

Stop Players Bunching With These 10 Drills That Teach Spacing



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1. 4 goal soccer game for spacing

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area
- 4 goals
- 1 soccer ball
- 2 teams of 3 or 4

Instructions:

This is one of my favorite soccer games to play to encourage players to spread out.

Instead of trying to score and defend 1 goal the teams must defend and score in 2 goals that are placed on opposite corners.

This encourages players to constantly think about where the space is, if they defenders are blocking 1 goal the attacking team must work together to move the ball across to the other goal where there is space.

Coaching points:

- Constantly keep your head up so you can see where the space is
- If you do not have the ball find a position where you can help support your team mate
- Your passes and first touch should always take you away from the pressure

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should you be constantly doing?
- If you don't have the ball what should you be finding?
- Where should your passes/ first touch take you away from?



2. Soccer rondo drill to teach spacing

Set up:

- 2, 5 x 5 yard areas
- Two soccer balls
- 2 teams of 4

Instructions:

This gives a more competitive twist on a basic rondo, create your 2 areas for your 2 teams each team will send 1 player over to the other teams area to become the defender.

The winning team for that round will be the team that puts together the most passes in a row. The over all winner will be decided by whoever wins the most rounds.

This soccer drill for spacing is great to use as a stepping stone because of the numerical advantage.

Coaching points:

- Scan the area before receiving the pass so you know which team mates are in space
- You should be receiving the ball in an open body position so you can see all the options you can pass to
- Create passing angles for your team mates by moving up and down your side

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should you be doing before you receive the ball?
- What position should you be receiving the ball in?
- How can you help support your team mate on the ball?



3. Vertical thirds small sided game to teach spacing

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area (divided into vertical thirds 5 yards wide)
- 2 goals
- 1 soccer ball
- 2 teams of 4

Instructions:

Divide your players into 2 teams of 4 and assign each of them a position, (left midfield, right midfield, central defender and striker). Each player or players must stay in their respected vertical section.

By splitting the field in vertical 3rds players can still go forward and attack as well as defend.

However once a player receives the ball in their vertical section they can choose to dribble out of their section but once they pass the ball to a team mate or lose possession they must return to their section.

Make sure you rotate players round into different positions.

Coaching points:

- Stay in your space/ position to make the pitch as big as you can when you are in possession of the ball
- Find a space to help support your team mate on the ball in your position
- Recover quickly back into your position after losing the ball.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- When we are in possession of the ball do we want to make the pitch big or small as possible?
- If you don't have the ball what should you be thinking and doing?
- If you lose the ball what do we have to do?



4. 2v1 soccer drill for teaching spacing

Set up:

- 5 x 10 yard area
- 1 soccer ball
- 2 goals
- 3 players

Instructions:

This will be a fun 1v1 soccer drill with 1 magic player, the magic player will be on the team with the player that has possession of the ball.

The magic player will always create a 2v1 situation which will provide lots of opportunities for players to spread out and find space to help support your team mate on the ball.

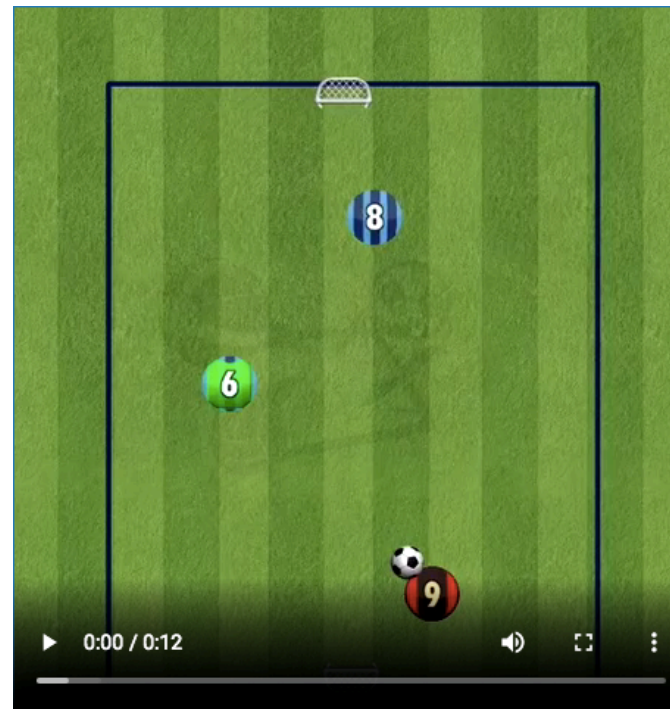
A good rule to add into this game is to say if players are able to combine passes with the magic player then that goal will be worth double.

