

# Session Planning Coaches Resource Pack



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**WELCOME** to the Session Planning Coaches Resource Pack.

This resource pack will identify and discuss important session planning considerations for all coaches regardless of the context they work in.

Within the resource pack, different areas to focus upon and consider when planning sessions will be identified. This will hopefully help you structure sessions in a way that is beneficial to your participants and their individual needs.

# Session Planning Coaches Resource Pack

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# Identifying A Session Topic And Objectives

When planning a session, a session topic and objectives will underpin the focus of the session.

## Session Topic

A session topic is the overall focus of the session. To decide the topic, coaches should identify which area of the game they want to promote during their session.

## Session Objectives

Session objectives are in essence the criteria that underpins the session topic. Consider what the session topic looks like in the game and what the players will need to achieve in order to successfully display the session topic in practice. You may determine this by identifying what **ALL** will need to learn, what **MOST** will learn and what **SOME** may learn.

Please see below an example of a session topic and objective for a session:

**Session Topic:** Building the attack from the goal keeper

### Session Objectives:

- **All** – Players will be able to understand the importance of creating space to build from the goal keeper.
- **Most** – Players will be able to consistently show how to create space to build from the goal keeper.
- **Some** – Players will understand and be able to show individual position responsibilities when building from the goal keeper.

# Coaching Points

**Coaching points are the key ingredients players are required to know and show in order to perform the desired skill and topic efficiently.**

When considering the key performance indicators that will underpin the session topic and objectives, coaches should try and imagine the processes present within the game which link to the topic. Coaches should try and work in a logical fashion, with coaching points linking to one another rather than occurring sporadically.

**Some examples of coaching points for building the attack from the goal keeper may be:**

**Use all the pitch** – create space by picking up positions that create width, length and depth

**Decision Making:**

- Player in possession is required to assess opposition pressing strategy and which passing option is appropriate.
- Outfield Recognising how and when to make movements to create overloads (e.g. players connecting and combining to play around pressure)

**Receiving Skills** – open body shape to see all the pitch and to identify spare teammates and space.

**Recognising** where the spare player is and how to transfer the ball to them.

# Coaching Points

Also when considering coaching points you should try to cover all 4 of the areas below in some way:

## Technical

**Technical coaching points refer to the sport specific techniques and skills required to perform the desired action.** Consider what is required from the individual and their team mates to achieve the desired goal.

## Tactical

**Tactical coaching points refer to the way in which the game is played and different strategies within this.** Consider how the game looks and what needs to happen from individuals/ the team to successfully perform the desired tactical element of the game.

## Physical

**Physical coaching points are the physiological elements of a skill.** You should consider how the player needs to move and or use their body to generate the desired outcome. This can be in combination with technical coaching points in some cases.

## Social/ Psychological

**Social/Psychological coaching points refer to the interactions players make with their team mates as well as the decision making processes the player will experience.** You should consider the different variables present and how this will influence a player's decision making.

The coaching points identified can then form key pictures of the game you want to show players within sessions.

**The Practice Spectrum is a continuum of different types of practices that may be included in sessions and the different benefits the different activities provide.**

Below are some examples of different practices and their returns. Please note there is no 'perfect' amount of time to spend delivering each different type of practice.

### Constant

**A constant practice is a practice that has constant returns.** This will mean that the players are getting high repetition of a technique and are likely to not have to make any decisions. An example would be short passing in pairs to practice passing technique.

### Variable

**A variable practice starts to incorporate more variables and therefore slightly more decision making.** An example would be a 1v1 attacking practice. Within this, players are still getting lots of repetition but now have to consider other factors such as pressure.

### Random

**A random practice will include a large range of variables that the player has to process in order to make appropriate decisions.** A game would be a prime example of this as players have to process and identify passing options, opposing players, space available, which technique/skill to perform and how they will do this.

# Practice Spectrum

# Representative Design

**Practices should represent the game in some way shape or form.** It is crucial to consider how you can take **match specific scenarios and produce this experience within a training** sessions, even if the scenario is filtered down to suit your training environment.

This is important because it will allow players to start to recognise situations that occur within a game and identify the best way to deal with/ overcome challenges they will face within the game.

When doing this, it is important coaches take time to identify how they will refine the desired pictures within the match to cater for numbers available as well as appropriate repetition.

It may be that you still only have a 1v1 or 2v1 situation however it should still look like the game and have contextual factors representative of the game.

**When planning sessions, always consider the following questions:**

- Could you pick up your practice and drop it into the game?
- Would your practice fit within the game?

To help with this process you may take a snapshot from a game and break this down into a training practise.



# Common Ways To Structure A Session

There are different approaches coaches can take to structure their training sessions. Different methods may produce slightly different results therefore it is important to consider which method is appropriate for your requirements.

