

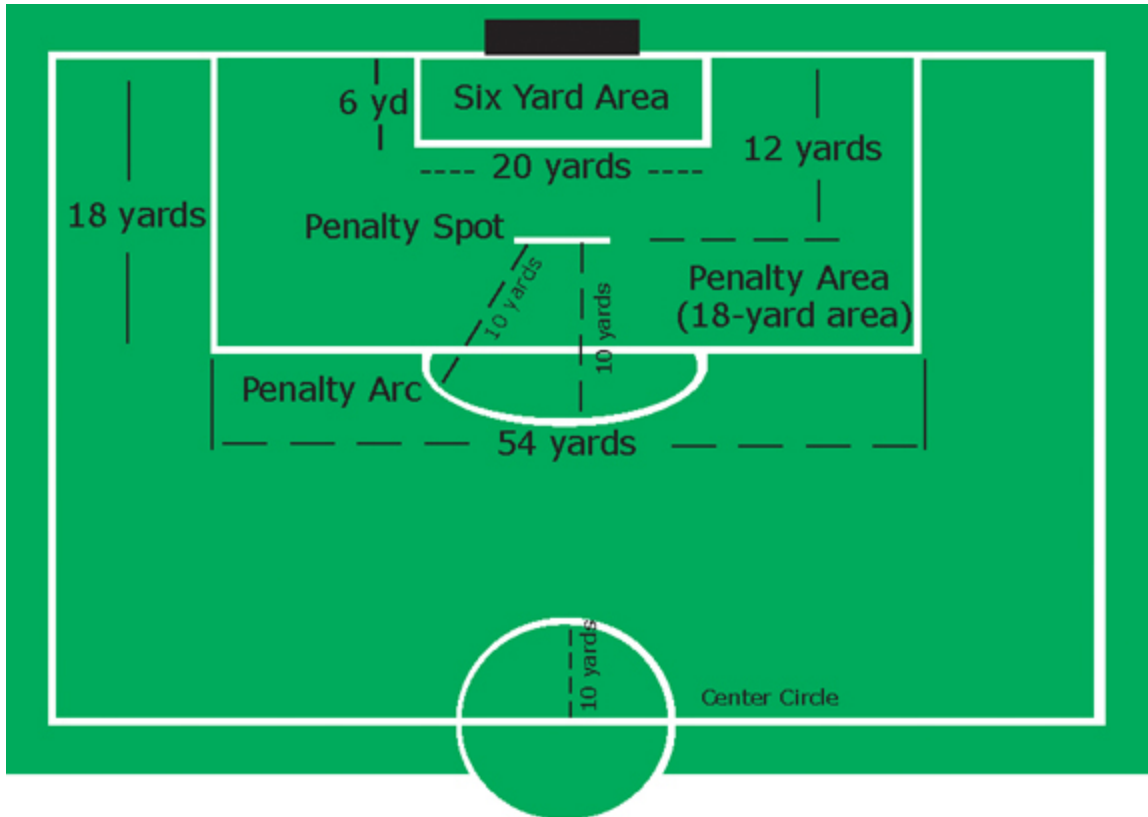
Basic Soccer Information For Parents

Field Dimensions

The dimensions of the half field below are based on a full-sized field (not small sided or modified).

A field must be at least 50 yards wide and at least 100 yards long and be rectangular in size (the width cannot equal or exceed the length).

An average field size for U13-U18 would be approximately 60-68 yards wide x 110-118 yards long, depending on the age.