Coaching points:

- The magic player should always keep his head up and looking to move into space to support the other players
- Communicate with your team mates let them know where you are

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- If you are the magic player what should you be always looking for and why?
- What else can you do to let team mates know where you are?



5. Keep the ball away 4 v 2 soccer drill to teach spacing

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area
- 2 soccer balls
- 6 players (2 defenders)
- 2 goals

Instructions:

There will be 4 players whose aim to keep possession of the 2 soccer balls, the 2 defenders must steal the soccer balls and work together to score as many goals as they.

As there will be 2 soccer balls in play players must constantly scanning the area and communicating with their teams to successfully keep the ball away from the defenders.

By spreading out and finding space the possessing team can make it very hard for the defending team to steal the ball. If the possessing team stand next to each other and bunch up it becomes very easy for the defenders to steal the ball.

Coaching points:

- Communicate with your team mates
- Scan the area so you already know what you are going to do with the ball once you get it
- If you don't have the ball move away from your teams and find a space where they can pass to

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- How can you let your team mates know you are in space?
- What should you be doing before you receive the ball so you know where everyone is?
- How can you support your team mates?



6. 3 team keep the ball away to teach spacing

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area
- 3 soccer balls
- 3 teams of 3 (1 defending team at a time)
- 2 goals

Instructions:

Set up your area and divide your players into 3 teams of 3, with one of the teams being the defending team.

The teams that are in possession of the ball can only pass to those players who are on their team. Their goal is try and get as many passes in a row as they can in that round, if they get the most passes in a row they will win the round.

The defending team must try and steal the ball of the possessing teams and score as many goals as they can in the round.

At the end of this soccer drill that teaches spacing there will be 2 winners, the team that got the most consecutive passes and the team that scored the most goals as the defending team.

This is a great drill that promotes spreading out and finding space as players are constantly scan the area and to support their team mates as there a lots of things going on in this soccer drill.

Coaching points:

- Keep checking your shoulder and looking up because there a lots of things going on at once
- Communicate with your team mates
- The more you spread out the harder it is for the defenders to win the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should you be constantly doing so you know whats happening around you?
- How else can you help your team mates on the ball?
- Will it be easier or harder for the defenders to win the ball if you are standing next to each other?



7. 3v3 transition soccer game that teaches spacing

Set up:

- 10 x 15 yard area
- 3 soccer balls
- 4 teams of 3
- 1 goal

Instructions:

This is a really fun attacking drill that will also help players to stop bunching and spread. First all divide your players into 4 teams of 3 starting at one side of the area facing towards the goal with each of them having a specific position.

To begin this soccer drill the first team will combine passes going towards goal and take a shot. As soon as the shot is taken they will become the defenders. The teams must attack quick and find space in their position if they want to be able to successfully score goals against the team that is trying to reorganize as defenders.

The defending team will then collect a soccer ball and join the attackers line once the phase of play has ended.

Coaching points:

- Stay in your position or space to help support your team mate if they cannot go forward
- Attack the space quickly
- When you are dribbling keep your head up so you can make the best possible decision on the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- Where can you go to help support your team mate on the ball?
- As a team do you want to attack fast or slow if a team is unorganized?

- Where should be looking when we are dribbling the ball?



8. Get it wide soccer drill to teach spacing

Set up:

- 20 x 15 yard area (create two 3 yard vertical channel that runs parallel to the 20 yard lines)
- 1 soccer ball
- 2 equal teams
- 2 goals

Instructions:

For this soccer spacing drill, it will be like a normal scrimmage however if a player is able to receive the ball in either other wide channels and the team is able to score in that passage of play the goal will be worth 3 goals instead of one.

