

MANCHESTER UNITED

**Sir Alex
Ferguson**
**Attacking
wing
play and
shooting**

Overview:

This session is about attacking from three different positions and is something that offers versatility in the final third, which is always essential.

We begin with shooting from outside the box, setting up opportunities for powerful accurate shots into the net - we have seen this come off many times, with Paul Scholes' memorable goal at Fulham this season a perfect example.

Moving on, we look at quick, instinctive interplay on the wing, finishing with a cross into the danger area. Plus we examine the roles of attacking first and second waves of crosses.

It's essential to practise these in order to fine-tune the movement of strikers, quality of delivery, and inventive combinations on the wing.

This is a powerful and insightful session that encourages players to practise hard, perfect their roles and reinforce habits, and is at the heart of why we are regarded as such a potent attacking force in the Barclays Premier League.

ATTACKING WING PLAY AND SHOOTING: MAIN SESSION

SETUP

AREA

Half pitch

EQUIPMENT

Cones, balls

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

7 upwards to 20 (one goalkeeper, varying combinations of outfield players)

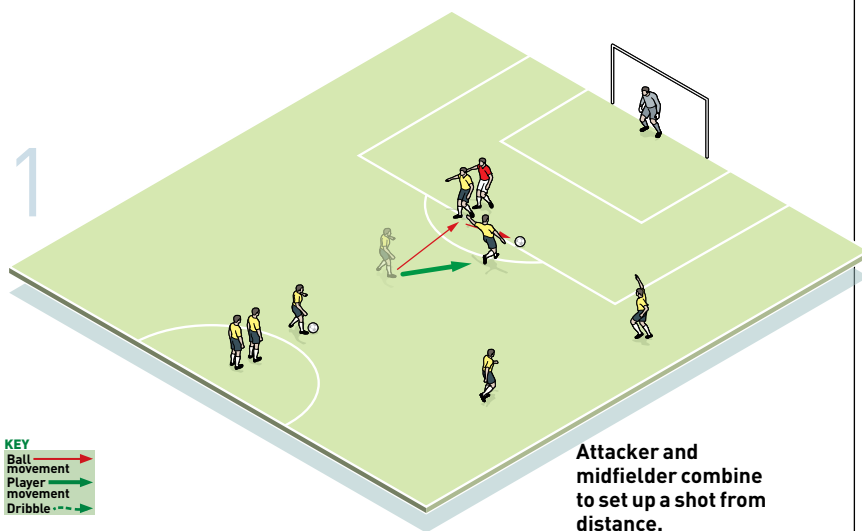
What do I get the players to do?

Use one defender, one attacker, two midfielders and two wide players. This is a two-ball routine.

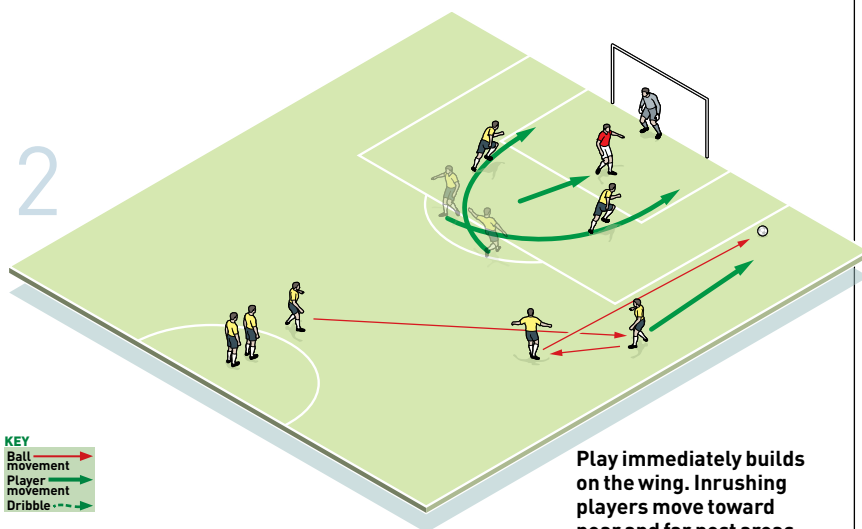
Positioned outside the D of the penalty box, the midfielder links with the striker and has a shot.

With the second ball, the other midfielder switches the play out wide. The two wide players combine and put a cross in for the intruding forward and attacking midfielder. The defender tries to clear the ball.

