

GrassRoots
COACHING
.com



FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LEVEL 2
Improve Creating Space in a Small Sided
Game





INTRODUCTION

Mike Trusson, who is a very experienced Football Association Level 2 Tutor and has tutored on over 50 Level 2 Courses, has written the content for Improving Creating Space in a Small Sided Game.

Mike is also the owner of www.grassrootscoaching.com which has over 300 animated, interactive 3D coaching sessions and a comprehensive section on the FA level 2 practical coaching curriculum with videos and downloadable PDF's.

The graphical content has been designed using Coaches Chalkboard, which is a very simple to use online football training planning software tool, which is available FREE at www.grassrootscoaching.com/freefootballcoaching/

COACHING IN A SMALL SIDED GAME

Regarding the Football Association Level 2 practical curriculum, a small sided game can be a number of different themed practices, some of which do not include goals, but should be directional. To simplify things, I always coach in a small sided game, with goals and goalkeepers. Players always like to play a game, so why not give them a game that they enjoy.

But the small sided game should have a theme or topic, which will be the main focus of the coach to bring out and develop. In this instance, the topic is to Improve Creating Space in a Small Sided Game.

Try and think about the size of the pitch to use, taking into account the age and ability of the players and the topic you want to coach within the game. So for example if I was coaching a group of 13 year old boys, of reasonable ability to improve Creating Space in Small Sided Game, I would be looking at a pitch size of 35 – 45 yards long x 20 – 25 yards wide, with relevant sized goals to the pitch size. I would play 2 goalkeepers and 4 outfield players in each team.

I would encourage both teams to try and play a formation of either 2 – 1 – 1 or 2 – 2. The players can rotate positions; but should try and keep to either of these formations.

Whilst I would manage the game, I would only coach one team and would want a competitive and fair game. But for the purposes of the Level 2 course, I would sometimes start play when the ball has gone dead, with the team I am coaching in possession (for attacking topics) this would give me more opportunities to coach my team, as they would have more possession and therefore more opportunities to coach create space in the game.

I would take a position off the pitch, where I could see all the pitch and the players as this would improve my observation and ability to analyse the game and be able to better coach my team and the topic.

PRIOR TO COACHING THE GAME

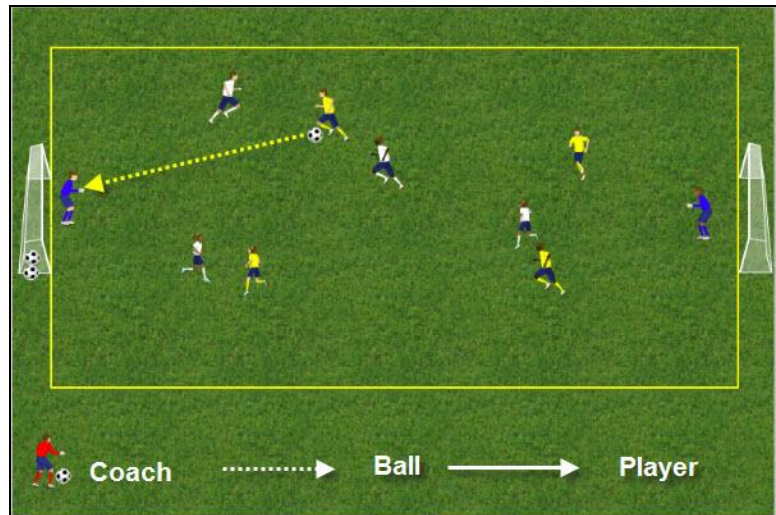
Ideally a coach would have coached the Technique and Skill of Creating Space prior to coaching improving Creating Space in a Small Sided Game, as this will greatly help the players' performance and understanding of this topic in the game.

There are E Books available covering the Technique, Skill and Small sided games for all the FA Level 2 Practical Curriculum.