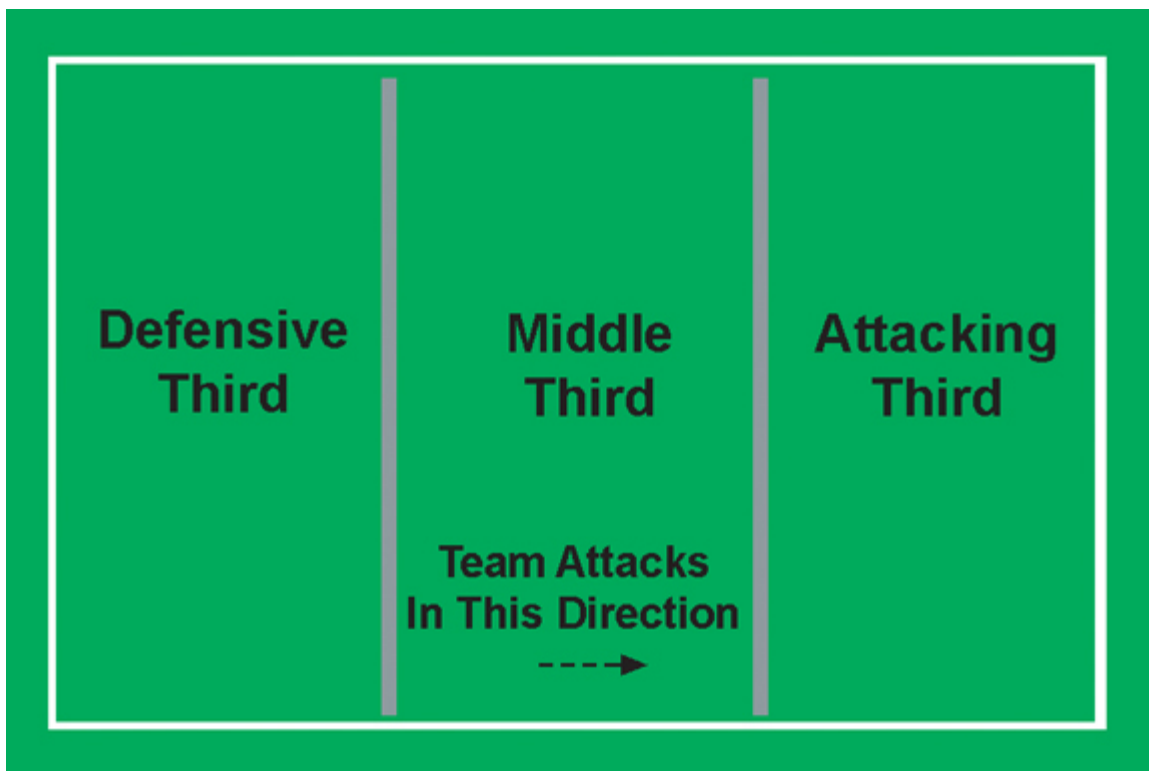
Field Thirds

In training players, the field can sometimes be divided into thirds: the Attacking Third, the Middle Third, and the Defending Third.

The Attacking Third - This is the third in front of the goal where the team is trying to score. Players may be encouraged to take more chances in this third in order to get an opportunity to shoot and/or score.

The Middle Third - This is the third in the middle of the field where a team may want to keep more possession and build the attack, in order to put players in a good scoring position leading into the Attacking Third.

The Defending Third - This third is located in front of YOUR goal. A player might want to play more safely here, as the attackers are taking more risks to score. Therefore, protecting the ball and getting it to your teammates in the middle third as quickly as possible is the key.