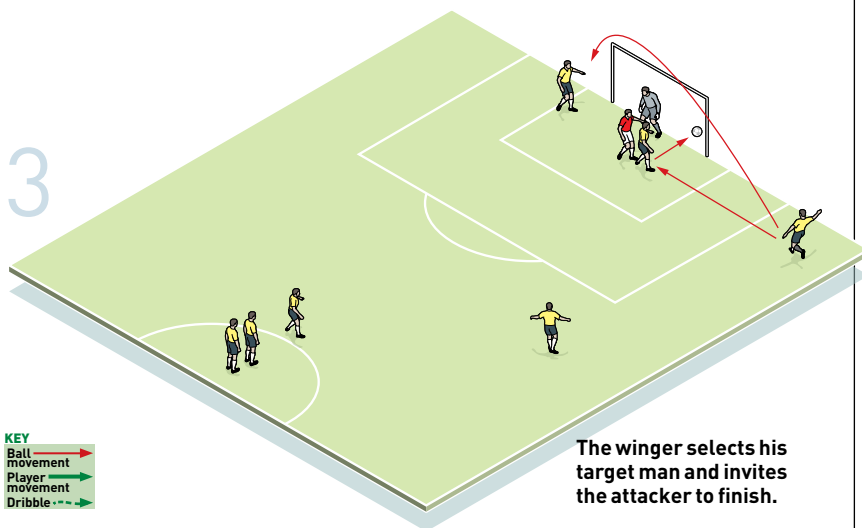
The crosser must be aware of the defender's position. As a coach you can make the defender defend either the near post or back post cross.



KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble - - - →



KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble - - - →



KEY
Ball movement →
Player movement →
Dribble - - - →

ATTACKING WING PLAY AND SHOOTING: PROGRESSION

How do I progress the session?

Progress this session to a three-ball routine with a complete back four plus a defensive midfielder to defend. Add wingers on the other side on the pitch and an extra attacker and midfielder.

The midfield players now work in pairs. Together with the striker, they try to outplay an opponent in order to get a shot on goal. The attacker who previously laid the pass off can now spin away from his marker and shoot. Strikers should run in anticipating rebounds.

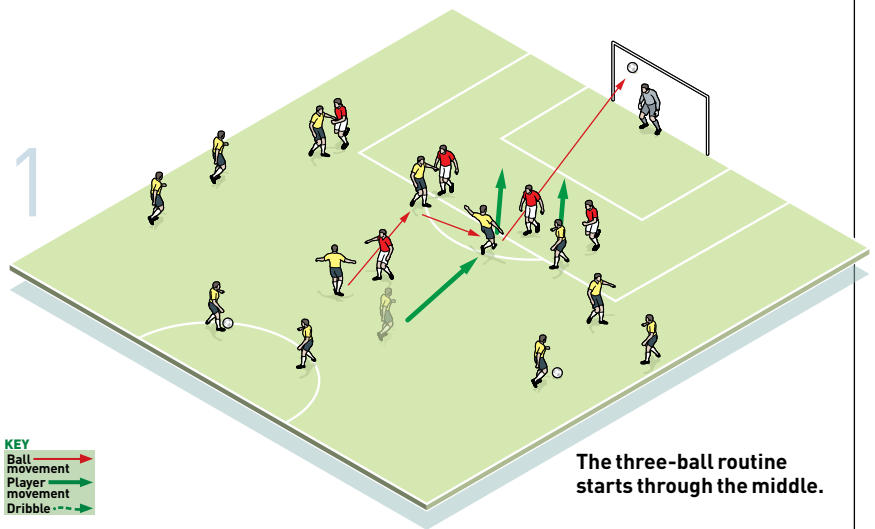
In the next phase, the full-back must try to stop the wide men from crossing. The wide men must try to outplay the full-back in a 3v1 situation.

When this ball goes dead, the opposite wide men put another cross in for the attackers and defenders to react to.

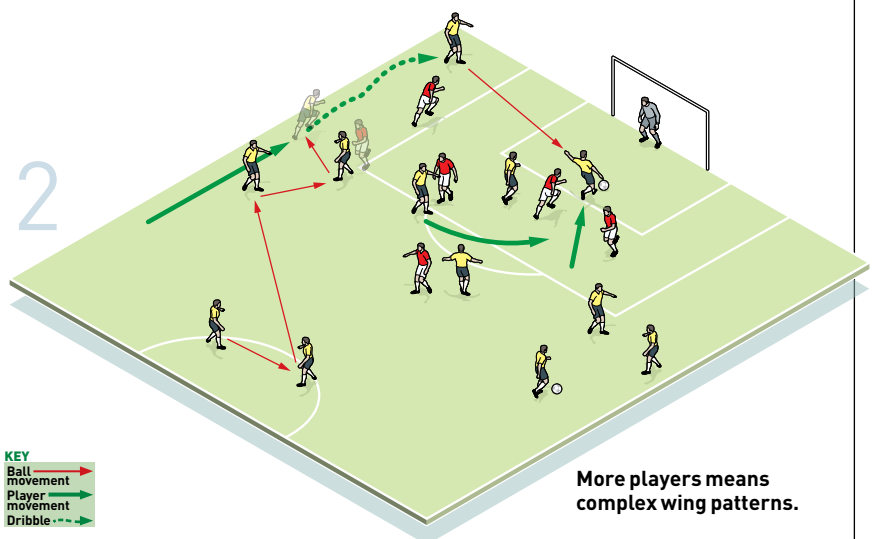
Defenders and strikers must always readjust their positions to deal with the next ball arriving. The aim is to make the routine more competitive and, at the same time, demand more creativity and unpredictability in forward play.

