

The 10 principles of possession soccer



What is possession soccer?

The term is rather vague and definitely open to interpretation. Watching a game of soccer played in the top soccer countries around the world, you can identify key principles. These principles can be considered the constants of a game that can provide the game with a rhythm- flow. Set patterns that repeat themselves. Once players learn to apply the principles their decisions become automatic and coordinated. Once ingrained a coach can add variety, improve penetration and also allow for individual interpretation.

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Please remember:

- 1) Be patient and understand that we focus on the process.
- 2) Overemphasize the execution and understand that at times it will look very robotic.
As stated on the previous slide: Once a possession based style is ingrained it becomes easier to add variety, improve penetration and individual expression to flourish.
- 3) Possession is kept, but it serves a bigger purpose. It is not the end goal!

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What are these 10 principles or constants of possession soccer? If you watch top level teams play possession soccer, you will notice the following playing behavior patterns repeat themselves time and again:

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PRINCIPLE 1: TEAM SHAPE – MAKE THE FIELD BIG



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PRINCIPLE 2: PEEL OFF AND OPEN BODY TO THE FIELD



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PRINCIPLE 3: BENDING RUNS



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PRINCIPLE 4: RUNS TRIGGER RUNS – AWARENESS OF SURROUNDING



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PRINCIPLE 5: DIAGONAL PASSES



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PRINCIPLE 6: EVERY BACK PASS IS FOLLOWED BY A SWITCH



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PRINCIPLE 7: THE BALL DOESN'T STAY IN AN AREA TO LONG

To maintain possession and not allow the other team to press and win the ball, the team in possession should circulate the ball and move it constantly around the field. This makes it less predictable and harder for the opponent to defend your team.

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PRINCIPLE 8: GOALPLAYERS DISTRIBUTE BALLS, AVOID LONG PUNTS



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PRINCIPLE 9: USE THROW INS TO SWITCH THE POINT OF ATTACK



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PRINCIPLE 10: SPEED OF PLAY

Players have to learn to play quickly and keep the ball moving. As the players develop their basic technique and become more comfortable on the ball, a lot of 1 and 2 touch play can increase the speed of play. There are always moments where dribbling is appropriate, but the majority of the time the ball will move around quicker when passed from player to player.

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 PRINCIPLE 5: DIAGONAL PASSES
 PRINCIPLE 6: EVERY BACK PASS IS FOLLOWED BY A SWITCH
 PRINCIPLE 7: THE BALL DOESN'T STAY IN AN AREA TOO LONG
 PRINCIPLE 8: GOALPLAYERS DISTRIBUTE BALLS, AVOID LONG PUNTS
 PRINCIPLE 9: USE THROW INS TO SWITCH THE POINT OF ATTACK
 PRINCIPLE 10: SPEED OF PLAY

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Ready to train your analytical eye?

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THE METHODOLOGY FOR TEACHING POSSESSION

TECHNICAL:

IN ORDER FOR ONE TO WRITE WELL, ONE HAS TO ACQUIRE A LARGE VOCABULARY BASE BEFORE HE/SHE CAN USE GRAMMAR RULES TO PUT WORDS TOGETHER AND FORM SENTENCES.

PLAYERS NEED A SOLID TECHNICAL BASE SO THEY ARE BOTH COMFORTABLE AND CONFIDENT ON THE BALL.

SIDE NOTE: AT A LOWER LEVEL THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENT IS LOWER WITH THE GAME GENERALLY BEING PLAYED AT A LOWER PACE.

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THE METHODOLOGY FOR TEACHING POSSESSION

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN:

- THE TEAM SHAPE – WILL DETERMINE SUCCESS OR FAILURE IN A GAME
- MOVEMENT OFF THE BALL – CREATE SPACE FOR YOURSELF OR FOR YOUR TEAMMATES. OPEN YOUR BODY AND FACE THE FIELD
- DECISIONS ON THE BALL – NEED SPACE AND SUPPORT

IN CORRELATION WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF PLAY

<http://www.westfieldnjsoccer.com/docs/WSA%20-%20Understanding%20the%20principles%20of%20play.pdf>

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Principles of attack

- 1) Penetration
Shoot, dribble, pass, run with ball
- 2) Support
Angles and distance
- 3) Width/depth
- 4) Mobility
Create and exploit space
- 5) Improvisation
Flair