1. ORGANISATION.

- Suggested pitch size 35 – 40 yards long x 20 – 25 yards wide
- Suitably sized goals
- Goalkeepers, 4 v 4 outfield players
- Supply of footballs with GK of team coaching and with coach
- Encourage both teams to adopt a formation of 2 -1 -1 or 2 – 2
- Coach position off the pitch and able to see all the pitch and players
- Coach one team only, but manage the game
- Initially when the ball has gone dead, let the team you are coaching have possession so you can coach your team the Topic of Creating Space
- Progress to a normal competitive match
- To start the game, have the opposition give away possession to the team being coached



EQUIPMENT

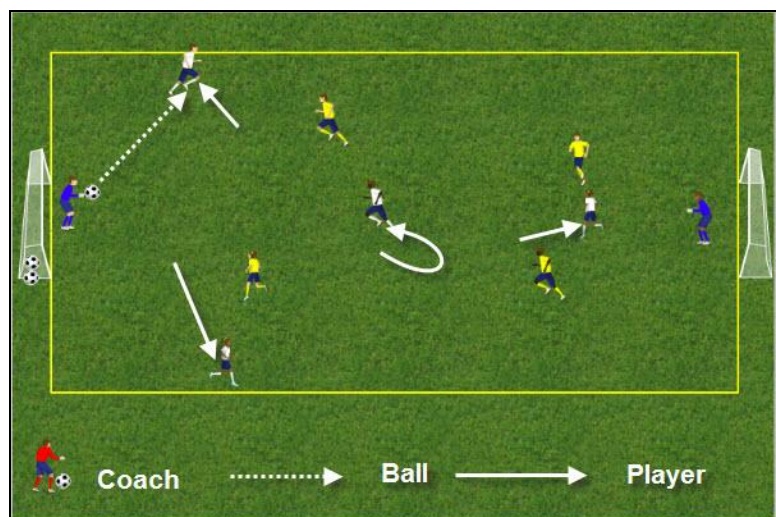
- Supply of footballs, cones to mark out pitch and bibs.

PURPOSE

- Coach Creating Space in a Small Sided Game

2. START

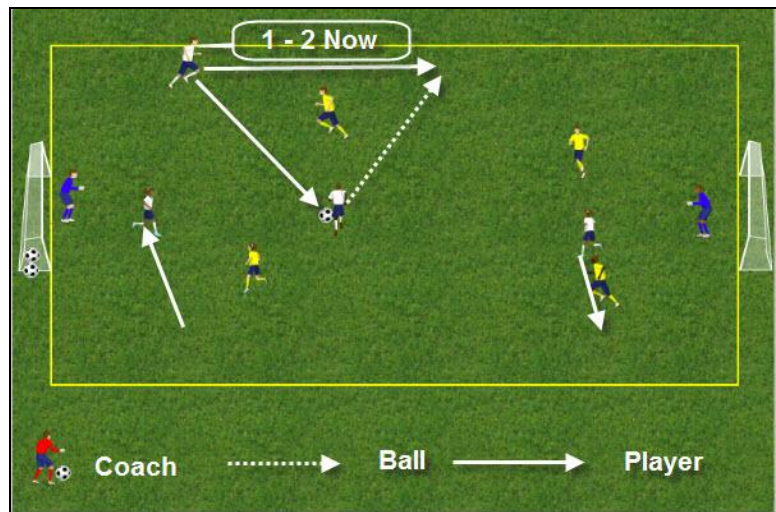
- As soon as the team being coached gain possession, the team to create space as a team to make the pitch long and wide, make the pitch as big as possible
- Ball is distributed to a player in space