## Technical, Skill and Game

**This method involves starting with an unopposed technical practice before moving into a opposed skill practice and then into a game.** This approach provides gradually progression of practicing a technique before introducing additional pressure and finally seeing if the skill practiced can be transferred into a game.

## Whole, Part, Whole

**This approach involves starting with start the session with a game before moving into a technical or skill based practice and then finally moving back into a game.** This approach will allow coaches to assess the players ability to perform a skill in the first game and then reassess their ability in the final game to see if any progress has been made.

## Carousel

**A carousel consists of numerous different practices to be carried out in smaller groups on a rotations system.** For example, 3 different shooting activities in which the players work round in groups of 5. This will allow for lots of repetition of different skills.

No one method is the perfect way to deliver a session. As long as you can justify your approach you can chose different structures throughout your training sessions.

When planning a session, it is important the following is considered to ensure practices designed are beneficial to the players.

### Realism

**Is the practice realistic to the game?** The practice should provide a link for the players from training to match day to aid transfer of knowledge. If the practice doesn't provide realism players may not learn the skills required for the game and also may lose interest as they may not see the benefits of the activity.

### Relevance

**Is the practice relevant to the player's current stage of learning?** Think about the players needs and requirements for their current stage of learning and try to identify how you can design practices to best suit these needs. You need to tailor your approach to the context you are working within.

### Repetition

**Does your practice provide lots of repetition of the desired technique or skill?** If your practice doesn't provide enough repetition, player learning may be slower in comparison to activities that provide high repetition. Players may also lose interest if they are not getting enough repetition.

# Realism Relevance Repetition

# Constraints Based Approach

When delivering practices, a constraints based approach may be used to incorporate different conditions in order to guide players towards a specific outcome/area of the game.

You may consider the following:

## Constraints

**You may consider different rules the practice may have in order to promote specific areas of the game.** When doing this, you need to consider what part of the game is less realistic as some rules may limit certain areas of the game.

## Pitch Design

**You may change the shape or design of your pitch for matches and or practices.** Different shapes may promote specific areas of the game more frequently. Again consider the trade offs as to which part of the game may you experience less of due to the pitch design.

## Number of Players

**You may modify team numbers to provide under and or overloads.** Modifying team numbers can provide certain skills more frequently but also get the players to consider different tactical approaches to the way they play.

# Individual Needs And Differentiation

**When planning sessions, you should consider individual needs.** The session may be tailored towards promoting a specific area of the game to help improve an individual/ group of players. Alternatively, you may include opportunities to target all players needs by looking to provide varying levels of challenges.

To achieve this, the following methods may be used:

## Individual Challenges

**Consider how individual players could be given challenges within practices** that link to their overall session or their individual development plans.

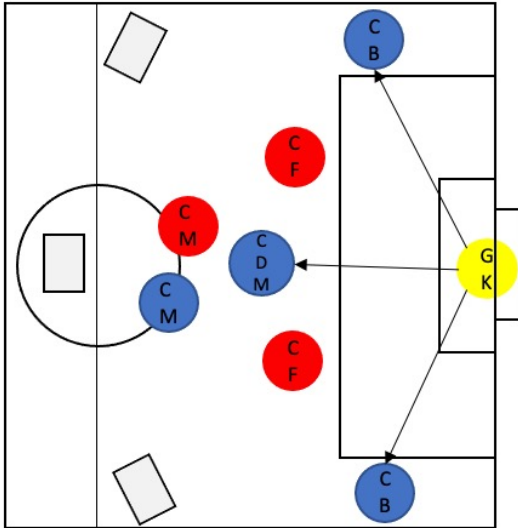
## Differentiation

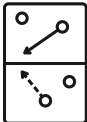
**Differentiation consists of providing different levels of challenge to ensure those that are struggling, coping and striving all receive an appropriate level of challenge.** This can sometimes be difficult but providing different types of challenges or modifying under and overloads on teams can help towards achieving this.

## Practice Design

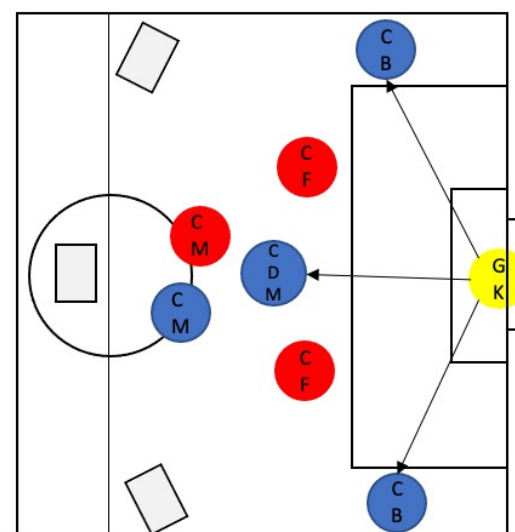
**Consider how practices are design to promote specific aspects of the game relevant to the desired strength or area of development a player possesses.** This may be achieved through modifying the pitch shape, rules or format.

