek security and comfort in practices.

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- We focus on methods instead of the desired outcomes.
 - We may get a result with a particular practice in one situation....
- ..but if we try to use the same practice to achieve another outcome we find it does not work.
- The players will often feel unsure and incompetent

A simple formula at training is to “Challenge a Response”

- The challenge is created by the environment (coach/practice) then the players come up with a response.

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- There is another challenge, another response.
- The formula is constantly being repeated.
- The problem is that these responses can become coded to the practice.
- They become part of the way the players think and the way they perform.

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- They may be good procedures, good practices.
- But when the players are faced with a new challenge, the old practice (response) often no longer applies.
- The response becomes obsolete and ineffective.
- We can never tell when we may encounter an unfamiliar situation.
- If there is an unfamiliar situation, there is initially a phase of confusion, then employ methods from the past.

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- After repeated attempts, experience relevant to the situation is built up.
- The importance of principles is that they are universal, proven truths.
- If the player's understanding is based on principles, they can quickly adapt and apply them in any situation.
- By teaching the players principles instead of practices or teaching the principles behind the practices.

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- Players are better prepared to handle unknown challenges throughout the game.
- The reality is that for a player / team to develop an understanding of their function they need practices built on principles and desired outcomes.

“ The best way to predict the future is to create it ”.

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Desired Outcome : #4

How to achieve it - many different ways

$$2 + 2 = 4, 1 + 3 = 4, 92 - 88 = 4$$
$$228 \div 57 = 4, \text{ Square root of } 16 = 4$$

There is a variety of combination to achieve 4.

All have a sound Principle & Methodology to achieve the desired outcome.

There are many different ways team's play according to their game philosophy - their playing style / game plan is build around understanding the Principles of Play

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Coach Education

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The Theory Principles of Play and Responsibilities of Players in Attacking and Defending situations

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Attacking Principles



Principles of Play:

Penetration - Improvisation - Ball Security

The player with the ball:

The First Attacker

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Attacks the space behind the defender by:

- ✓ Shooting past the defender
- ✓ Dribbling past the defender
- ✓ Passing the ball into the space behind the defender to another attacking player who is simultaneously moving into the space to receive the ball

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Attacks the space behind the defender by:

- ✓ Passing the ball to a supporting attacker and simultaneously running into the space behind the defender by means of a return pass - wall pass
- ✓ Changing direction and angle when running with the ball to create space to make a forward pass, dribble or shot

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Additional player tasks:

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If necessary creates space behind the defender by:

- ✓ **Committing the defender to challenge by running at the defender in an aggressive but controlled manner**
- ✓ **Enticing the defender forward towards the ball to create space behind them, then take-on the defender by dribbling past them**

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If necessary create space behind the defender by:

- ✓ **Passing the ball into the space behind the defender as the supporting attacker simultaneously moves into the same space to receive the pass**

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Additional player tasks:

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Ensures ball security by:

- ✓ **Keeping the ball moving & away from the opponents tackling range - be on the move /keep the positioned central**
- ✓ **Moving the ball away from the defenders feet with their first touch**
- ✓ **Moving the ball into the attacker's advantage space**
- ✓ **Attacking the defenders most vulnerable area**
- ✓ **Attack the space either side of the defender**

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Ensures ball security by:

- ✓ **Ensuring ball security with the last touch**
 - good first touch important – good last touch is vital
- ✓ **Combine with a supporting player to create a crossover, overlap or blind-side movement**

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Additional player tasks:

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Attacking Principles

Principles of Play:

Depth - Width - Movement - Communication

The Second Attackers:

Supports the player on the ball / disrupts supporting defenders position by their movement

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Helps the player on the ball by:

- ✓ Giving options to the 1st attacker around the ball
- ✓ Supporting at various distances in the 1st attacker's visual field - be on the move to receive the ball
- ✓ Giving the 1st attacker a good angle and a clear line to pass the ball
- ✓ Positions to receive the pass with a body shape that allows forward play with their first touch

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Helps the player on the ball by:

- ✓ When the 1st attacker takes on defender, the 2nd attacker assists by moving away
- ... this may force a 2nd defender to move away
- ... the 2nd defender may have to compromise between covering 1st defender and covering 2nd attackers who are moving beyond them

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Helps the player on the ball by:

- ✓ **The 2nd attackers communicating with the 1st attacker.**
 - talking / body language / movement
- ✓ **The 2nd attackers creating as many options as possible and change position constantly**
- ✓ **The 2nd attackers position where the ball can be received and played forward**
- ✓ **The 2nd attacker (s) moving forward and attacking the most vulnerable space if they become tightly marked by supporting defenders**