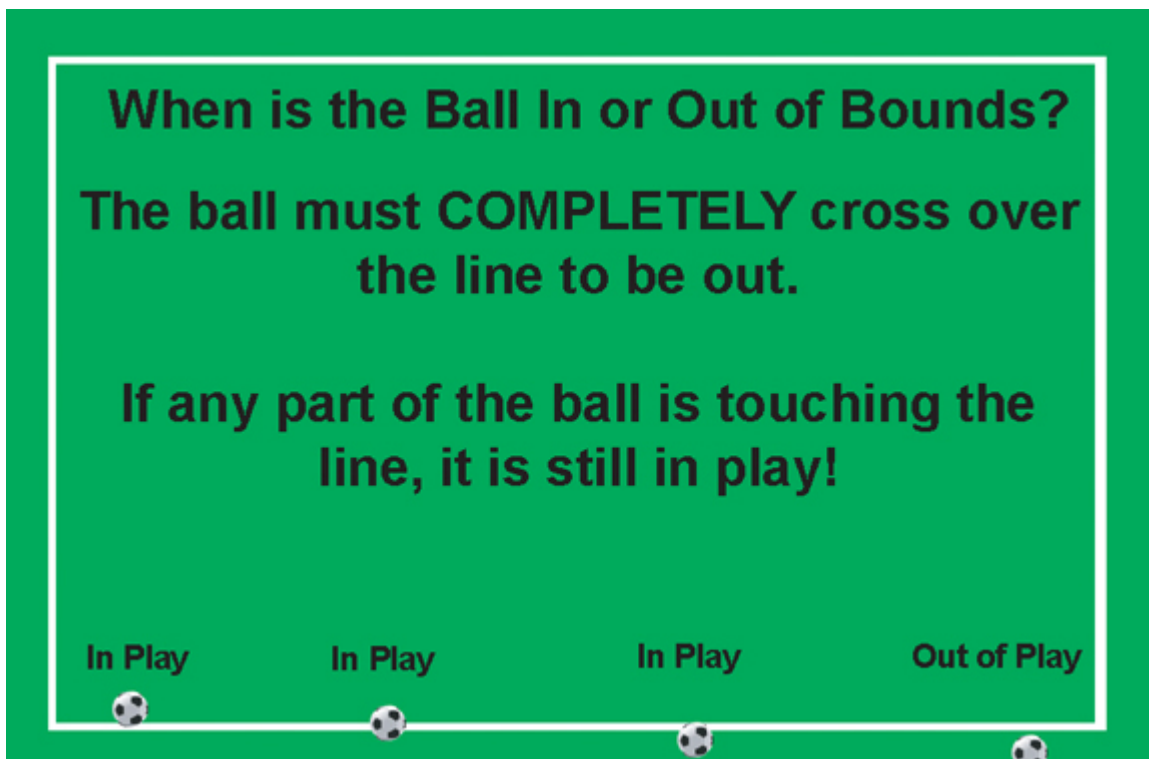


The Ball In and Out of Play

In order for the ball to be out of play, it must pass **COMPLETELY** over the line. If any part of the ball is touching the line, it is still in play.

This applies to scoring a goal also. The ball must **COMPLETELY** cross the goal line for a goal to be scored. In fact, the goalkeeper may stand **INSIDE** the goal and catch the ball before it crosses the line!

Keep this in mind when challenging a referee's call! Some plays happen very quickly and there is no instant replay



OFFSIDE

An attacking player **MUST** have two defenders between them and the goal, when the ball is served to them, in the opponent's half of the field or they are considered offside and an indirect free kick is awarded to the defending team.

If a player has one defender and the goalkeeper between them and the goal, then they are in an **ONside** position and may receive the ball. However, if the defender steps up in front of the attacking player **BEFORE** the ball is kicked to the attacker, then that attacker is in an **OFFside** position.



As shown above, the attacking player (white) on the right is in an offside position. If the ball is served, offside should be called.

The attacking player in the middle is in front of the ball, but is NOT in an offside position, as they are even with their defender (and the defender on the right is behind them).

NOTE: A player EVEN with the last field player (defender) is considered ONside.

NOTE: A player cannot be offside in their own half of the field.

NOTE: A player cannot be offside if the defensive team plays the ball to them.

NOTE: A player cannot be offside on a throw-in.

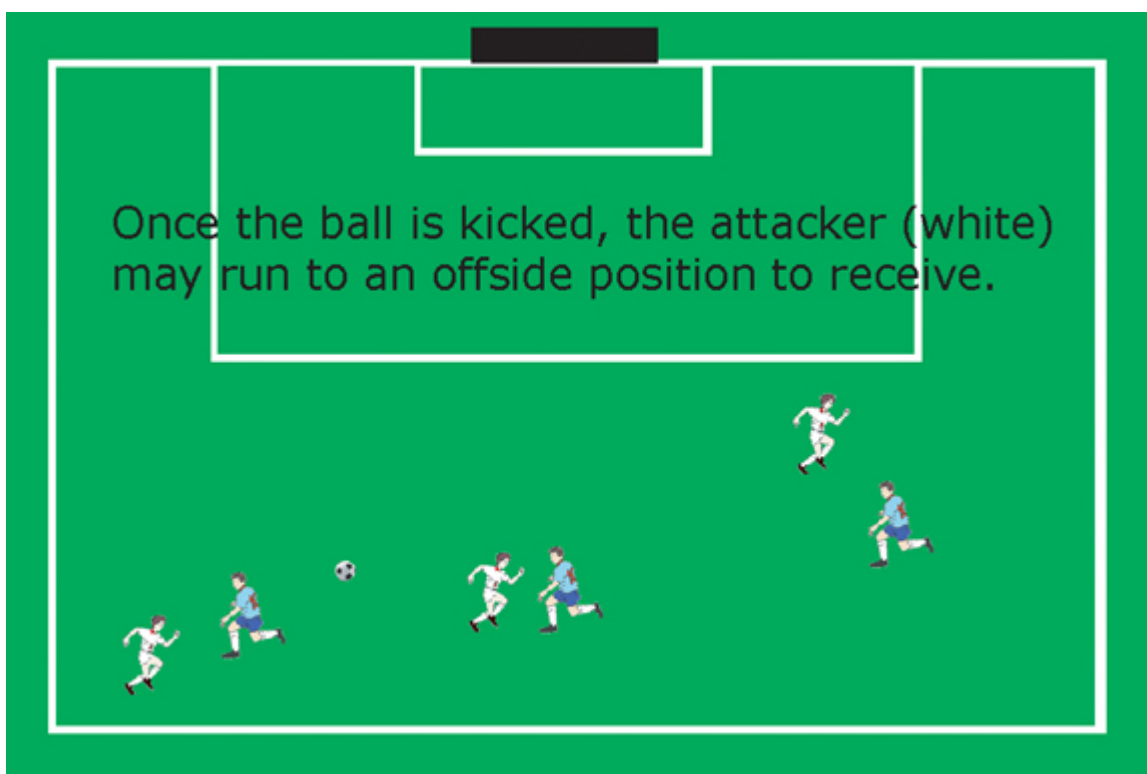
NOTE: A player cannot be offside on a goal kick.