What are the key things to look out for technically/tactically?

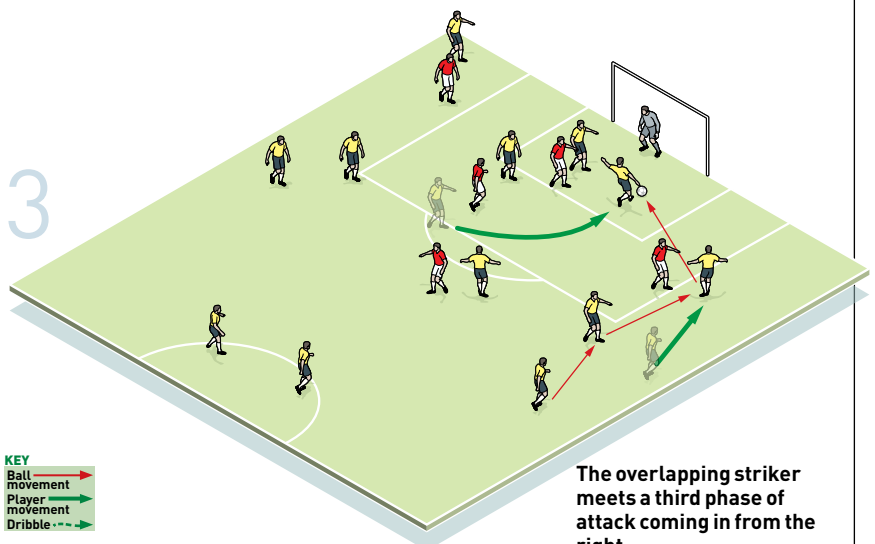
We are looking for accuracy of passing and finishing, plus a variety of crosses. ▶



The three-ball routine starts through the middle.



More players means complex wing patterns.



The overlapping striker meets a third phase of attack coming in from the right.

“The strikers in the middle must be mobile and versatile.”



**Sir Alex
Ferguson**

MANCHESTER UNITED

In November this year, Sir Alex Ferguson CBE celebrates 24 years in charge of Manchester United. The Glaswegian is the longest-serving and most successful manager in British football, having clinched 43 trophies for the Red Devils.

His early years in management saw him enjoy spells at St Mirren and East Stirling, before joining Aberdeen in 1978. His record of 10 trophies in seven years signalled the most successful period in the Dons' history, and after managing Scotland at the 1986 World Cup, United came calling.

It took him four years to secure a first major honour south of the border – the 1990 FA Cup – and a further three to land the Premier League title. But Ferguson hasn't looked back, winning a further nine league championships and numerous other domestic honours, plus the European Cup twice.

He has also been named England's Manager of the Year nine times, the LMA Manager of the Year twice, plus the Manager of the Decade for the 1990s.

ATTACKING WING PLAY AND SHOOTING: PROGRESSION

On the wings, rhythm and flow of passing is essential, and players must protect against mistimed runs or erratic passes.

The strikers in the middle must be mobile and versatile – they must run to the near post and far post, whilst still being prepared to receive passes in and around the penalty spot or further back.

How would you put this into a game situation?

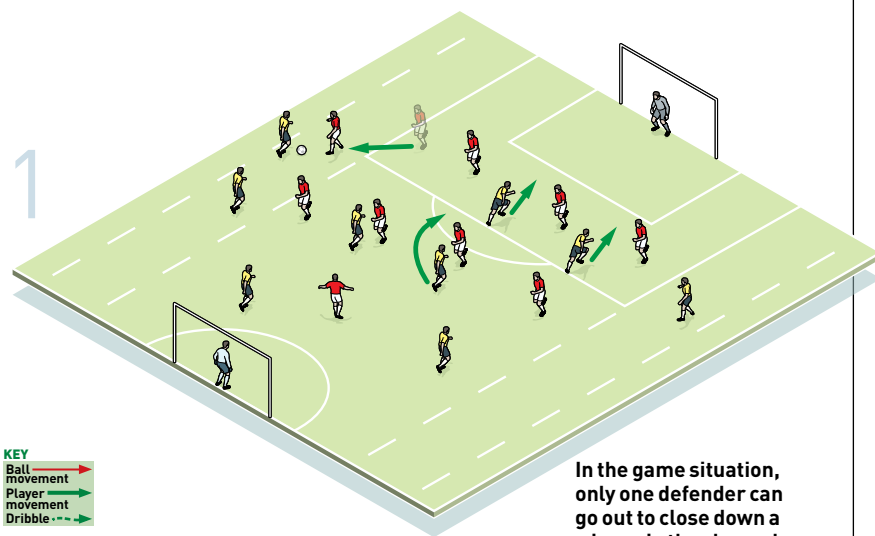
Work this into a 10v10 game (including goalkeepers) across a half-pitch, marking out two wing channels.