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Additional player tasks:

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Attacking Principles



Principles of Play:

Mobility / Width / Depth / Penetration

The third Attacker:

Other attackers away from the immediate playing area

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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Making runs on the blind side of opponents** - unseen
- ✓ **Making runs across defenders** – seen, to move the defender
- ✓ **Attacking the space behind the defender without the ball** - late or early runs



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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Making runs away from their closest defender and / or the ball so that:**
 - if defender goes with a 3rd attacker space is created
 - if defender stays to cover the 3rd attacker is free
 - as a result of the movement the defence is disturbed / disrupted or unbalanced

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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Coming from behind the ball where they are unmarked or poorly marked to attack the most vulnerable areas**
- ✓ **Calls or makes silent runs**
 - runs not rewarded with the ball are as essential as runs which receive the ball, both types of runs must be constantly encouraged

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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Creating as many options as possible so that defenders "balance" is destroyed or confused**
- ✓ **Committing the last defender by attacking them and / or running past them into a vital area**
- ✓ **Always looking to interchange with other players, to disrupt defenders**
 - disguising the run is important, timing of the run is vital

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Additional player tasks:

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Defensive Principles

Principles of Play :

Win the ball / Delay / Deny the Use / Pressure / Contain

The first Defender:

The nearest player goal side to the opponent with the ball
- may change as players recover

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Affects the attack by:

- ✓ **Winning the ball / delaying penetration / denying the effective use of quick forward play**
- ✓ **Stopping or delaying the opponent playing the ball forward (blocking the - pass / shot / cross)**
- ✓ **Denies the opponent working space by pressuring quickly, while ball is still moving**

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Affects the attack by:

- ✓ **Showing the opponent the way to go by denying access to vital areas** - effective body position
- ✓ **Tackling when there is support or when opponent has lost control or when unable to pass to other players**
- ✓ **Staying on their feet, balanced and focused on the ball**
- some exceptions

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Affects the attack by:

- ✓ **Never getting caught with having to turn a 180 degrees**
- some exceptions
- ✓ **Pressurising the opponent when the opponent receives the ball** - some exceptions

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Defensive Principles

Principle of Play :

Depth / Pressure / Concentration / Communication

The Second Defender (s):

Gives support to the first defender and restricts the working space of supporting attackers

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Helps the 1st defender by:

- ✓ **Tacking up an effective covering / supporting position quickly**
- is therefore the nearest player(s) around the ball
- ✓ **May have to mark & be aware of other attackers as well as cover/support-**
- ✓ **1st defender shows the close supporting defender(s) where to support or to apply pressure by their body shape / position**

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Helps the 1st defender by:

- ✓ **Communicating with the 1st defender, when cover is on, tackle, or turn player to ambush etc**
- ✓ **Always looking to apply pressure to the next player that is able to receive the ball or reduce the working space of the attacker**
- ✓ **Always looking to apply double marking pressure to the player on the ball or ambush**
- ✓ **Positioning to see the ball and be aware of other attackers**
- ✓ **Hunt in groups to apply pressure on and around the ball**

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Defensive Principles

Principles of the Game :

Concentration / Balance / Mobility / Communication

The Third Defender (s):

Defenders away from the immediate playing area

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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Tracking down all opponents that make forward runs towards goal**
- some exceptions
- ✓ **Allowing no opponents to get goal side around the penalty area**
- position goal side & ball side, some exceptions
- ✓ **Always being prepared to balance the defence**
- ✓ **Always being prepared to become 1st or 2nd defenders - Instantly**

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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Always scanning / communicating / observing opposition and the ball**
- ✓ **Always looking to intercept the ball & reduce the depth and narrow the playing area of the attack's playing space**
- ✓ **Always looking to apply pressure to the next player that is able to receive the ball**

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Helps the team by:

- ✓ **Applying tight marking to the player who can score with their first touch**
- ✓ **Positioning to see the ball and be aware of wide opponents**
 - are not spectators / ball watchers
- ✓ **Marking players goal-side & ball-side of opponents**
- ✓ **Reading the game to apply tactical adjustments**

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Additional player tasks:

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Playing in the " Back Third " of the field



THE DEFENDING THIRD

When you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- ☛ **the player with the ball must not be able to progress forward to pass /cross or have a shot** - 1st defender and 2nd defender's job
- ☛ **turn opponents to the flanks or inside to ambush**
- defence advantage area or game plan

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When you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- ☛ **Isolate the player with the ball from their team mates**
- ☛ **Tackles to be successful** - hunt in two's three's four's and five's
- ☛ **Defend goal-side and ball-side of opponents**