NOTE: A player cannot be offside on a corner kick.

There are many variations to the offside rule. For instance if the ball is kicked, an attacking player may run to an OFFside position to receive it. Below are some ONside examples.

The attacking players below are all ONside

The attacking player ran to an offside position AFTER the ball was kicked, therefore they are considered ONside.

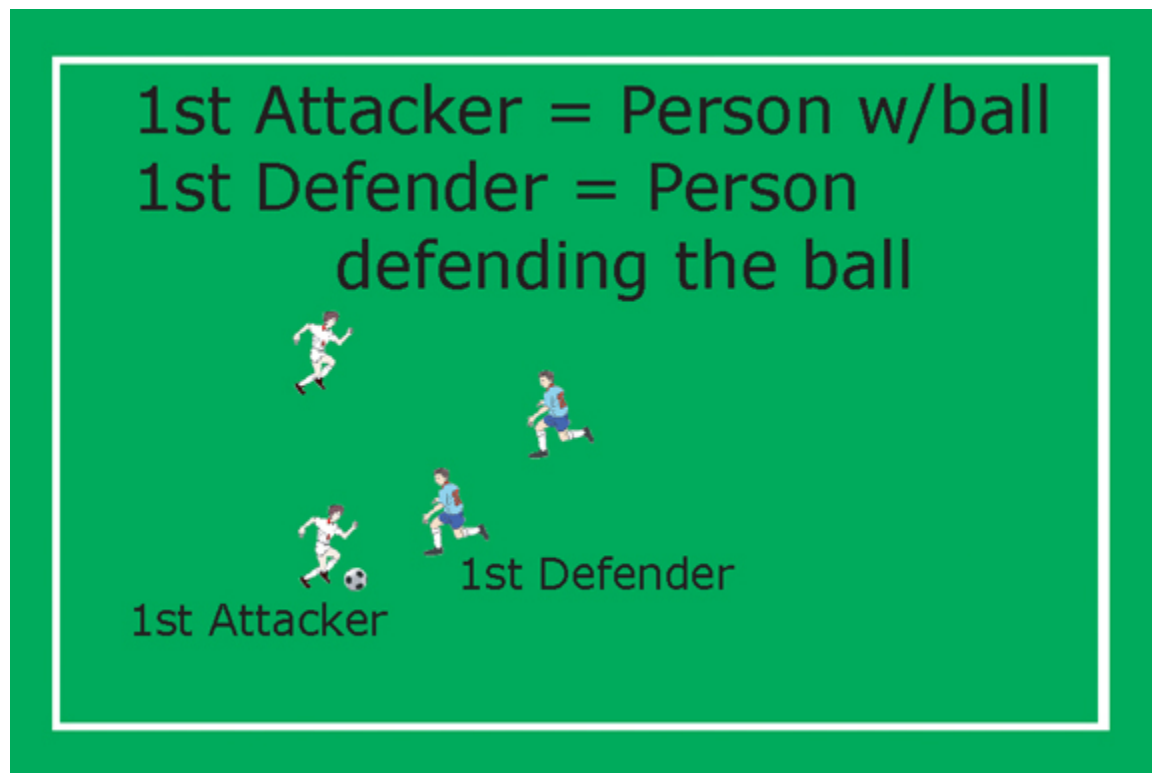


The First Attacker and First Defender

The First Attacker is the player with the ball. The First Defender is the player guarding the First Attacker.