3. OVERLOADS TO CREATE SPACE

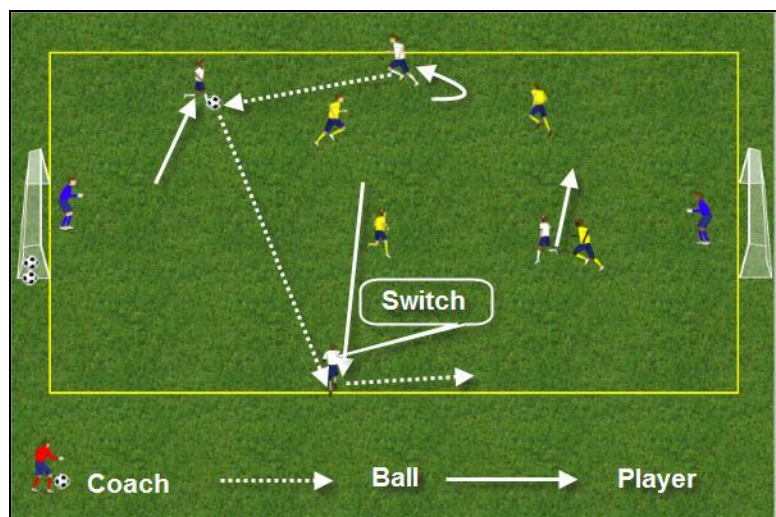
- In this example, the White team (the team being coached) have created a 2 v 1 situation, where the player with the ball can pass to the supporting midfield player and create space by going for the return pass down the wing
- The player playing the 1 – 2 should look to time their pass to commit the defender and time their run into the space behind the yellow defender. They should also look to communicate to the passer when and where they want the return pass
- **NOTE** – look how the white team striker has pulled away from the space to effect the defenders decisions and to create space for other players



- **NOTE** – the fourth member of the white team has moved to support behind the ball in case the ball is lost or the team need to go backwards to retain possession

4. TURNING WITH THE BALL TO CREATE SPACE

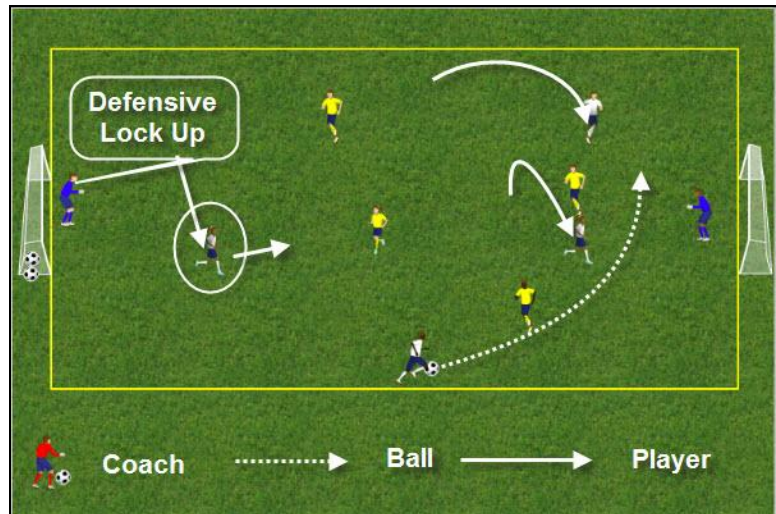
- In this example, the defenders have closed the space down, so the player with the ball turns with the ball and passes back to the player supporting in space behind the ball
- The midfield player now makes a run into the space on the opposite wing to receive a cross field pass
- **NOTE** – The forward has now made a run away from the space, effecting the defender, so that space is created on the opposite wing





5. CREATING SPACE IN ATTACKING AREAS TO CREATE GOALSCORING CHANCES

- The player on the ball looks to cross into the area, looking to hit the space for the forwards to run and attack the ball
- The players making the runs will need to time and angle their runs so they hit the space in front of the defenders and as the ball is coming into the area to attack
- By bending their runs and one attacking the near post and the other attacking the far post, they give themselves the best chance to exploit the space and get onto the end of the cross and score
- Another ways of making these attacking runs for crosses is for the players to cross over. So the player, who is at the near post, pulls to the far post and the player at the far post attacks the near post.
- Communication between the players is vital



6. DEFENSIVE BALANCE WHEN ATTACKING

- In small sided games, like all games, it is vital that when a team is attacking, not all the players rush forward to attack.
- There should be a defensive balance or “lock up” to the attack
- The furthest back player in the attacking team should take responsibility to ensure they are in a position to be the defensive organiser if the ball is lost.
- They should also ensure they are in a position to receive the ball if the attacking team can't go forward and need to retain possession and build the attack in a different direction.