This gives an incentive for the wide players to spread and stay in their positions instead of coming into central areas to get involved with the play. When the wide players do this, it takes away space from players in the central areas.

So when central players have the ball they have less time to make a decision and cannot play to the wide areas because their wide player is right next to them.

Coaching points:

- When in possession of the ball the wide players should be in these channels
- If the ball is in the wide area the wide player needs support going forward and going backwards
- Remember even if the wide player does not receive the ball, by staying wide they are creating space for other players in the middle

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- Where should wide players be when their team has possession?

- How can we help support the wide player?
- How else does the team benefit from the wide player staying wide?



9. Pass through the cones soccer drill for spacing

Set up:

- 15 x 20 yard area
- 1 soccer ball per team
- 7 small circles made up of cones
- 3 players per team

Instructions:

This is a very easy soccer drill to set up and explain, within the area space out your 7 circles and give 1 soccer ball to each team of 3.

The team that is able to pass the ball through the most circles is the winner, however teams must not pass through the same circle consecutively.

This will help players think 1 or 2 passes ahead to help support their team mate by finding a space where they can receive a ball that travels through a circle.

Players must also scan the area and communicate with their team mates to decide which circle they are going to pass the ball through.

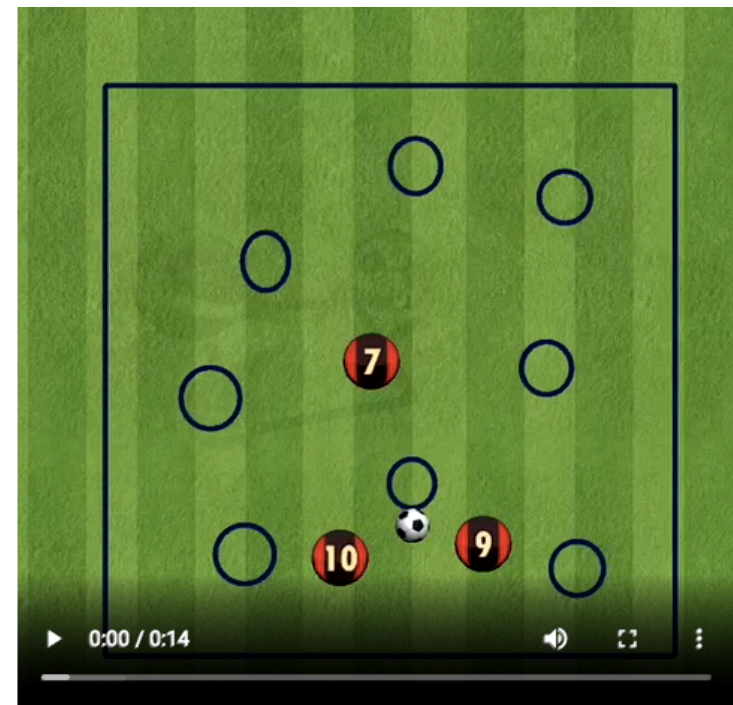
Coaching points:

- Once you have passed the ball you should be thinking where you should be moving next
- Receive the ball in an open body position to keep as many options open to you as possible
- Communicate with your team mates to decide which circle you want to pass through next

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What should be doing/ thinking after you have passed the ball to a team mate?

- What position should you be receiving a ball in?
- How else can you help your team mates make better decisions on the ball?



10.4 square rondo soccer drill to teach spacing

Set up:

- 5 x 5 yard area divided into quarters
- 1 soccer ball
- 5 players (1 defender)

Instructions:

With this rondo players must keep the ball away from the defender in the middle however the team in possession must stay in their own quarter, the will to players running to the ball and bunching up.

This will allow players to get an understanding of how spreading out and moving away from the ball is a lot more effective to help the team mate then running towards them and closing their space down.

Coaching points:

- Create an angle to help support you team mate on the ball
- Receive the ball in an open body position
- Your first touch should take you away from the pressure

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- What can you do to make it easier for your team mate to pass to you?
- What body position should you be in to receive the ball?
- Where should your first touch take you?