Only one defender can enter the wide zone to defend the cross. This encourages 2v1 situations on the wing and ensures many crosses into the penalty area.

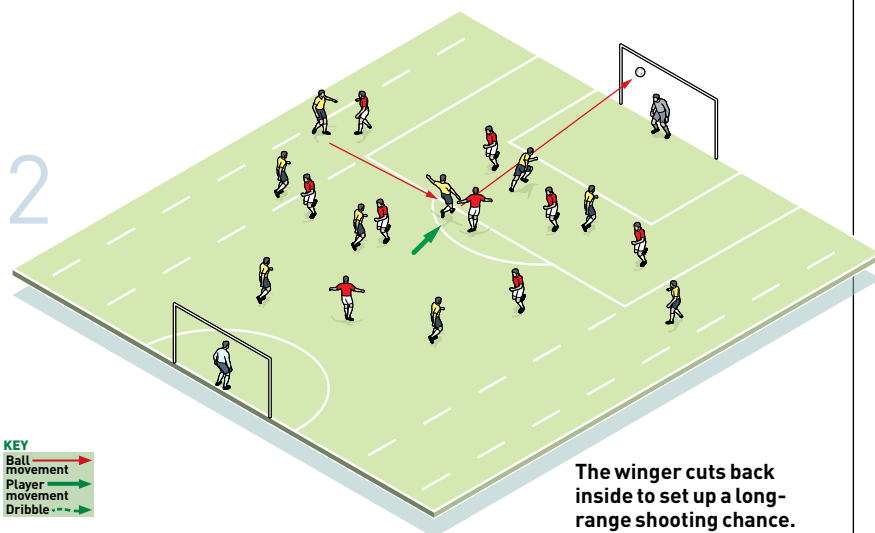
The approach should be varied, sometimes attacking down the wing to fire a cross into the six-yard box, on other occasions cutting back inside to set-up a long-range shooting chance.

If a ball from the wing is delivered into the box, players must finish using one touch. Award two goals for crosses that finish with a header or a volley. If the defending team wins possession, they break upfield.

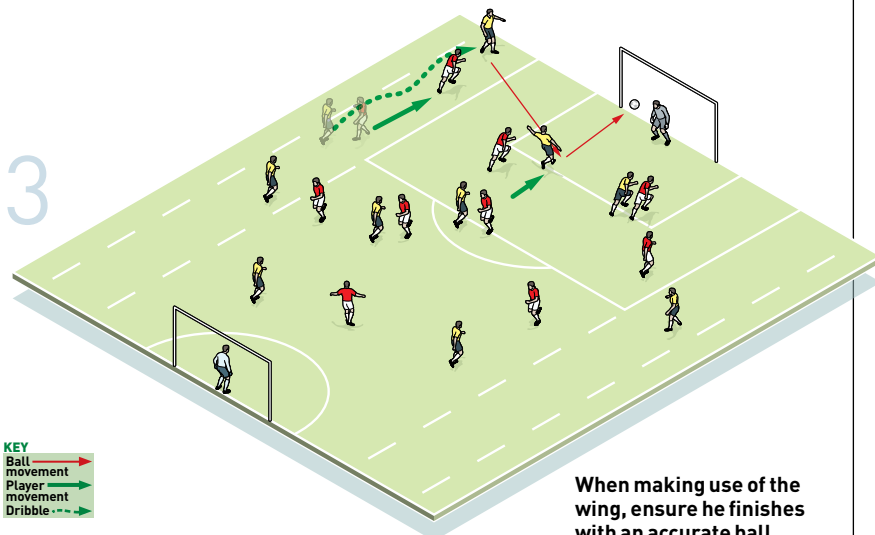
This game would usually last 45 minutes. The training session in total takes 75 minutes.



In the game situation, only one defender can go out to close down a winger in the channel.



The winger cuts back inside to set up a long-range shooting chance.



When making use of the wing, ensure he finishes with an accurate ball into the six-yard box.