7. COACHING THE GAME

- Consider the size of the pitch needed for the age and ability of the players and for the topic or theme of the SSG
- Coach only one team, but manage the game and both teams
- Let the game be played realistically. But get a balance of how you get possession for the team you are coaching in an attacking topic to ensure there is enough possession and attacks for you to coach
- Adopt a coaching position off the pitch that allows you the widest range of vision, so you can see all the players and the action
- Try and coach examples of how you can improve your team, related specifically to your topic

8. KEY COACHING FACTORS

- When in possession, ensure your team creates space as a team, both wide and long to make the pitch as big as possible.
- Players thinking “one step ahead” – “Not where the ball is, but where it is going to be”
- As the ball moves, the players should constantly be moving to find and create space.
- Always more than one passing option of a player in space for the player on the ball.
- The timing and angle of movement to create space
- Communication between players
- Quality of passing: To feet, space, first time passing or pass and control?
- Turning with and without the ball to create space
- Runs to create space for other players
- Defensive balance or lock up when attacking



On the next 4 pages there is an FA level 2 Coaching Session Planner Template. Please feel free to print it out and use. You will need to complete the details relevant to your session and needs.

Coaching Session Planner

Candidate Coach		Date Produced	
Coach Educator		Time Available	

Information on Players

No. of Player		Age		Ability Level	
Medical Info.					
Particular Needs					

Information on Facilities and Resources

Location		Session Date	
Facility Needs	Goals, safe and suitable playing area. Toilets		
Equipment Needs	Balls, bibs, cones, Poles for goals		
Health & Safety	Check Players for injury and for personal health and safety. Suitable footwear, clothing, shin pads, jewellery, Complete pitch check and ensure first aid kit and mobile telephone are on site. Risk assessment carried out prior to session start.		
Action Plan, Points from previous Sessions:	Give good demonstrations and intervene as appropriate. Ask questions of players. Use Guide and Discovery style of coaching with players. Progress the practice to the players needs		

Session Plan

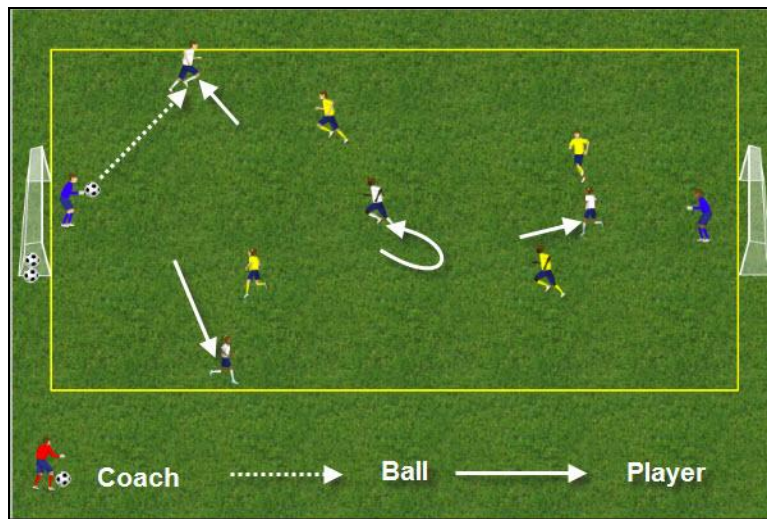
Session Aim	In a Small Sided Game improve Creating Space	
		Timings
Warm Up Activities	Gradual increase of warm up activities with the ball. Looking to increase the pace and intensity of the players movement to game intensity prior to the session. Looking to increase heart rate and blood flow. Also looking to tune the players in mentally to the upcoming session. Stretching of the main football muscle groups	10 minutes
Cool Down Activities	Gradual decrease of physical activity – run to jog to walk. Gentle stretching of the main muscle groups. Gravity led exercises to rid the body of lactic acid.	10 minutes