# Example Snapshot Of A Session Plan

My Coaching Journey Session Plan			
Session Topic	Building the Attack	Session Focus	Playing out from the back into midfield (4v3+ GK)
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Coaching Considerations			
Organisation			
Ball starts with the GK and is played out to either CB, CDM or CM. The CB or CDM then aims to pass the ball into the target goals (Replicating the CF or LM/RM. If the striker regains, they attack the goal.			
Progressions		Key Questions	
Progress to 5v4 + GK by adding an additional CM for each team.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How can you position yourself to see the ball whole pitch whilst allowing you to play forwards?</li><li>How can you support your team mate when they receive?</li><li>How does the opposition's movement influence your decisions?</li><li>How can you work as a midfield pair to create space to outplay for each other?</li></ul>	
Coaching Points		Key Pictures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Start positions from the CBs - split wide inline with penalty spot.</li><li>CB hold space to create space for others</li><li>Receiving skills - hips open (facing corner flag diagonally opposite), scanning as ball travels and first touch (back foot into space or soft touch to draw)</li><li>Pass detail from GK - back foot into space</li><li>Supporting angle from GK to switch if needed</li><li>Supporting angle from GK to switch if needed</li><li>Supporting runs from CDM (angled approach to allow for combinations or penetrating passes)</li><li>Rotation of midfield players to create space to receive (timing of movement in line with play and move on different passing lines)</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Using GK as a pivot to switch play</li><li>Using slow or bounce passes to draw pressure</li><li>If forward press high, play through CDM. This may be a direct pass or a pass into a CB who sets to play through or combines with the CDM</li><li>If the forwards mark the CDM and 2 CB's, the ball can be circulated into the spare CB.</li><li>CDM needs to identify passing lanes and recognise when to hold space and when to drop in.</li><li>Rotation of midfielders to receive and combine centrally</li></ul>	
Individual Considerations			
<b>GK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pass detail – weight and direction of pass (too back foot, space)</li><li>Angle of support to switch play if CB can't play forwards</li></ul>		<b>CB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Start position to receive</li><li>Holding space to create space for CM to receive</li><li>Open hips to receive and play forwards</li></ul>	
		<b>CM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Start position – high to receive between lines or drop into central space</li><li>Rotation as a pair to receive (one drop, one threaten beyond)</li></ul>	



# My Coaching Journey



**My Coaching Journey**

This plan is designed for older youth age groups/senior training sessions playing an 11v11 format.

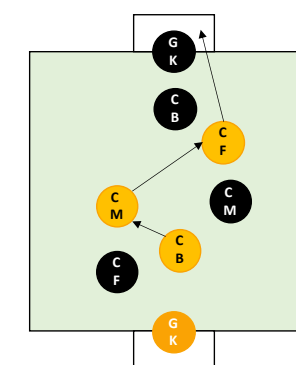
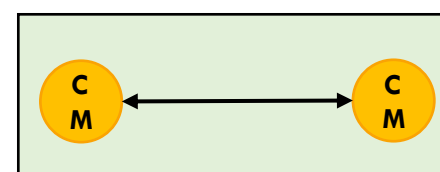
# Session Design Considerations



How Do You Design Practices to Encourage Learning?

## Blocked Practice

- Specific Returns
- Low Variables
- Lots of Repetition



## Random Practice

- Random Returns
- High Variables
- Increase Decision Making

Considering how you can provide athletes with **different experiences** is an important aspect to practice design.

### Consider:

- How can you help provide experiences for players that directly transfer to a match day?
- How can you design practices that promote specific experiences and encourage skill development?

## Experiences

### Constraints Based Approach

You may design small sided games that contain a constraint/rule in order to **guide players to a specific outcome** through increased ownership and decision making.

### Representative Design

**Practices should represent the game** in some way shape or form. It is crucial to consider how you can take **match specific scenarios and produce this experience within a training** sessions, even if the scenario is filtered down to suit your training environment.

Could your practice be picked up and dropped into a game?



## Repetition

Does your practice provide **appropriate amounts of practice** for the desired technique/skill?

## Realism

Are the practices planned **realistic to the game**? Would the situation you are trying to create occur in a game?

## Relevance

Is the activity relevant to the **ability of your players** and their current **stage of learning** and is it **relevant to the game**?

## Differentiation

How can you adapt practices and or individual challenge to **meet individual needs**?

## Progressions

How you can progress activities to **provide further situations** and or outcomes.



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