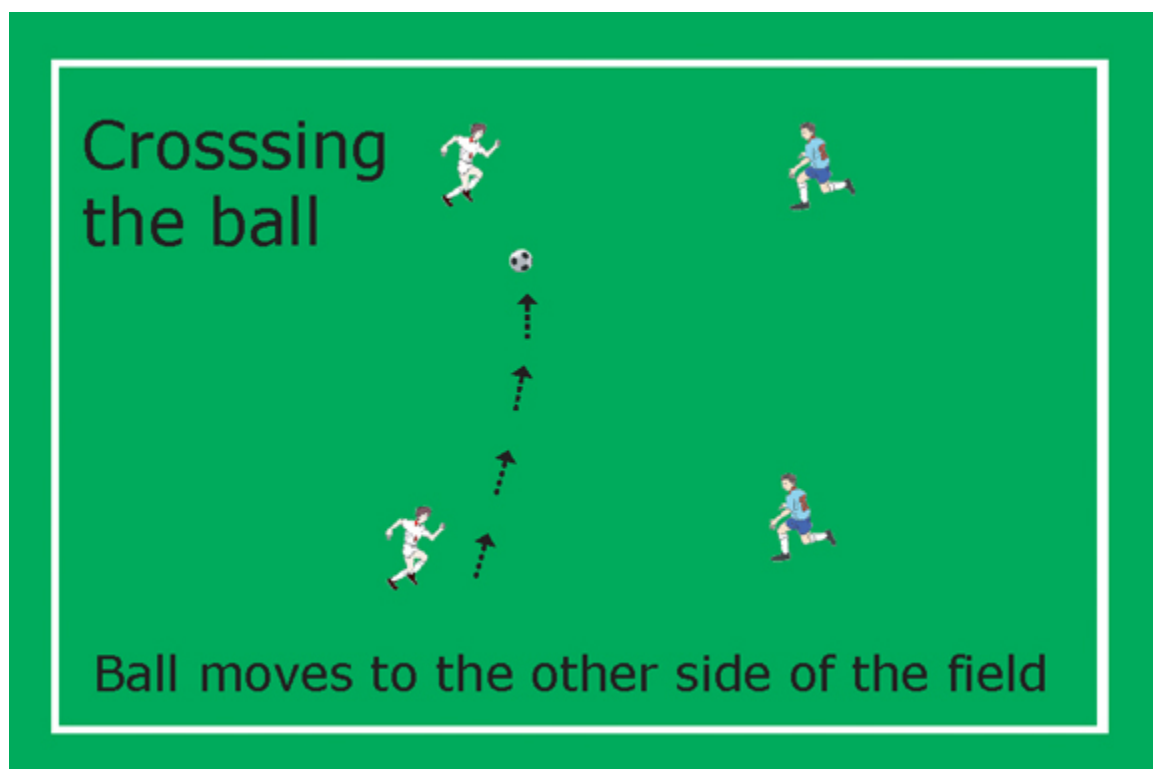
The First Attacker is trying to beat the First Defender by either dribbling, passing or shooting the ball (eg: putting the ball into the space behind the First Defender) and maintaining possession for the attacking team.

The First Defender is trying to prevent the First Attacker from exploiting the space behind them. They want to dispossess the First Attacker, while not letting them get to the space behind them.