Session Plan

Session Title	In a Small Sided Game improve Creating Space	Timings
Key Technical Aspects/Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When in possession, ensure your team creates space as a team, both wide and long to make the pitch as big as possible. • Players thinking “one step ahead” – “Not where the ball is, but where it is going to be” • As the ball moves, the players should constantly be moving to find and create space. Always more than one passing option of a player in space for the player on the ball. • The timing and angle of movement to create space • Communication between players • Quality of passing. Feet, space, first time, pass and control? • Turning with and without the ball to create space • Runs to create space for other players • Defensive balance or lock up when attacking 	



ORGANISATION

- Suggested pitch size 35 – 40 yards long x 20 – 25 yards wide
- Suitably sized goals
- Goalkeepers, 4 v 4 outfield players
- Supply of footballs with GK of team coaching and with coach
- Encourage both teams to adopt a formation of 2 - 1 - 1 or 2 – 2
- Coach position off the pitch and able to see all the pitch and players
- Coach one team only, but manage the game
- Initially when the ball has gone dead, let the team you are coaching have possession so you can coach your team the Topic of Creating Space
- Progress to a normal competitive match
- To start the game, have the opposition give away possession to the team being coached

COACHING THE GAME

- Consider the size of the pitch needed for the age and ability of the players and for the topic or theme of the SSG
- Coach only one team, but manage the game and both teams. Play 2 – 1 – 1 or 2 – 2 formations
- Let the game be played realistically. But get a balance of how you get possession for the team you are coaching in an attacking topic to ensure there is enough possession and attacks for you to coach
- Adopt a coaching position off the pitch that allows you the widest range of vision, so you can see all the players and the action
- Try and coach examples of how you can improve your team, related specifically to your topic
- Coach all the players in the team where possible



LTPD 4-Corner Model Outcomes

When planning your session you will need to consider what outcomes you are trying to achieve in relation to the 4-corner model. You should aspire to identify outcomes for all 4-corners for each of your sessions.

Technical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing • Receiving • Ball control • First time passing • Decisions • Defending • Linked play 	Psychological <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagination • Decision making • Confidence • Self Belief • Spatial awareness
Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running • Turning • Balance • Agility • Changes of pace and direction 	Social <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making • Fair play • Communication • Team work • Challenges

Development of the Session

Some players are struggling to cope with the session, how would you adapt it to make it more achievable for them.	Make the area bigger to give the players more space and time. Slow down the practice to walking pace, and then increase the pace, as the players get better. Spend more time on the technique with the players.
Some players are finding the session to easy, how would you adapt it to make it more demanding for them.	Progress to 6 v 4 and 5 v 5 quicker Make the area smaller Introduce the challenges sooner
Identify what sessions you would ideally have coached prior to this session	Support Play
Identify what the session content might be for the next session.	Forward runs / forward passing





Coaching Session Self Evaluation

Candidate Coach	Session date
Were the arrangements and organisation of the session appropriate?	Size and pitch appropriate for the age group. All equipment ready and organised
Was the health and safety of the environment and session maintained?	Risk assessment carried out prior to session start, no issues.
Did the session content deliver the outcomes of the 4-corner model?	Discussed with the players and let them come up with the answers, which they did very well?
Did the session content meet the player's needs and expectations?	Pretty much. They can all master the technique of creating space. They need to focus on support movement and decision making and working as a team to create space
Was your coaching style and communication appropriate to the players?	I gave good clear instructions and used the EDI formula when coaching. I also asked players questions on their performance and used Guide and Discovery to help players find out their own solutions to problems
Did the player's performance improve as expected?	There were improvements as individuals and as a group. Although one or two players need a bit more individual help
What feedback have you had from other people involved in the session?	I had pretty positive feedback from the players and the parents watching. I also asked a Level 2 qualified coach on their views and they were very positive about the session
If you were to coach this session again, what might you change?	My coaching position and ability to observe all the game
The aim of the next session might be:	Forward runs / forward passing

Personal Action Plan:

Particular points that you think you should address at the next/future sessions:

Observe more and coach sometimes from good practice when players had done well, rather than from coach from mistakes.





PERSONAL NOTES:



GrassRoots
COACHING
.com

