

Systems of Play Game-Day Shape

“How do I teach game day shape without enough players for two teams?”

“Attack vs Defense”

- Divide group according to position: GK + backs vs. midfielders + forwards
- Midfielders + forwards attack a full-size goal.
- GK + backs attempt to stop attacking group and counter-attack to small goals.
- Use different restarts: (e.g., kick-off, goal-kick, corner-kick, throw-in.)
- Rotate players between positions.



In the above example, the preferred game-day formation (1-2-3-1) is being taught with each team possessing multiple lines of field players. The coach can either work with the unit defending the big goal (GK + backs + mid) or the unit attacking the big goal (mids + forward) to establish roles associated with each position.

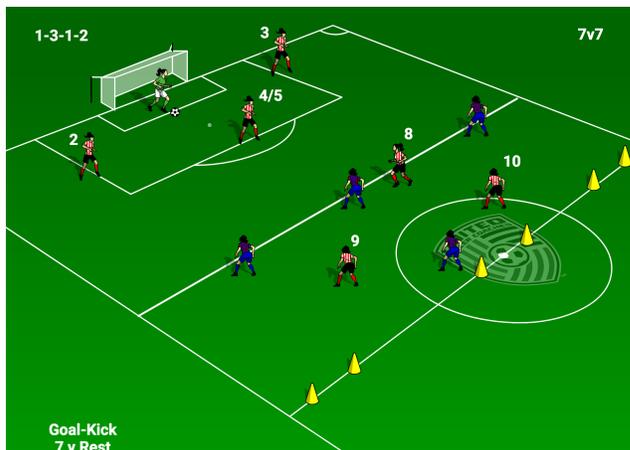
Note: Player roles will change depending on whether the group of players is in possession of the ball (attacking) or does not have possession (defending).

The coach may also want to think about playing style within their own (back) half of the field (safety to prevent goals) versus playing style in their opponents' (front) half of the field (risk to score goals).



“Team vs. Rest”

- Create a full-size team and play against the rest of the players.
- If there are no additional players, the coaches can step in to create some opposition so that players need to think about choices with the ball (dribble, pass, or shoot) and how to move to create appropriate support.
- This creates an overload in favor of the team, which will hopefully allow them to be successful in possessing and penetrating with the ball.
- Use different restarts: (e.g., kick-off, goal-kick, corner-kick, throw-in.)
- Rotate players between groups and positions.



In this example, a full team is training to play out of the back on a goal-kick in a 1-3-1-2 formation. The goal is to progress the ball out to one of three mini-goals positioned at the half way line. *(The opposing players are positioned behind the build-out line as required in the game. The additional number of available players will determine the number of opposing players.)*



In this example, one team is playing with all of their field players in a 2-3-1 formation against a goalkeeper and strategically placed opponents. The goal is try to create and finish as many goal-scoring opportunities as possible. *(The opposing team tries to play the ball back to the coach.)*

Note: The expectation is that the team with more players will be successful, but this is not always the case as attacking players may not always see the best option available, and a smaller, well-organized defense can be highly effective in disrupting the flow of the game.

Try to coach only the full team and one concept at a time, otherwise the activity can be confusing. Allow the flow of play as much as possible, so that players have the opportunity for as much repetition as possible.