Crossing the Ball

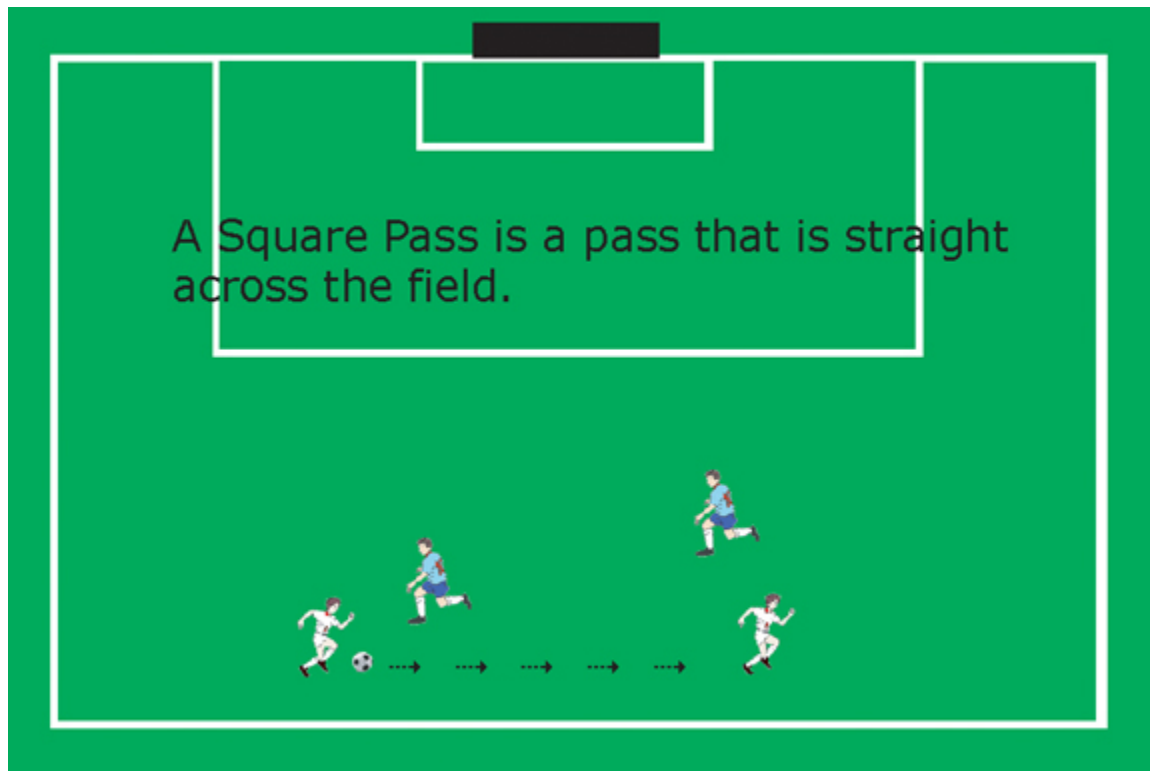
Crossing the ball is passing it from one side of the field to another - across the field



Square Pass

A square pass is simply a lateral or sideways pass (on the ground) to a teammate parallel to you.

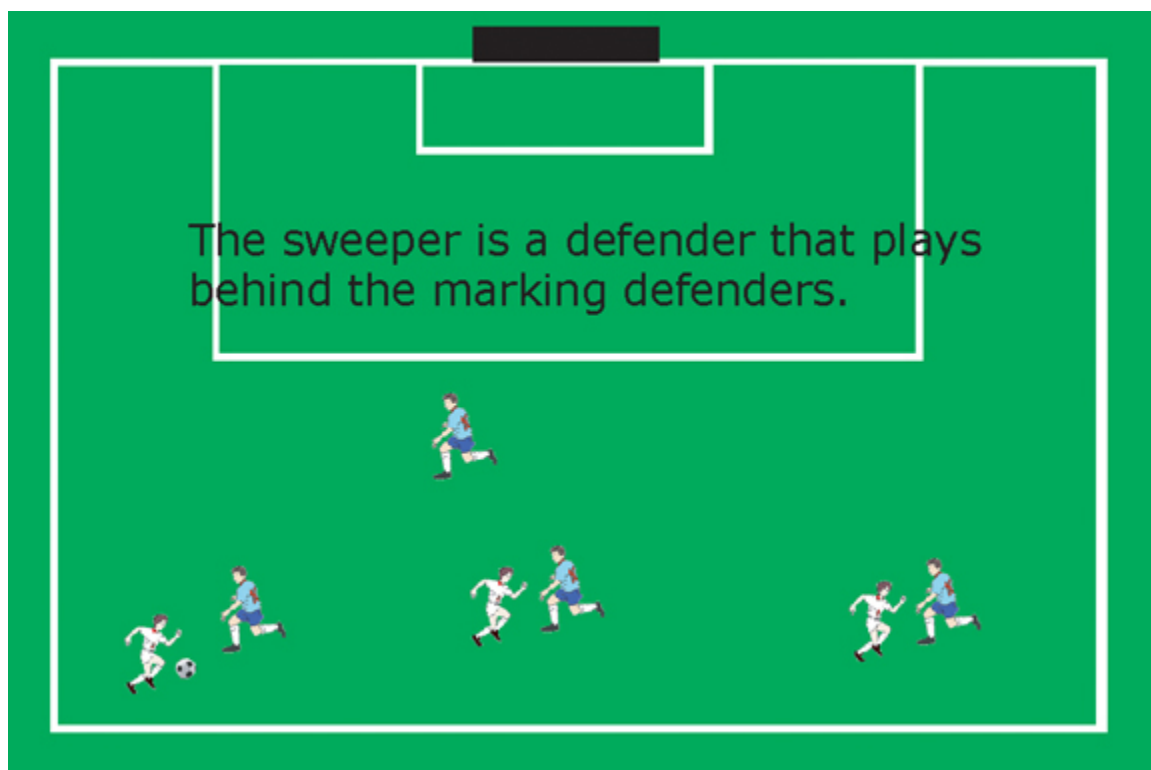
NOTE: A square pass in your defensive third can be a dangerous pass, as an attacker can step between the passer and the intended receiving player and possibly have an easy shot on goal!



