

THE PRINCIPLES OF TEAM PLAY

ATTACK	VS	DEFENSE
<p>SUPPORT (Angles and Distance)</p> <p>This is the most important factor in attacking play, as effective support gives a team all-round passing options. Which, in turn, enables composed possession. Good possession is vital for the basic reason that when your team has the ball you can score and your opponents cannot.</p>	VS	<p>COVER</p> <p>The covering player needs to be close enough to the teammate who is marking the attacker with the ball and is closer to his own goal. Effective cover is when your teammate is beaten and the covering player is in a position to challenge the attacker immediately with a tackle or pressure.</p>
<p>PENETRATION/SPEED (Direct Play)</p> <p>This means getting the ball and/or player(s) forward past opponents, going toward their goal. It could be a shot, a through pass, a dribble, etc. This is allied to speed of movement to maximize the attacking opening.</p>	VS	<p>DELAY/PRESSURE</p> <p>Holding and pressuring attacking players until your players can recover into good defending positions, i.e., pressure and cover.</p>
<p>WIDTH</p> <p>Good teams have a variety of ways of getting to their opponents goal. If the middle of the field is congested, then the use of the wings to get to the goals becomes important. Some teams have orthodox wingers who stay wide while others create space on the wings to bring fullbacks into these positions. Again, you have to have a combination of both of these methods. Getting players into wide positions provides attacking options -- If the defense stays compact & central then wing play is the attacking answer. If by having attackers get wide it draws defenders out & stretches the defense, then the "holes" appear in more central areas to attack.</p>	VS	<p>CONCENTRATION</p> <p>This is when you force your opponent's attack into the bulk of your defense allowing a minimum of attacking possibilities.</p>

THE PRINCIPLES OF TEAM PLAY (cont'd)

ATTACK	VS	DEFENSE
<p>MOBILITY</p> <p>Running for the sake of running is pointless. It is important to learn the "when" and "where" to run. The most positive types of "runs" a player or players can make are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To take opponent(s) from good defending positions to poor ones which creates space for a teammate to enter to receive the ball. 2. To get into positions behind defenders to receive the ball--these are "blind-side" or "sneak" runs. 	VS	<p>BALANCE</p> <p>The usual defensive arrangement has the 1st man marking the opponent with ball tightly, the 2nd defender giving cover, then the 3rd and the 4th defender providing balance. These 3rd and 4th players mark space rather than opponents. Their constant assessment has to be ... "if the ball is played to my nearest opponent, can I get close enough to pressure him?"</p>
<p>IMPROVISATION</p> <p>Where players are encouraged to do the unusual, either individually (dribbling) or collectively (cross-overs). These types of skills are especially important in and around the opponent's penalty area.</p> <p>It has to be positive, direct skill--going for goal. The result of such a play is that it creates a scoring opportunity.</p>	VS	<p>DELAY/PRESSURE (Slow down, eyes down)</p> <p>You must be patient in pressuring to force your opponent into making errors.</p> <p>Think of 3 feet and 3 seconds. The defender needs to be 3 feet from the ball to "threaten"/pressure the attacker on the ball. 3 seconds - can the defender "hold"/delay the attacker for that amount of time. That "buys time" to get help. Once good defensive organization is established, i.e., pressure with cover, then the pressurizing defender can get tighter on the ball.</p>
<p>CREATING SPACE</p> <p>"Space is only a space until someone moves into it." Often, attackers drift into it too early and close it down. Generally, you want to keep space open as long as possible and attack it late.</p>	VS	<p>SQUEEZING SPACE</p> <p>Defensively, you want to dictate the opposition's attack, forcing them into areas away from your goal or into the teeth of the defense. Either way, the object is to "squeeze" their attack into smaller and smaller areas.</p>