



**SOCCKER COACH**  
**Norbert Altenstad**  
**Tel: 514-717-5373**  
**E-mail: nstad@sympatico.ca**



# **Attacking Shape**

*by Tom Goodman,*

**Objectives:** To help our players to understand the importance of individual, group and team shape when their team is in possession of the ball. A players shape and how it is coordinated with teammates in the area around the ball, as well as teammates away from the ball, is crucial to the attacking success of the team.

**1) Interpassing in 4's or 5's (10-15 minutes):** Players are in color-code groups of 4 (4 blue, 4 red, etc.). Each group has one ball. Each group passes and moves in free space, playing through the other groups. The purpose of this warm-up activity is to clean up the mechanics of passing and receiving, increase the players' technical speed and develop basic individual and small group shape.

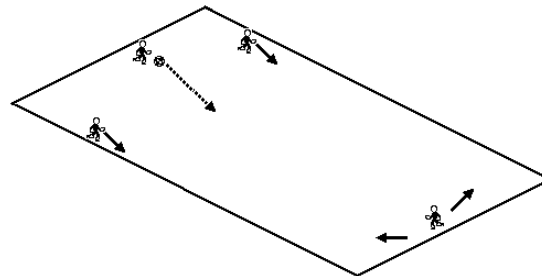
**Coaching Points:**

- Survey the playing area at all times so that you can anticipate what to do next with and without the ball.
- Keep body open to as much of the field as possible based on where you are on the field.
- Take first touch toward a passing option.
- Strike ball with proper weight and proper surface.

**2) 4 v 0 or 5 v 0 Pattern Play (15 minutes)** In a 30yd x 40yd grid, one of the 4 or 5 player groups moves the ball from one end of the grid to the other. In this activity, the point is to move the ball effectively and quickly, while the players maintain their positions and a "kite-type" shape. The idea is to have 2 wide players supporting the player with the ball and one high player for a long pass option. The players in the area around the ball make 4-5 passes before looking long to the high option. Once the ball is played to the high option, the 2 wide players move to support the ball at the other end of the grid.

**Coaching Points:**

- Develop & keep individual and group shape
- Develop rhythm of play
- Increase speed of play
- Recognize visual cues such as body shape of teammates, supporting positions, high option "ON"



**3) (4 v 0) + (4 v 0) (15 minutes):** Two groups of 4, with 1 ball per group, play through each other in the same 30yd x 40yd grid. Each group simply focuses on their ball, their individual & small group shape and their speed of play. Neither group attempts to disrupt the other.

**Coaching Points:**

- Develop & keep individual and group shape
- Develop rhythm of play in traffic
- Increase speed of play in traffic
- Recognize visual cues such as body shape of teammates, supporting positions and high option with the added pressure of more players on the field



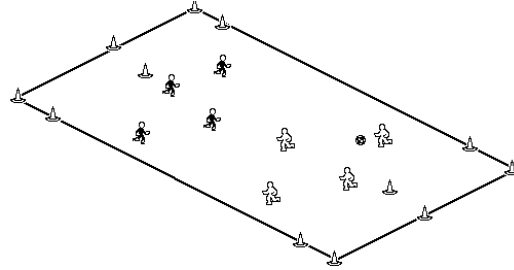
**SOCCER COACH**  
Norbert Altenstad  
Tel: 514-717-5373  
E-mail: nstad@sympatico.ca



**4) 4v4 or 5v5 to Zones (15 minutes):** In the same 30yd x 40yd grid, add 30yd x 5yd end zones at each end. Play a 4v4 or 5v5 game to end zones. Each team defends one end zone and attacks the other end zone. If a team successfully plays a ball into the end zone opposite them to a teammate, they receive one point (the player must arrive in the end zone as the ball arrives...NO attacking player is allowed to “hang out” in the end zone). The defending team can only defend in front of their end zone...they cannot enter the end zone that they are defending.

**Coaching Points:**

Constantly survey the playing area  
Develop & keep individual and group shape under the pressures of a game  
Develop rhythm of play based on what the game presents...increase speed of play at the right time



**5) 6v6 to 8v8 Game (25 minutes)** - Play the larger game. If playing 6v6, the field size should be approximately 45 x 60 yards. If playing 8v8, the field size should be approximately 55 x 80 yards. Encourage your goalkeeper to communicate to the team regarding team shape. Emphasize the coaching considerations made throughout the training session. *Stay on topic.*

**6) Cool Down (10 minutes)** – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.