The Sweeper

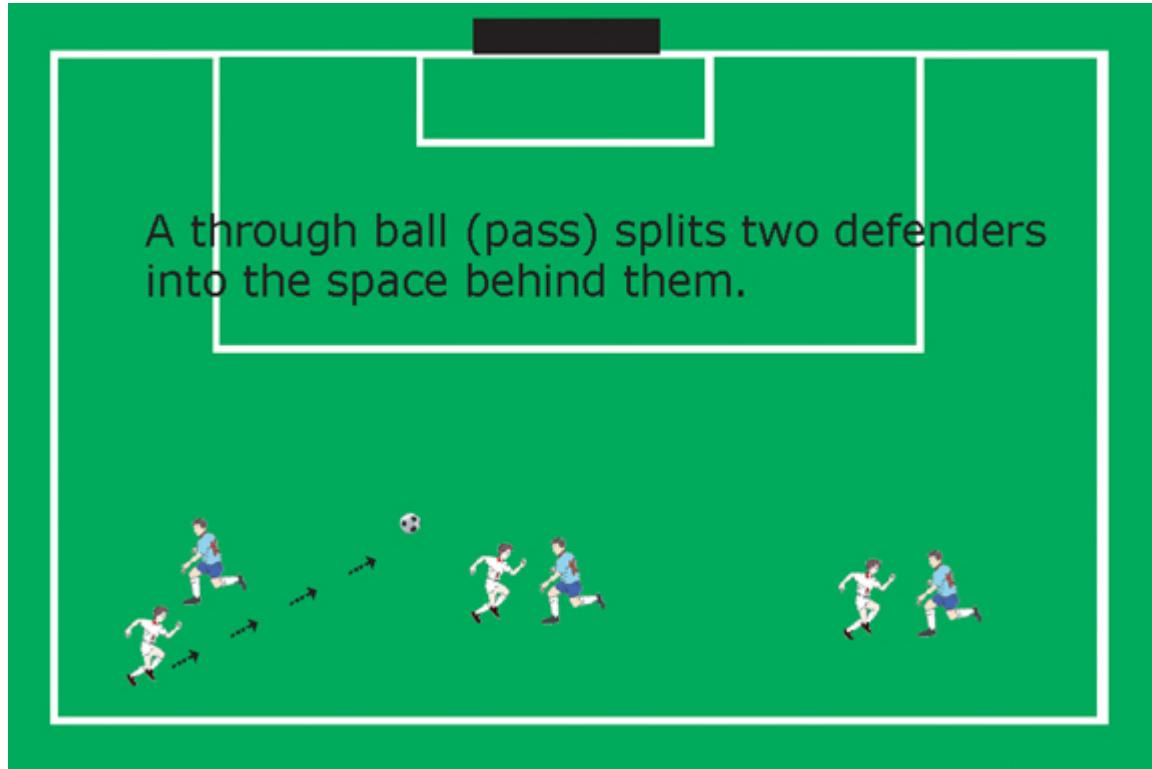
The sweeper is a player who plays behind the defensive backs and offers depth and support to those players.

NOTE: If a team plays flat across the back, there is no sweeper position



Through Pass

A through pass (or thru ball) is service that splits two defenders into the space behind them - a very dangerous ball for the opposing team!



The Wall

The Wall is set up to help defend free kicks in the defensive third. Anywhere from one to four players (or more) will set up in a wall to block off one area of the goal from the shooter, while the Goalkeeper covers the other area.