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When you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- In the back third and around the penalty area, marking may become man to man - touch tight
- Have at least one more defender in the back third than attackers - some exceptions
- When a goalkeeper leaves the line a defender always covers
- Do not give away free kicks

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When you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- Squeeze the attackers into the smallest possible area and surrounds them with numbers
- All the attackers must be under pressure all the time around the penalty area
- Keep the team shape / re-adjust when other players have been pulled out of position

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When you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- **Move forward as the ball is played towards the opponents goal**
- keep composed and compact
- **Drop off when the ball can be played behind the back line**
- some exceptions
- **Block all passes, shots and crosses toward the goal area or into a vital area / player**

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Additional player tasks:

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When you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- **Retain possession - all passes must be 100% safe**
- some exceptions
- **Attackers move away from defenders quickly if the goalkeeper has the ball** - take up good body position
- **Attackers move into the middle third quickly and away from defenders** - take up good body position

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When you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- **Goalkeeper to throw the ball as often as possible and looks for a quick counter attack**
- **Move the ball into the middle third or front third at speed with a minimum of passes**
- **Emphasise breaking quickly - by all attackers** - some tactical exceptions

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When you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- ☛ **In EMERGENCIES clear the ball up, long & wide UP is vital** - this buys time and does not give opponents an easy ball
- ☛ **Do not dribble in tight areas or get involved in "battles" with defenders where losing the ball could result in an immediate shot at goal or a counter attack**
- ☛ **Possession is everything, play the ball to feet or advantage space**
- some exceptions

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Additional player tasks:

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Playing in the "Middle Third " of the field

The Middle third

If you **do not** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- All principles of 1st, 2nd and 3rd defenders apply
- Do not allow attackers to play the ball into the back third
 - some tactical exceptions

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If you **do not** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- Turn attackers to the flanks or inside to ambush
 - restricted area and ensure a predictable direction of play
 - greater number of defenders maybe inside
- Track all opponents that make forward runs
- Hunt in 2's,3's 4's & 5's - able to apply pressure to and around the ball

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If you do not have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- Keep the team's defensive shape
- Look to balance and cover all possible switch of play by opponents

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Additional player tasks:

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If you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- All principles of 1st, 2nd and 3rd attacker's
- Play safe passes to feet or to where the player is going and to their advantage space
- Quick, frequent and short inter-passing
- Quick interchanging of positions - keep in touch with team mates

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If you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- Do not get caught in possession
- Play two touch or one touch inter-passing
- Give and go - attack the back of defenders
- Never run with the ball or pass the ball into an area which it is difficult to get out of

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If you do have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- Be prepared to play the ball back in order to go forward and keep possession or change direction of play
- Look for through balls and switch direction of play regularly or for tactical reasons
- Possession is everything - some exceptions

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Additional player tasks:

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Playing in the "Front Third" of the field

The Attacking Third

If you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- All principles of 1st, 2nd and 3rd defender's
- Turn opponents across their own goal / pressure the goalkeeper and other attackers who may receive the ball
 - some tactical exceptions

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If you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- Do not let opponents play the ball forward or to a supporting player who can not be put under pressure immediately
- Do not let opponents play the ball wide - some exceptions
- Lock the opponents in their own back third "herd" them into a small playing spaces towards other defenders and pressurise with numbers

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If you **do not** have the ball these may be some of the team's tasks

- Win the ball in the attacking third by applying constant pressure, hunting with numbers and looking for interceptions
- Retreat towards your own goal if out numbered, for a tactical reason or the score requires this action

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Additional player tasks:

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If you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- ☛ All principles of 1st, 2nd and 3rd attacker's
- ☛ Play attacking balls forward - in behind defenders
- ☛ Be prepared to take a risk in order to get a shot
- ☛ Shoot often - be aware of deflections and rebounds
- ☛ Accept the responsibility for shooting

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If you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- ☛ Only pass to a colleague in a better placed position to shoot
- ☛ Use width, depth and movement to stretch supporting defenders
- ☛ Keep composed under pressure situations and challenges
- ☛ Face forward as often as possible - with & without the ball
- ☛ Move / position outside defenders - attach the space behind them

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If you **do** have the ball, these may be some of the team's tasks

- Work hard to get free of defenders and face forward, with or without the ball as often as possible
- Wide players position to attack the back of the defense with their first touch and cross in vital areas
- Create shooting opportunities or space using - a wall pass / cross over / overlap / blindside run or creative dribbling

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Additional player tasks:

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THANK YOU